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**A STUDY  
OF RADIO –TELEVISION SYSTEMS IN  
AFRICA  
THE CASE OF NIGERIA**

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## **RADIO AND TELEVISION IN AFRICA**

There is something unnatural in the African States, hurriedly designed by the ancient colonisers. Within their boundaries a hundred languages, a hundred customs, a hundred cultures meet in the same juridical space and each day there arise difficulties, conflicts and struggles even bloodshed.

One can grasp the importance which the radio and television can assume in the new African nations, as instruments of communication on a wide scale toward an agreement and a peaceful co-existence of different cultures.

But one can grasp also how the cultural problem in program scheduling is immense and varied, both for the radio on account of linguistic pluralism and for the television on account of the multiplicity of customs and behaviours. It is not therefore possible to understand social communication without basing oneself on a rigorous sociological research, without pointing out the different statistical aspect and the different cultural requirements.

For these reasons the survey made by Arnaldo Rigodanza is considerable: it concerns a particular area, the tormented Nigeria; but precisely in its geographical limits it becomes reliable and documented.

A survey conducted with discretion and respect, but also with acumen, by questioning and comparing on the spot; and by proposing once again the serious problem of the neo-colonialism, which now and again re-emerges by selling among other things the productions of its own cultural industry to those countries where to produce locally is still difficult.

The problems of the Third World present themselves in this way, in all their gravity, even though from a single Nation of the vast Continent, and from the definite perspective of social communication. But this limitation is, lastly, an example of scientific exactitude: the only way to begin a serious proposal; which goes beyond the rhetoric of the new nations.

Virgilio Melchiorre

# I

## FOR A STUDY OF THE RADIO AND TELEVISION IN AFRICA

### THE CASE OF NIGERIA

The pages which follow contain the results of a research conducted in Nigeria between July and August 1968 concerning the actual status of the radio and television in the country.

Presented with the fascinating prospect of studying the problem of communication in Africa on a wider scale, I preferred the more modest way of referring to what happens in one single country.

Basically it was a question of choosing between a theoretical discussion, - which in spite of the studies accomplished and the statistical repertoires, often lacks the essential data - and a discussion which springs from the concrete reality of some stations which nevertheless might be meaningful in a more general situation.

I chose the latter way and having concluded the research, I am convinced that it presented its advantages.

One of these is that of realising the numerous and serious limitations to which the African communicators are subject, and therefore, find themselves in the position of judging their activity with realism.

The direct observation of the facts reveals, for example, that the scarcity of programs aimed at the development of the country depends more from the want of technical equipment, the lack of specialised personnel and the regime of rivalry between stations, rather than from the lack of awareness of the functions which the means of communication have to support an evolution restrained by strong group resistance.,

It also appears evident, to cite a problem of television scheduling, that the amount of western TV films which crowd the African screens will lessen only the day in which television stations cease to suffer from the actual financial restrictions, and only when some imported programs cease to cost a tenth of those locally produced.

Another advantage is that of realising that the activity of a radio and television organisation lives and develops daily with the personnel and the experiences it has, and that one cannot expect from one day to the next

leaps of quality.

One cannot pretend, for example, that television stations born prematurely, and forced at the moment more to survive than to develop will succeed also in immediately finding originality in the heart of African peoples.

In other words that they will succeed in uncovering, in their oral tradition and in the written literature of their new authors, not only the contents, but the manner of narrating, the rhythms, the sense of space and time which belong to their own culture.

The method of focusing one's attention on what happens in a particular country can, in short, guarantee some results.

That the research conducted in one nation would be indicative of the problems that communication meets in Africa, it was necessary to find a nation which had fundamental characteristics similar to those of other areas of the Continent and whose radio-television stations had overcome the experimental stage.

It was necessary to find a country geographically vast and of varied density of population, which would allow one to control the efficiency of the signals in the urban areas and their possibility of reception over greater distances; it was necessary to find a country which for its ethnic, linguistic and religious pluralism would test the sense of democracy and responsibility, as well as the ability of scheduling the programs, and, possibly, a country with a system of communication which was not monopolised, and which, therefore, could allow one to observe the interference and the reciprocal conditioning of the various stations.

The nation which, on account of its vastness and its ethnic pluralism, corresponded to these requirements was Nigeria. It corresponded also for the articulated system of its radio-television stations.

In fact in Nigeria there are four radio-television organisations operating; one whose main aim is that of serving the public, whose network has a national extension and whose finances are supported mainly by the Federation; and the other three are of a local character and of a commercial tendency.

It appeared to me then that the choice was obvious and that Nigeria would be ideal to observe, microscopically - and with some years of anticipation in respect to other African countries which present similar characteristics - the phenomena of the growth of radio and television, the various tendencies of program scheduling, and the ways of co-existence of mass media which have different finalities and are immersed in a context of users who differ greatly.

It goes without saying that this research is only a first approach to the problems of communication in Africa, and so it does not presume to say anything definitive nor exhaustive.

The reason for this is not only due to my limited preparation and the impossibility of a longer stay in Nigeria, but also to the uncertainties of this type of studies, which is only beginning, and to the difficulties of conducting it in such a vast country, during a period of war, and in a nation which, in spite of its progress, is still under developed.

I will, however, try and overcome the temptations to artistry. Africa has remained for the Western public the Africa of the explorers. Journalists and writers have, therefore, the duty to return home with descriptions of a continent rich in romanticism and sensations. But the Africans are fed up with this stereotyped image and they do not hesitate in saying so. "It is the fault of the journalists- said to me one of the television producers of Lagos - if people in Europe still have the impression that we are strange human beings with tails living in trees". I therefore tried to keep this in mind.

## II

### BROADCASTING AND OTHER MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

An examination on the radio in Nigeria should begin from the fact that the local population listen to it in a way and with an interest that to us Europeans seems incredible: journalists, government officers, missionaries, people met by chance were all in agreement with this phenomenon.

And, on the other hand, it is sufficient to live in that country for a short time to have an audible confirmation. I was stationed at Kaduna in the vicinity of the market place, and I will always remember how I was awakened up with a start at six in the morning by the radios which were going full blast.

In many poor homes, I was told, there is nothing else but a mat and a radio; many buy themselves one before they even buy a pair of shoes, because a transistor radio has become a status symbol and also because in economic difficulties it is accepted in place of cash.

It is almost impossible to know exactly the number of radio sets in use in Nigeria, and I met with insurmountable difficulties in my efforts to find this out. I am not prepared to accept as positive the estimate put forward by the Ibadan radio which gives the number as two million, because this was based on false data;<sup>1</sup> it is however significant that the new

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<sup>1</sup> .- The first reason for this difficulty is the generalised use of not paying the license fees, fixed at 10 / for the radio and at 2 pounds for television. (Information confirmed at the Central Post Office, by the officers in charge of these payments).

The direct research made on the users does not bring any results and in this case because they are afraid of having to pay the mentioned fee. In 1961, however, an experienced advertising agency, Lintas W.A. Ltd. of Lagos, conducted a survey which yielded this result: in 1961 the radio sets were 387,000. But, from that time on, this agency did no further inquiries, (confirmed by its Media-Manager Rami Adeoyo).

I received trustworthy figures from the "Federal office of Statistics, External Trade Branch", which registers the number of imported radio sets. I will quote the statistics from 1958:

1958: 42,520 - 1959: 60,000 - 1960: 124,970 - 1961: 119,347 - 1962: 91,634 - 1963: 71,928 1964: 125,520 - 1965: 126,345 - 1966: 57,924 - 1967: 99,274. The total, therefore, of radio sets imported in those years was 920,462.

In addition to these individual receivers, there are 30,000 loud-speakers

sets, imported or assembled in the country every year, amounted almost to 200,000 sets, at least in the most recent years.

If one then takes into account the fact that a serious radio audience survey assigns an average of 7.3 listeners per set, one gets an idea of the vast listening audience.

The reasons for this success are certainly the same as those used in Western countries to explain <sup>2</sup> the expansion of the radio in Europe between the two wars. But there are others, linked with some traditions of the African civilisation and to the privileged conditions under which the radio operates in those countries, which will better illustrate this phenomenon.

I refer first of all to the fact that the African cultures are spoken and not written: the history of the village, the account of ancient heroes, the mythical legends of the gods of the place, the stories with a moral have always been transmitted orally by the chiefs and the elders; and the radio, which continues this spoken communication, finds an eagerness in its listeners which is not to be found among our listeners.

More than that, the radio substitutes, in the transmission of its messages, traditional systems such as the drums and public criers which had notable obstacles in the complexity of their codes, in the modification

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distributed in 120 towns and villages of the West and Middle-West, linked up by wire to the Rediffusion transmitters. In this way we reach a primary total of 1,000,462 radio receivers.

Besides, there exists in the Country four firms, which assemble radio sets importing the spare parts from abroad. Here my research had to come to a halt, because the Economic Statistics Division began to collect these data from 1966 only. From July to December 1966 the sets assembled in the Country were 48,314 and reached 115,338 in 1967.

These are the data at our disposal and from here one could make some estimates; but then again one would have to be a prophet to know just how many of these sets are out of working order and if their number can be compensated by that of transistor radios smuggled into the Country.

The estimates made by the WNBS, which put the amount of sets at two million should be taken with a grain of salt; and this because they used a false datum, which consisted of taking into account the potential capacity of the firms to produce yearly half a million sets, rather than taking into consideration the effective production of sets, certified for 1967 as 111,338 units. (Cf. *Digest of WNBS 1967 Radio Audience Survey*, Ibadan, 1968).

<sup>2</sup> - Cf. AKINSOLA A. AKIWOWO, *A Statistical Report of the Radio Audience Survey in the Lagos and Western States of Nigeria*, 1967, NISER, Ibadan, Dec. 1967, p.85; total percentage referred in the above quoted Digest.

of the texts on the part of the various intermediaries and in the limits of vocal possibility. And it substitutes them bettering them, with the ease of the spoken word, with the immediate relation between speaker and listener and with the technical expansion of the human voice.

There is also a third reason which explains the vastness of the radio audience in Nigeria, and it is precisely this, that the radio does not find in other means of communication, any rival who could effectively compete with it.

I carried out a personal research at the Ministry of Information regarding the extension of the daily newspapers in Nigeria. The results of this research I then checked with an English advertising agency which operates in Nigeria, and it resulted that-after the political disturbances with the stoppage of the papers of the East and two of those of Lagos - all the dailies of the country did not sell more than an average of 270.000 copies.<sup>3</sup>

The press in Nigeria began with great disadvantages over the radio: 1.-very few can read or write; 2.- the press can't express itself in various languages, as the radio does; 3.- the transport of newspapers in an immensely vast country, with an insufficient amount of roads, which are made even more precarious in the rainy seasons is a real problem; 4.- the vast majority, an estimate of 84%<sup>4</sup> of the population live outside the towns, and finally a most obvious difficulty, which is that of having to be paid 3d

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<sup>3</sup> - Cf. *Newspapers and Magazines Registered in Nigeria*, March 1968, not periodical bulletin, mimeographed, edited by the Ministry of Information. Check on newspapers circulation Alistair Watson, Managing Director NIDA Press Services Ltd., London. Ordinarily there exists the tendency in the editors to raise, for advertising agencies, the figures of the copies printed.

But it is also true that it is difficult to establish the average values, because of the variations of circulation, due to changes in political and seasonal happenings. In this way a headline of exceptional importance can increase the number of copies of the "Daily Times" - the most widely read Nigerian daily - from an average 120,000 copies to half a million; and viceversa, the rainy season with its useless roads and the relative delays, or with the impossibility of bringing the paper to farout towns, can decrease the copies to less than 100,00. (Cf. *The Daily Times of Nigeria Provisional Sales Figures*, internal register of sales).

The geographical distances is another great drawback in the distribution of the dailies. In order that the "Daily Times" of Lagos may reach Kaduna in time to compete with the local dailies, the Northern edition must be ready at 5 p.m. the evening before, and nevertheless it will reach Kano in the early afternoon, in an hour in which it will be impossible to sell; and at Maiduguri, two days after the date of publication. (Source: Distribution Director of the "Daily Times").

<sup>4</sup> - Declaration of J.D. Abiagon, Acting Assistant Chief Statistician, Demography. For urban areas they mean towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants.

every, day, which, although it is very little for the editor, is too much for the pockets of the average Nigerian.

In these conditions newspapers are not in a position to compete with the radio.

Neither is the Cinema, since during the whole of 1967 it registered only 147,346 movie goers <sup>5</sup>. It is true that these figures should be joined to those of the spectators present at the film projected by the various mobile government "Film Units" in the various villages <sup>6</sup>; but this is rather a sporadic and temporal exposition to the movies and one cannot say that it is in a position to compete with radio listening.

In a very remote future the television will be capable of drawing listeners away from the radio; but for the moment television sets in the country are, according to credible estimates, only 37,000, concentrated in the larger towns and only among the more affluent circles.

A comparative examination of conditions in which the various mass media operate, reveal that the radio takes the lion's share.

And we have a final confirmation in the results of a sociological research, by the International Labour Organisation which took place in a pilot area of West Nigeria.

In the villages with a population less than ten thousand, 67% of the people questioned had never read a newspaper; 80.7% had never seen television; while only 21% had never listened to radio. In the towns of the

<sup>5</sup> - Statistics supplied by the "Field Publicity Section of the Federal Film Unit". The figures of the annual attendance in the last year are as follows:

|                        |                        |             |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 1965: Boys: 113,941    | 1966: Boys: 91,325     | 1967: Boys: |
| 64,91                  |                        |             |
| Adults: <u>102,154</u> | Adults: <u>109,099</u> | Adults:     |
| <u>82,43</u>           |                        |             |
| Total: 221,095         | 200,424                |             |
| 147,84                 |                        |             |

Countries from which the 229 imported films come: USA 147 (49.2%) – Italy 66 (22.4%) – India 57 (19.1%) – France 11- Great Britain 8 – Japan 3 – Greece 2 – Other countries 5. (Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs authority responsible for film censorship).

<sup>6</sup> - Cf. *Unesco Statistical Yearbook*, 1966, to be updated with these data relative to the number of Mobile Films Units: 1965 = 13; 1966 = 21; 1967 = 7. (Source: Federal Film Unit).

same area - Ifo, Otta, Ilaro -, although remaining on the same value level, the percentage of people who had never seen television or read a paper, the number of those who had never listened to radio decreased, respectively to 4%, to 11% and to 6% <sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> - Data supplied by D. Calcott of ILO, Acting Chief of the "Department of Economic Planning and Social Development", Western Nigeria. The fact that the ILO is not involved with the world of communication and that it is expert in sociological researches, lends credibility to the seriousness of the survey.

### III

## HISTORY STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE VARIOUS RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS

The arguments which we will now put forward demand a detailed illustration of the four Radio television systems in the country.

Some of the differences in the criteria used for program planning are in fact explained by the structural, technical and economical characteristics of the organisations in charge of transmission, rather than in an actual difference in basic principles in those responsible for these communications.

The oldest of the organisations operating In Nigeria is the "National Broadcasting Corporation"(NBC) of the capital; inaugurated in 1951 as an independent service by the BBC of London with authorisation to produce its own programs.<sup>8</sup>

The actual outlook of the Corporation goes back to an Ordinance of 1956 - which established the administrative structure, its aims and its finance – and to an amendment to that Ordinance which joins it more closely to Government politics.

The corporation is directly dependent on a board of Governors appointed, except for the persons who are members by virtue of office, by the Governor -General in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Information.<sup>9</sup>

The possibility of Government interference relies upon a further article, inserted into the Ordinance in 1961, where it is written: “The Minister of Information may, after consultation with the Corporation, give the Corporation general or specific directions on matters of policy or matters appearing to the Minister to be of public interest, and the Corporation shall give effect to all such directions”.<sup>10</sup>

The Corporation is bound to produce “as a public service and in the

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<sup>8</sup> - The information of historical character are taken from a book written by the last British Director of the NBC: J.K. Mace, *Broadcasting in Nigeria*, University Press, Ibadan, 1964.

<sup>9</sup> - *NBC Amendment Act 1961*, which substitutes section 5 of the Ordinance.

<sup>10</sup> - *Ibid.*, number 4, relative to section 10, 3 a of the 1956 Ordinance.

interest of the Federation, independent and impartial broadcasting services”; It is moreover duty bound to see that all the services “when considered as a whole, reflect the Unity of Nigeria as a Federation, and at the same time that adequate expression is given to the culture, characteristics, affairs and opinions of people of each Region and of the Federal Territory”, that is of Lagos.<sup>11</sup>

In fact the NBC actually includes: one station situated in the capital Lagos, which broadcasts a National program;<sup>12</sup> four Regional stations which put out their own programs as well as the news and other programs of interest from the National station; seven Provincial stations, which operate on small transmitters in the medium wave with the purpose of bettering reception and guaranteeing the possibility of local programs to the inhabitants of as many other towns in the North.<sup>13</sup>

The system that was adopted - although it is still compromised by the limitation of power of some transmitters - corresponds to the particular demands of Nigeria; it does in fact take into account the varied density of the population in the diverse geographical areas; it allows a diversity of programs which is indispensable in a country with a mosaic of tribes,

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<sup>11</sup> - *NBC Ordinance*, 1956, Part III, 10, 3.

<sup>12</sup> - *Ibid.*, Part IV, section 19; section 24, I.

<sup>13</sup> - TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT:

National Programme: (Lagos) 100 kW, 20 kW, 10 kW on short wave; 10 kW on medium wave. The transmissions on the two wavelengths are common in the less rich countries, with a greater extension and a varied density of population. In fact the short wave, which utilises the successive reflections of sound between the earth and the ionised strata of the atmosphere, though creating an unstable and precarious signal, are apt to overcome greater distances. The medium wave, instead, on a horizontal diffusion, covers a restricted area, but since it guarantees a good quality signal, is used to transmit the programmes in the cities and surrounding areas. (Cf. Fr. Bebey, *La radio diffusion en Afrique noire*, Paris, 1963, p. 78-84).

Western Programme: (Ibadan) 10 kW on short wave; 10 kW and 0.25 kW on medium wave.

Northern Programme: (Kaduna) 20 kW, 10 kW, 7.5 kW on short wave; in addition to these there are other smaller transmitters on the medium wave to guarantee, locally, limited programmes and a better reception in the major cities of the North: 1 kW at Kano; 1 kW at Kaduna; and 250 Watts at Jos, Sokoto, Ilprin, Maiduguri, Zaria, and Katsina.

Programme of the Middle West: (Benin) 10 kW on short wave; 5 kW on medium wave. (source: L.A. Jinadu, Assistant Chief Engineer, NBC, Lagos).

cultures, languages, religions and levels of education; and it tends at the same time to overcome - through the uniqueness of its direction and the possibility of interchange between the centre and the peripheral areas - the danger of a spiritual and political dispersion of the Nation, over and above that of the separation of the communicators from their audiences.

If the system outlined by the Ordinance of 1956 had been able to work at once<sup>14</sup> as it works today - it is probable that other three independent radio and television organisations would never have arisen alongside the NBC.

But as it was, things went differently and it is worthwhile to point out why. It is not the case here to get mixed up in political considerations, but I happen to think that if the Nigerians had had to struggle for independence rather than receive it as a consequence of the evolution of international events, the Nation would have had a better start.

I mean that if the leaders belonging to the various ethnic groups had had to struggle for long years with common sentiment and for the same ideal, the strength of the tribal loyalties would perhaps have been less imposing and the political parties would have arisen not according to the tribal divisions, but under the attraction of a particular ideology.

Instead, at the dawn of independence the three main Nigerian parties reflected the three great tribes which dominated in the three Regions in which the Federation was divided politically; we had therefore the Action Group, which represented the Yorubas of the West; the NPC which joined the Hausas and the other tribes of the North, and the NCNC which was the expression of the Ibos of the East.

This absence of national cohesion in the political groups which was the source of many disturbances that arose some years after independence, was also the source of the proliferation of the Nigerian broadcasting and television organisations.

These were the years in which the NBC was putting into practice, with great difficulty and therefore slowly, the program set out by the Ordinance.

One had to try and create the bases of the future activity; it was necessary to assure oneself of the land in the more suitable areas, in the various towns, sufficiently equipped with electric power; one had to pay particular attention to the constructions and provide the stations with the indispensable technical equipment, in spite of recurring lack of funds; it

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<sup>14</sup> - The service of the NBC in the North could only begin in August 1961; and that for the West in January 1962.

was imperative to prepare a Nigerian staff which would substitute in all sectors and at all levels the personnel loaned out by the BBC.

In the meantime it was necessary also to continue the broadcasting under the pressing request to dedicate more time to Regional transmissions and to increase the use of the vernaculars in the news bulletins.

All this took place under the constant preoccupation to safeguard impartiality between the pressures of Regional Governments and the various parties, a most difficult task. There is no reason to be surprised if the NBC, under these conditions succeeded, in spite of all its efforts, to displease everyone.

“In such a domestic situation” - said the Minister of Information at that time in Parliament defending the NBC from the protests of the four Regional Governments – “it is unlikely that a wife would be able to satisfy the demands of each of these husbands”.<sup>15</sup>

The truth is - and it is the last British General Director to say so- that this slowness in satisfying all the demands was not only due to an objective order of difficulties, but also to an incapacity of the Corporation to broaden its vision in more regional and elastic terms.

The NBC had inherited from the BBC an excessively centralising administrative structure, which, although valid for Britain, was absolutely inadequate for a country like Nigeria, where the population was separated by great distances, cultures, languages, customs, remote history, politics ... and is united only by the very meagre bridge of English, the memory of a period of colonialism, and a fragile aspiration for a united country.

If one considers the poor autonomy initially left to the peripheral stations, and joins this to the fact that the direction of the Corporation was at Lagos, a sophisticated metropolis which is not even geographically central, one can understand the criticisms which poured into the NBC.

They accused it of not having an attentive ear to the voices of the whole Federation, of being dominated by Lagos thinking, of being unsympathetic to the Regional requirements and of dedicating more time to foreign news than to internal affairs.

The Regional Governments, then, considered the NBC an instrument of the Federal Government and held that they lacked any means of information, which was indispensable to illustrate their objectives and to support their initiatives.

In the end, moved by this local spirit and by the insufficiency of the

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<sup>15</sup> - Op. Cit. J.K. Mace p. 68

NBC - and evidently by a miscalculation of what it means to run a radio-television station – one of these Regional Governments, that of the West, decided to establish its own station in the capital of the zone, Ibadan.

The other Regional Governments considered that they had to do likewise and in the space of only four years, from 1959 to 1962, there arose and began to operate three radio and television stations: the WNBS at Ibadan, which assumed the motto “First in Africa”; ENBS at Enugu, in the East, which having been outdone in speed had to resort to the motto “Second to none”; and the RKTV, in the North, which being the last arrived, discretely declined to decorate itself with any titles.

At the time of my journey in Nigeria, 20.th of July to 10.th of September 1968, even although the Biafran troops had retreated a long distance from Enugu, the Eastern station was not working and its staff had probably all scattered; I did not consider it useful to go there – on the other hand it would have been practically impossible – to put together direct information and valuations.

Consequently I limited my study to the stations that I was able to visit, that is namely the NBC, the WNBS at Ibadan and the RKTV in the North.

We will try and find out later if the radio stations are the mouthpieces of the Governments; but it is a fact that the law attributes to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Information of the Western State ample powers <sup>16</sup>, which in a moment of crisis of democracy could be very dangerous.

The law of WNBS establishes in fact that the members of the Board of Governors should be appointed by the Minister; it imposes on said Minister the duty to give the Corporation “ general or special directions as to the policy to be followed” and determines the cases in which the station must broadcast Government declarations. <sup>17</sup>

Where the WNBS differs greatly from the Federal Organisation is in the regional approach and its finance, which has to be commercial.

It appeared to me that the regional approach was greatly overcome, for a number of reasons, difficult to explain, but among which I would

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<sup>16</sup> - The 27<sup>th</sup> of May 1967 Gen. Gowon substituted the former division of Nigeria, in four Regions plus the Federal Territory, with a subdivision in twelve States.

<sup>17</sup> - *Western Nigeria Government Broadcasting Law*, 1959, sect. 4, subs. 1; and respectively sect. 10 and 11 (In “Supplement to the Western Region Gazette”, num. 49, vol. VIII, October 29<sup>th</sup> 1959).

include: the fact that the Yorubas are no longer part of the opposition; the reactions against the recurring attempts of regional secession;<sup>18</sup> the incredible sense of national unity caused by the war against Biafra - even although under the pressure of an extremely concentrated propaganda -; and, last but not least, the commercial character of the station.

The General Manager of WNBS told me: "if we preached local politics, our business would go down. We have already undergone this experience in 1965; the people were literally tearing the loudspeakers from the walls and returning them to the rediffusion authorities. Then again our programs reach other Regions, and also here there are people of other places. No. This policy is not practicable; if we do this, we would only turn the audiences against us. It would be like cutting our own throat".

The other vocation of WNBS, namely its commercial side, is, as one can see also from this affirmation, very far from being finished. And, on the other hand, there are a thousand and one signs which show this fact: from the dynamism of its officers, to the fact that they have commissioned an expensive audience survey, the results of which show that theirs is the most popular station in the West; from the fact that they have installed at the heels of the opposing NBC station a television transmitter, capable of covering the appetising area of Lagos,<sup>19</sup> to the very striking commercial criteria of their scheduling.

The Government, on its part, - as well as the law providing for the establishment of the station - encourages it in this direction, progressively diminishing its grant to the tune of 10% at every financial year.

To the efforts of the WNBS there correspond good results: in the last three years the station has doubled its income on advertising;<sup>20</sup> and it would become financially independent if the television had not revealed itself - right from the start and against all the provisions of the station authorities - to be an abyss for money, and if at the same time, giving blow for blow, the NBC had not in its turn inaugurated its own television station at Lagos, and so there were two of them beginning to fish in that meagre pool of publicity

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<sup>18</sup> - OKOI ARIKPO, *The Development of Modern Nigeria*, Penguin African Library, 1967, p.145.

<sup>19</sup> - TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

Ibadan: 10 kW, 10 kW, on short wave; 10 kW on medium wave. Abafon: 10 kW on medium wave for the coverage of Lagos. Future plans: 50 kW on medium wave at Abafon and at Ibadan; plus 10 kW on short wave at Ibadan.

<sup>20</sup> - Source: Commercial Director of the Lagos Offices.

which is proper to a developing country.

The fact remains that in nine years of existence the radio showed that it was capable of maintaining itself and of realising some profits, no matter how small; while the television succeeds in paying a mere 37.5% of its expenditures, having to extend a hand for the other 62.5% to the owner, that is the Government of the Western State.<sup>21</sup>

There is no reason to be surprised if in these conditions, and in the still worse conditions of the beginning, the Coker Inquiry, which had the technical and financial co-responsibility in the business, withdrew after only two years.

What is instead surprising is the resistance, in similar situation, of the triple ménage of the other independent station, that is the TKTV situated at Kaduna in the North.<sup>22</sup> 50% of the shares of this Company are held by the Government of the six states of the North, while the other half is divided equally between two British firms of the same branch of activity, that is the Electrical Musical Industries and Granada.

The British Chief Accountant of the Company is, as far as secrets are concerned, as safe as the Bank of England, and I was unsuccessful in my efforts to get anything out of him regarding the financial situation, not even in percentage form. I did however find out what was sufficient, and that is, that in a very near future the radio will be capable of covering its own expenses, while nothing of the sort can be foreseen regarding the television.<sup>23</sup>

The officers of this station nevertheless were much less preoccupied than the officers at Ibadan; evidently they don't have the sword of Damocles over their head, that of having to balance the budget within five years, as officers of the WNBS have.

The decision to establish a broadcasting and television station here, must have been taken in view of the service it would have provided and with full knowledge of the costs involved. In 1962, after the financial vicissitudes of WNBS, they had to know that the television wasn't a real

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<sup>21</sup> - Data calculated on the budgets of nine years of activity, up until March 1963 and supplied by the Chief Accountant of the WNBS.

<sup>22</sup> - TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT: this station disposes of a transmitter on medium wave of 350 kW, which is the most powerful in Black Africa. And in addition to this, 10 kW on short wave; 10 kW on medium wave. A new short wave 10 kW transmitter should have been installed in 1969.

<sup>23</sup> - Declaration of the Secretary to the Company and Chief Accountant, W.H. Handley.

bargain, and they were certainly aware that their coverage area was less advantageous commercially than that of its sister station in the West.

Anyway, it is quite indicative that the officers I interviewed insisted on the finality of the Company as being of public service. They also rejected the idea of scheduling the programs in a commercial way.

Before concluding this description, and since I touched on the financial situation of the Regional Government –owned stations, it would be helpful to say a word regarding the pockets of the NBC.

For nine years it remained aloof of all types of publicity, but in 1960 it gave in and was allowed to become, although only partially, commercial.

The NBC – situated as it is in the Capital of the Federation and in the major towns of the country, rich in programs diversified according to the different areas and to the various languages of the territory – had, and has, also in this sense strong possibilities of success.

But it is a success which it must pay dearly, because it means multiplying personnel, seats, technical equipment, and the costs of energy. It is not therefore surprising that the NBC radio is far from being capable of covering its costs – has happens for Regional Governments – owned stations – and that it has to have recourse for 92% of its balance to the subsidies of the Federation.

This is, on the other hand, a Corporation with a clear purpose of public service, and the Federation intervention is justified.

Less clear, in the field of social justice, is the situation that all of the Nigerians have to pay the costs of a television, like that of Lagos, which can be seen almost exclusively by the inhabitants of the Capital.<sup>24</sup>

But this is a problem which we will tackle immediately.

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<sup>24</sup> - Source of the percentages: Chief Accountant of the NBC.

## IV

### TELEVISION IN DIFFICULTY

Ten years ago Nigeria was the first to start a television service in Black Africa <sup>25</sup>. To-day it has four stations, transmitting autonomous programs and it may be worthwhile to try and find out the results of the operation.

It may be worthwhile, too, because other twenty countries of the Continent <sup>26</sup> have followed Nigeria's example, and clues could be deduced by the Nigerian case on what is presumably going to happen elsewhere.

Meanwhile one thing is clear, namely that Nigerian television stations cannot afford to pay their own expenses and their finances won't get better as long as a further broadening of the Country's economical activities will not take place, and as long as the number of the receivers are not sufficient to assure the advertisers an adequate number of customers.

Here we touch the painful aspect of the situation. According to a trustworthy estimate of the WNBS, the number of television sets in Nigeria should be around 37,000 units, distributed in such a way: 27,000 in Lagos and in the Western State; 6,000 in the East, and 4,000 in the North. <sup>27</sup>

Even taking into account the fact that - because of the extended structure of the African family and the habits of hospitality proper to Nigerian custom <sup>28</sup> - the average of viewers per receiver is high, averaging

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<sup>25</sup> - The expression "Black Africa" is commonly used to exclude the countries which overlook the Mediterranean.

<sup>26</sup> - Cf. World Radio T.V. Handbook, 1968.

<sup>27</sup> - My direct research came to a halt once again in the office of Mr. Ambah, Head of "Economic Statistics Division", who did not have at his disposal the data regarding the number of televisions assembled in the country. The way in which the WNBS arrived at its estimates is the combined system of considering the official statistics and of checking in the larger stores of the various towns on the number of sets sold. The NBCTV and RKTU declared, through their directors, slightly higher figures. But the fact that some sets have been functioning for ten years, in the tropics, and without a sufficient system of maintenance leads to prudence.

<sup>28</sup> - The habit of receiving one's neighbours for a television show is quite a common practice. It seems that only the well-to-do, living in isolated quarters surrounded by gardens, evade this custom.

nine people per set, one should recognise that 37,000 television sets divided among four autonomous stations is not a proportionate sum.

It does not help to console oneself with the consideration that Nigeria comes second only to Rhodesia for the number of television receivers; this only means that elsewhere things become even worse, and so the remarks which we shall make will prove to be even more valid for other African countries to the South of Sahara.

The officers, whom I spoke to, were aware of the disproportion between costs and results. The WNBS Controller of programs told me clearly that having installed television at this particular period had been a mistake; a mistake made for the sake of prestige, namely for having seen television as a symbol of the progress made by the country.

To-day the Government, though covering the financial deficit of the services, does not facilitate an expansion of television use.

If the nation spends all that money it is obvious to think that it does so in view of the functions of the television in the public service. But it is obvious as well that the television can perform its task of public service only if there is an adequate number of people sitting in front of the television screen. But statistics tell us that such a public virtually is non-existent.

And this is so, among other reasons, because television sets, overpriced because of import taxes, are too costly.

The eventual buyer of a foreign set pays 100 per cent customs duty on its original price. If, instead, he decides to buy a television assembled in the Country, things are not much better, because the local firms – which pay, according to the customs tariffs, 33.33 per cent of the cost of the spare parts and 5 per cent for excise duties – finish by putting it up for sale approximately at the same price of the imported ones.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> - For completeness I will add other data:

#### IMPORTATION RESTRICTIONS:

Nigeria practices a varied policy in importation. It demands an import license, given by the "Licence Committee" of Lagos, for all the goods coming from Japan, Hong Kong, Macao and from the communist countries excluding Yugoslavia; a license for some products from the dollar area countries, from Holland and from all other countries which are not part of the Commonwealth.

The importation of all the products connected with the radio and the television (radio and TV transmitters and receivers; gramophones, tape-recorders and radiograms) are subject to further restrictions; from January 1968 a license is required for the import of these articles, no matter which country they come from. (Cf. Federal Gazette, n.5, vol. 55, 18 Jan. 1968 and officers of the Ministry of External Trade).

Under these conditions a receiver ends up costing between 85 to 117 Nigerian pounds, a sum which - just to give a rough idea - is higher than the annual salary of an unskilled labourer.<sup>30</sup>

The television, therefore, becomes a privilege of a few well-to-do, who, after all, being what they are, have had the possibility of education and for whom the television is simply a pastime.

And here the problem takes on a different light and touches on those principles of social justice which we have mentioned above. It concerns an idea expressed right in Lagos during a congress, held there in 1964, on the institution and development of television in Africa.

Jan Darcy said in his report: "It is not right that the inhabitants of a developing Country should be forced to pay higher taxes to allow the financing of a television service, whose use is a prerogative of a few privileged people. If the objectives of such a service are restricted to the entertainment of particular groups rather than to the whole population the cost of this entertainment should not be paid by the majority who cannot make use of it."<sup>31</sup> Experience, as one can see, is gifted with prophecy.

Such an objection of a moral character could break down if it were

#### CUSTOM DUTIES

No custom duties are imposed on broadcasting equipment for radio and TV organisations.

Films, film scripts, slides, sound recording, newsreels, and similar visual and auditory material passed by the "Board of Censors" as being of educational, scientific and cultural character are free of taxes, as long as they are imported by broadcasting, educational or science organisations approved by the Minister.

Radio and television receivers: 100% of the costs.

Spare parts of these receivers 33.33% (Cf. Customs Tariff Act, 1965, n. 3, plus various amendments appeared in the "Federal Gazette" since 1965 onward.

All the films, excepting those quoted at n. 2, also imported by the radio and TV organisations pay 10% per foot.

#### EXCISE DUTIES (for locally produced goods)

The factories which assemble the radio and television sets pay 5% of the sets' cost, when the product is finished.

<sup>30</sup> - Prices exposed in the Kingsway UTC stores and in Niger Radio Shops, in May 1969.

The Nigerian pound note did not follow the devaluation of the English one. P.C. LLOYD writes that the annual salary of an unskilled labourer is 75 pounds. Cf. *Africa in Social Change*, London, 1967, p. 150.

<sup>31</sup> - JAN DARCY, *The Statutes and Financing of a TV Service*, p. 12; in "Meeting on the Introduction and Development of TV in Africa, Collection of the acts", Lagos, 21-29 September 1964.

only possible to demonstrate that the television fulfils the task of supporting the Nigerian scholastic system.

A system in expansion, but which suffers, precisely for this, of a chronic insufficiency both quantitative and qualitative of teachers, aggravated by the ease with which many of them change schools or abandon their profession for more interesting and worthwhile jobs.<sup>32</sup>

This in fact had been the most frequent motive put forward when they decided to establish the television at Ibadan; that of the possibility of enriching didactics with the glamour of the image and with the example of high level teaching.

But to-day it has been insinuated by some that to have at that time boosted that perspective was a trick in order to obtain what they wanted; and that that vocation if ever existed, has been betrayed.

These are criticisms which reflect a feeling of frustration which is understandable, but my impression is that the difficulties in which the scholastic televisions find themselves, flow more from the general situation of the country than from individual responsibilities.

If the scholastic television programs reach the screens of only 64 schools out of the 4992 of the West and of other 75 out of the 2872 of the North<sup>33</sup> – and if therefore there is disproportion between the expenses and the number of the pupils making use of the lessons<sup>34</sup> – this is due largely to

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<sup>32</sup> - The *Interim Report on Education in a Rural Area of Western Nigeria* by D. Calcott, ILO, reveals that 69.5% of the teachers of primary schools remain less than two years in the same school; and that 50% of the teachers of villages would change jobs if the occasion would arise.

<sup>33</sup> - The figures on the number of schools gifted with a television set were supplied by E.D.A. Adenig, Senior Education Officer, Audio-visual Aids Centre, Ibadan; and by Jibir H. Dukku, Head of School Broadcasting Unit, Kaduna. The number of schools was obtained by adding the data relative to the primary and secondary schools of the two ex – Regions referred in *Statistics of Education in Nigeria*, 1966, Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos.

A positive judgement demands instead the TV service for schools which the Ministry of Education and NBCTV transmit for the Federal District. And for many reasons: first of all because here the large majority of the schools are gifted with TV sets, and, furthermore, because the coverage of NBCTV reaches the whole territory; because the electric power network has a greater diffusion; and because the problems of maintenance are less serious than in other places. As far as the quality of the programmes is concerned, I received from the headmasters and the teachers, whom I interviewed, enthusiastic reports.

<sup>34</sup> - A very accurate account of the cost per student-hour was compiled by JACK LYLE in 1965: *Case Studies for Planners, educational television in Nigeria: Three Case*

the fact that the areas covered by television services are restricted, and to the circumstance that the electric power network is, in spite of its progress, still at its beginning.

From an accurate observation of the maps and from the data I was provided with, one can conclude that the NBCTV, for the technical characteristics of its transmission equipment, has a coverage which enables it to radiate its programs over the narrow strip of the Federal District and to reach the boundaries of the Western State. <sup>35</sup>(Population of the Federal District: 665,246) <sup>36</sup>

The RKTv of the North, which has a transmitter with an adequate tower at Jade - and the possibility of receiving and distributing signals by coaxial cable among three stations - can cover three crowded cities like Kaduna, Zaire, Kano and their own surroundings, for an extension of about 30 miles. (Population of the three cities: 611,912)

The WNTV of the West, with its transmitter of Ibadan, and with that of Abafon projected on Lagos area, covers - if B areas are also included in the calculations, where the pictures are not so clearly received - about a third of the Western State and the whole Federal District. These are densely populated areas, and if we put together the number of the inhabitants of the towns covered by WNTV, we reach the number of three and a half million. <sup>37</sup>

In order to redimension the figures of potential users of the three televisions, we should take into account - at least until the era of transistorised televisions worked by batteries - two facts connected to the

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*Studies*, UNESCO, I.I.E.P., Paris, 1967.

#### <sup>35</sup> - TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

NBCTV (Lagos) 40/8 kW (the first number is referred to video, the second to audio) Ch. 10. (Source: Assistant Chief Engineer, TV, at Akinyemi).

WNTV (C.C.I.R. system): Abafon (Lagos) 60/12 kW, ch.3; Ibadan 1,5/0,3 kW, Ch. 4. Future plans: Ibadan 50/10 kW, ch.4; Idominasi (for this coverage of Oshogobo and Ilhesa): 30/60 kW, ch.5. Data supplied by the Chief Engineer, R.O. Ifidon.

RKTv (C.C.I.R. system): Jaji: 10/2 kW, ch.4; Kano: 4/0,3 kW, ch.10; Kaduna: 100/20 Watts, Ch. 4 (Standby). Source: Chief Engineer, G.P.H. White.

<sup>36</sup> - Data supplied by the Central Office of Statistics, Demography Section, and corresponding to the census conducted from the 5th to the 8th of Nov. 1963.

<sup>37</sup> - Exactly 3,435,035. The number concerns only the towns with a population of over 20,000, for which it is the case of relating to television, given the characteristics of the electrical network.

availability of electric power.

The first is that this power - according to the data quoted by the last *Report of the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria, 1966-67* - is still not available in all urban centres. In the six States of the North, which are nevertheless in this respect the most disadvantaged, only 24 out of 70 towns have electricity.

The second is that in towns where power is available, links with private residences are limited. Actually the Report reveals that there are 52,894 consumers in the Lagos area; 47,332 in the ex-region of the West; and 28,958 in the ex-region of the North, which total 129,174 consumers.<sup>38</sup>

It is quite clear that at least for the time being the margin of extension of television sets faces well defined limits in Nigeria. An eventual temporary, suppression of the custom's duties on the receivers - similar to that granted with good results in Latin America - would certainly allow an acceleration in the spreading of television and therefore a financial benefit for the broadcasting stations, but would not obtain those miracles which some are waiting for.<sup>39</sup>

The great majority of the population would remain in any case excluded from the benefits of television, namely that 84 per cent belonging to the rural population, which is far from the possibility of being reached by power lines, as it is still far away from the possibility of benefiting from the advantages of development.

The Governments, responsible of having in the past created a television system which does not serve its purpose, and aware to-day that there exist much more serious needs than those of television, are forced to finance broadcasting, but at the same time they are morally bound to do it only to the extent that they allow the stations to survive.

In these conditions the organizations, on their part, are forced to

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<sup>38</sup> - Cf. *Electricity Corporation of Nigeria, Annual Report 1966- 67*, Lagos; Number of Consumers, p. 13. The data does not take into account the three States of the East, which are not considered in this study, and concern the residential links, excluding industrial and commercial ones.

Regarding this problem of electric power in the field of audio-visual aids, Cf. E. BARTOCCI, *Le rôle de l'énergie dans l'enseignement et l'information*, in *L'emploi des audio-visuels en Afrique*; Istituto Italiano per l'Africa, Quaderni d'Africa n.2, Cairolì, Como, 1966.

<sup>39</sup> - I refer to the declaration left to me by an important officers: "If the Government suspends the customs tariffs for five years and the televisions descend to 25 or 20 pounds sterling, we can guarantee that in five years the televisions would rise to two million".

close their eyes on the quality of the programs, and, what is worse, are induced to always aim in a commercial direction and to sacrifice their ambitions of expansion towards the interior, towards that vast shadowy area in which they could shine their light.

Certainly the quality of the programs is, sometimes, what it is. But It would be unreasonable to screw up one's nose in the name of one's own sophisticated concepts; as it would be unreasonable not to take into account the objective conditions where African television is operating.

Certain things, which at first sight seem to depend on unforgivable carelessness, when they are more closely viewed, reveal a different source, which may be, according to the moments, the precariousness of the technical equipment, the shortcomings of the staff and of rehearsal time, or the very peculiar habits of the local artists.

If pannings for example seem to be driven by waves, it may not be the cameraman's fault, but of the studio's floor which is badly levelled.

If you see some jumps in panoramic shooting, the reason may lie in the fact that the camera operator does everything on his own, and kicking, to free himself from the cables, has repercussions on his arm.

If the producer of a drama shoots like a producer of live sports, trying to run after the events which he can capture, it may be that he has to deal with an unforeseeable village amateur actors, playing impromptu. If these amateur actors reveal on the small screen mimic exaggerations, this is because they are used to act in the open, in front of a crowd; a crowd which, on the other hand, is not a concert audience.

If in a close-up of a drama there microphones appear on the table, it is because the majority of the programs are live transmissions, and there is no way of repairing these errors.

And if the cuts on the players of a musical group are not perfect, one must not forget that the local bands don't come with a sheet music, even though they have heard of it.

These and other faults of the kind do not obstruct the local programs to be followed with incredible interest. And, therefore, it is perhaps not the case to be shocked.

More warring instead appear certain choices made by the television organisations spurred on by economical necessities. I refer first, of all, to the places where the transmitters have been installed.

If television had to fulfil the duty of enlightening the masses, if it had to support education, it was obvious that the transmitters would have to be directed towards those minor urban centres which, though disposing of electric power, are less favoured in the sector of medical assistance and of

the institutes for education, more disadvantaged on the level of territorial mobility, more backward in the agricultural field, less taken care of in their religious aspirations, and less participant in politics.

For lack of television sets the local authority, might have been able to provide - as happened in certain Northern centres - by installing them in town halls. It would not have been a business, but the television, contributing to the development of the country, would have justified the money invested.

But it did not happen like this. The WNBS, following a calculation which at least economically seemed correct, placed its second transmitter not far from Lagos, unaware of the fact that, shortly after, the Federal radio as well would, and in Lagos itself, establish its own television service.

And so in the capital the public can choose between two channels, while elsewhere, in the evening, fifty million Nigerians look at the stars, while paying.

The inconveniences to which television stations with limited finances can be exposed are not only those of operating in more economically profitable areas rather than in those of major necessities, but also that of scheduling the programs in such a way as to capture maximum audience with minimum cost.

It is a system already experienced by countries of all continents, which avails itself of a simple mechanism, easy to learn. To be more explicit it consists of:

- cutting down the locally produced programs and increasing the series of foreign TV films;
- reducing educational programs in favour of entertainment;
- scheduling educational programs out of peak viewing periods.

We shall have the possibility of observing in the following paragraph what the tendencies of various organizations are regarding to transmissions aimed at the development. Here we will dwell upon the phenomena of foreign programs.

According to the calculations I made over the schedules related to the third term 1968 - after having seen many programs and having received direct information from those in charge - it turns out that NBCTV produces locally 42.4% of the television programs; WNTV, 38.3%; and TKTV, 33.3%.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> - NBCTV: weekly hours of transmission: 36,05', of which 15,20' local and 20,45' foreign.

WNTV: weekly hours of transmission: 33,15', of which 12,55' local and 20,20' foreign.

The percentage of local programs compared to other countries in Africa and to the conditions in which these televisions work, is very high. It is enough to say - to quote a case I know by personal experience - that television station of Sierra Leone succeeds in producing locally only "The News".

Nevertheless, if one considers the alienating effects that such an amount of foreign programs produce, the percentage is too low.

The directors of the three stations are intelligent people, far from being cynical, and seem to realise the position. A proof of this is the fact that the producers of Lagos feel the necessity of a local presentation of foreign programs for children, in order to help the little spectators understand them, receive some instruction from them or extract a moral lesson. Another proof of this is the will of all of them to progressively increase local transmissions. Here we are not evaluating people but things.

Things which are in this case an obstacle to good intentions.

The production of a musical program may cost the NBC of Lagos, just to pay the group, from 80 to 100 pounds. A dramatic play lasting an hour costs, with the expenses of costumes and scenery but without those of general costing, roughly 250 pounds.<sup>41</sup>

Whereas an hour of "Perry Mason", "The Avengers" or "The Big Valley" and similar programs, costs the NBC 25 pounds, which is one tenth of what it would cost to produce an hour of drama in its studios.<sup>42</sup>

RKTV: weekly hours of transmission: 27,30', of which 9,10' local and 18,20' foreign.

If we add to the programs produced by the TV organisations, also the scholastic programmes, the percentage of local productions would be higher. But these are transmissions produced by the Regional Ministries of Education and I did not think it correct to take them into account, even if the organisations supply the technicians and the equipment. "The News" was included in the calculation. For the children's programs of the NBC it was taken into account that during five items a week, only the introduction is local.

<sup>41</sup> - Figures supplied by the Chief Accountant of NBC.

The cost of local productions in WNTV are less for many reasons, such as the presence of theatre groups in the West, which is the kingdom of the Yoruba theatre, the lesser the expenses of transport and often the absence of accommodation expenses for the actors; the cost of living which is lower at Ibadan than at Lagos and, last but not least, the meagreness of the salary policy of this station.

Also the cost of the RKTV is less and this time because in the absence of professional actors in the North, the station organised some drama groups among the amateurs.

<sup>42</sup> - Cr. *NBC Television Film Inventory* (as of May 31, 1968), internal register; see Cost

But this is just the first obstacle to the expansion of local programs.

If the authorities of television would decide not to use any more Western productions, they would face the immediate necessity of having to increase their TV studios and the technical equipment <sup>43</sup>; they, would also stumble over the chronic lack of specialised personnel; they would have to explore urgently new areas of the indigenous cultures, <sup>44</sup> and think up further forms of transmissions for that devourer of creations and talents that is the television.

In spite of the fact that the television has been functioning for ten years, it seems impossible to overcome this series of difficulties.

The authorities of the Nigerian Stations therefore consider that they can follow the example of all the commercial stations, and can fill up the empty spaces of their schedules with foreign productions, as happens in Great Britain and in Australia.

This is the unfailing analogy made by those whom I interviewed, whenever I touched upon the subject. But there is a number of reasons, based more on intuition than on evidence, for which I think that the analogy does not hold and for which to continue in this way is probably wrong.

The Western populations have been rendered largely similar by a

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per Run.

#### <sup>43</sup> - TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT – PRODUCTION

The NBC consists of: two studios (m. 10 x 15; 12 x 20) with a precarious sound – proofing system, gifted with two cameras and one boom each; a van equipped for outside broadcasting and three video tape-recorders. (Source: Akinyemi, Assistant Chief Engineer).

The WNTV consists of: two studios (m. 6 x 9; 9 x 12), blind, sound-proofing, but with badly levelled cemented pavements; of another studio, very much reduced, for news and announcements. These three studios are also used by the radio service. It moreover has two cameras and booms per studio, which, however, they do not use because of limited space. (Source: L.O. Dare, Senior Engineer, studios).

The RKTv consists of two studios (m. 6 x 6 ; 10 x 13) with five cameras and two video- tape-recorders. The maintenance of technical material is quite good. (Source G.P.H. White, Chief Engineer).

<sup>44</sup> - The resources of religious and profane folklore, of popular theatre, of songs, dances and of stories are vast in Nigeria, but their immediate television use is impeded by the linguistic pluralism, by the cultural diversities which render some indigenous manifestations of a zone incomprehensible to the inhabitants of other geographical areas; by the levels in quality and, once more, by the scarcity of personnel and technical means.

common cultural origin, by the economic and political interaction through the centuries, by the assumption of the same values of the industrial civilisation, by the common experience given by territorial mobility and by the vicarious mobility obtained through mass media.

Whereas, when the same American film passes to the African screen it meets a public whose cultural and moral values are different from those presented in the original communication.

There has been no research about the effects of exposure of the Africans to programs destined originally for a Western public. So one cannot presume to say anything definite on the argument.

Eventual researches into this sector should, among other things, start from the fact that when one speaks of "African audiences" one tends to fall into a comfortable generalisation, to which a cultural homogeneity of the various peoples of the Continent does not correspond.

Similar research should, therefore, take into consideration, not only all the variables connected with the various types of programs, but also those relative to the public; like the various geographical areas, ethnic and cultural differences, various levels of education, various grades of exposure to the screen and to the Western way of life. Besides the variables of the social group influences and of the age and sex to which the spectators pertain.

While we await the accomplishment of this type of survey, one has to content oneself to peruse through those few indications at one's disposal, to interrogate those responsible for television and to put forward some hypothesis, which remain in a field of open opinion.

The first indication which has to be outlined is the preference of all Nigerian audiences for local productions, with an accentuated tendency to theatre performances and to humorous shows.

In Nigeria there does not exist a research centre which periodically ascertains the number of listeners and the degree of public acceptance; but this is a fact about which my hosts had no doubt, also because this is the kind of shows which fills up their living-rooms with neighbours.

It was, on the other hand, a preference to be taken for granted. These are productions wherein type or humour, language, social background, attitudes and behaviours are common to those of the viewers, and in which, therefore, the phenomena of projection and identification can become immediate.

Moreover - and here we may add to the transmissions mentioned above, the programs of music and variety, shows which enjoy large favour - we are dealing, basically with an extension through the technical means

of entertainment activities, very much a part of the culture of the people.

The elders stories, the songs, the dances, the improvised shows in the clear nights of the dry season, are among the things which stir up the homesickness of the urbanised Nigerians.

What happens inside them or better inside those recently urbanised, when the local show having finished and having been extracted from their atmosphere, they are plunged into a detective story, situated at the opposite cultural poles of humanity, nobody knows.

A scholar of the Syracuse University of New York tried to uncover this by installing a television set at Lalupon, an area in which television had never been seen. And it seems that he found that the levels of comprehension grow quite rapidly in the public. Unfortunately none of the television officers could tell me more about it or succeeded in finding the report.

Many spoke to me about the accentuated Western culturalisation in the towns, which would render much easier the assimilation of what is shown in our films; but some also told me that they couldn't see a film in peace being harassed by request of explanations from their relatives. Others told me that action films or the Indian ones of music and dances <sup>45</sup> are a success and they have spoken instead of our psychological films in terms of psychiatric pathology.

It is difficult to ascertain something when in the same house and around the same television there are: the head of the family who has studied in Europe, the grandfather who refuses the new world, the child who has been in mission schools and has become accustomed to European music, and the long lost cousin who has come from the village to find work.

The curiosity of knowing what the level of capacity of comprehension of these "cousins" becomes acute when, traveling around the suburbs of Lagos or through the markets of Ibadan one realises that these newly urbanised are legions and find that this is confirmed in the observations of sociologists.

It is impossible to say what happens when these people, who come from the village find themselves in front of a television thriller. One experience I had might give us some idea. I happened by chance one day to see the television together with two young men from the interior who had

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<sup>45</sup> - See the amount of American Westerns in the movie theatres, of Italian films (22.4% of the total) of a Roman, mythological and biblical milieu, and of Indian films (19.1%) which are on an average rich in colour, in dances and narrated with a very slow rhythm.

never seen it. They were showing a TV film, I think it was British, of the series "Dial 999". It was the story of a model who had stolen patterns from the fashion-house where she worked, by using a camera hidden in a medallion around her neck.

After various adventures the police intervened, sirens squealing, and with great use of radio telephones, and arrested the woman and her accomplice.

The show having finished, I spoke for a long time with the two young men and it turned out that -although one was a teacher and the other, one who had been at school and knew English – they had only understood that the characters of the film had indulged in "a lot of fighting".

The reason for this fighting, however remained a mystery. And it couldn't remain other than a mystery. In order to understand the film they should have known that the pattern of a dress in a Western society is an important thing, and that to have it beforehand means to beat competition on his own ground.

They lacked also the knowledge of things which for us are obvious. They knew for example what a camera was; but that it was possible to hide it in a medallion was just too much for their imagination. They had also seen the missionary using something similar to that used by the police in the film when he was preaching in church; but that the microphone could be used to speak between moving cars ... no, they couldn't fathom this.

This is only one case and one cannot base a theory on it. But it is a case which may help us to remember how complex may be - in themselves and in every latitude - those processes of selection and re-elaboration which should lead to the assimilation of the message, and how in these cases they can be further obstructed by other factors.

I am thinking of the distance of the interior categories of the film's author from those of the viewer; of his ignorance, sometimes, of the simplest components of the fact, which render precarious the comprehension of a complicated event as a detective story may be; and of the distractions of the viewer confused by a lot of new facts which appear exotic to him.<sup>46</sup> Not to mention other phenomena which seem proper to the

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<sup>46</sup> - See one of the conclusions of the anthropologist P. Morton-Williams, who conducted a survey on the reactions of four diverse rural groups of Nigeria to the films intended to promote development in the British colonies. One must pay attention that in this case the films were made in view of the rural public. "It may be assumed that when totally unfamiliar scenes are portrayed, the audiences will fail to understand much of what they see, but will give attention to any detail which may resemble the surroundings of their daily life" (p.44). And he advises the producers of these types of films: "since unfamiliarity of dress and gesture can be confusing and distract attention from faces, it

rural public of Nigeria, such as the inclination to allow themselves to be absorbed by the visual action, overlooking the commentary,<sup>47</sup> or the possibility that they may be led to associate ideas different from those of the Western communicator.<sup>48</sup>

The doubts on the possibility of understanding, which arise when one sees a Nigerian from the interior sitting watching a detective story, become obvious. But, after all, it is only the case of a detective story, that is of an action which has a logical development and which therefore is rationally controllable.

The perplexities become more serious when one has to do with such expressions as music, dance, humour, which imply cultural motives so deep as to be one with the experiences and ways of a people. Particularities perhaps describable, but not apt to be vitally assimilated, if not by few exceptionally open and broad minded people, and after a long exposure.

Since this phenomenon of incomprehension, regarding the expressive forms of people belonging to different cultures, exists for us as for the Africans, I could begin by quoting my experience.

It is a fact, and I confess it, that in the voices of the drums, in which the Africans perceive messages, calls and all the ranges of human sentiments I heard nothing but noise; in the dances where they mimed scenes of religious and profane life I could not see anything else but picturesque waving; and it is a fact also that sometimes I couldn't find a reason for the laughter of my hosts.

Certainly we are, on average, more ignorant on African affairs than are the Africans who have studied about our affairs. In some milieu moreover - through the mediation of just over a century of Christian hymns of European importation and through that more recent of Afro-Cuban rhythms - the Western music is accepted and in the entertainment places of

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seems probable that there should be very few principals and that they should be clearly differentiated from the other actors by the photography". In *Cinema in rural Nigeria (A Field Study of the Impact of Fundamental-Education Films on Rural Audiences of Nigeria)*, Ibadan, University College, p. 28. Year of the research: 1952.

<sup>47</sup> - Cf. Ibid.: "It seemed generally true of all films that it was the action, not the commentary, which held the attention and was remembered" (p.29).

<sup>48</sup> - Cf. Ibid.: "There is no reason to suppose that these 'habitual associations of ideas' are likely to be the same for all-non-European peoples. And on the contrary, experience has shown that they differ significantly among neighbouring tribes inhabiting quite small areas" (p.8). And he exemplifies with cases of cultures which associate illness to religious ideas.

the larger cities our type of dances are in vogue. All that which is European is snobbish, and modern.

But the resentment with which some people spoke to me of these imitations, the frequency with which these phenomena are made fun of on the television, lead one to think that the Western culturalisation in this field is accompanied by a sense of guilt. I will not then attempt to say if these things are accepted externally as an imposition of fashion or if actually they imply a vital assimilation.

Anyway, these are phenomena concerning some milieus of the larger cities and to look at Nigeria from these observation points could lead one into perspective errors. Outside paved roads it is rather probable that the Nigerian public react in front of our television shows of ballet and music in a way not much different from that with which I reacted in front of their affairs.

Under this profile it is significant that the radio stations of the interior, like the two in Kaduna broadcast local music, during entertainment programs.

One could within reason object to what we have said so far, that the television is an urban phenomenon and concerning the élite, and that, therefore, the motives for the perplexities expressed have less reasons to exist.

And truthfully – if one does not take into account the presence of community viewing centres in the North, the fact that the people living with the owner of the set and his neighbouring viewers may not belong to the élite, and if one set aside the future perspectives – the objection holds.

So far we have spoken of levels of comprehension concerning Western television programs and it is something which does not regard educated Nigerians.

In this case we deal with people living on the fence which divides African from European culture, and participating equally to what is peculiar to one and the other. It is something, after all, which one sees at first sight, because it implies all the manifestations of life: your host who speaks with you in English, answers the telephone in Yoruba or in Hausa; to-day he receives you in European dress, and to-morrow in the brightly coloured local costume; he eats western foods with a fork, and by hand those cooked the African way; he drinks whisky and beer, but if necessary switches to palm-wine; he acts as an officer in a Government building with an elevator, and spends the holidays in his village; he prays in a Christian church or at the mosque, but does not miss the festival of the goddess of the river.

Seeing the ease with which he changes from one way to another, one might say that he has at his disposal two souls and that to make them function alternatively, it suffices to switch on a secret button.

But the truth is more complex and bitter, because these two souls of his act contemporarily and are in conflict within him. If a motive recurs insistently in the young African literature<sup>49</sup>, it is this sorrowful ambiguity of a man between two civilisations.

One, archaic, but corresponding to his interior character; to it goes his nostalgia and he is moved to idealise it, as much as the remembrance of what it was becomes confused and vanishes in childhood.

The other, modern, joined to missionary work, colonialism and gulped in successive mouthfuls; a civilisation whose intellect knows almost everything, but whose heart does not understand the reasons. To it goes his realism, the consciousness that the process is not reversible and that one cannot stop. A civilization which he accepts, but not without remorse and not without resentment. As one accepts a rich bride whom he does not love.

This is the man who, in the evening, having turned on the television, allows himself to go into an imaginary universe, which comes from very far away, and which abducts him from his community, from his way of life and feeling. And he sails peacefully in this sea, he believes to have in hand the rudder of his ego, and is drifting far away from the banks of his native land.

When he will awake from the dream, he will be even further, in the open sea and he will delude himself that he is between two continents, that his panorama is more vast; but his raft will no longer be Africa nor yet Europe.

African novelists of the colonial period said, suffering, that they did not feel at home in their own country where they returned to after their studies in the universities of London or Paris. To-day writers are still too busy to speak of "the kicks in the mouth received from civilization" and of the showers of the "holy water on their cringing brows"<sup>50</sup>, to notice that

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<sup>49</sup> - The most noted Nigerian novelist, Chinua Achebe, may be assumed as a symbol of the attitude which characterises the elite of this country; an attitude which differs from that of the "cultural mulattos", Senghor style, -and the expression is his own- as from that of the angry anti-Westerns, David Diop style. An attitude which is both of nostalgia and of realism, and which was expressed by Achebe especially in *Things Fall Apart*, the history of the desegregation of the Ibo society, and in *No Longer at Ease*, which is the description of the dilemma of the elite who live between two different worlds.

<sup>50</sup> - See the beginning of *The Vultures*, a poem by David Diop: "In those days/ When civilisation kicked us in the mouth/ When holy water slapped our cringing brows..."

there is a danger also in that docile instrument, which friendly, insensibly and fatally, renders them foreigners in their own sitting-room.

The television, on the other hand, would help to accelerate a process already begun by a scholastic system made in the image and likeness of the British one; but would tend to operate in an area much more vast and delicate, such as that of moral values of a civilization.

The uncomfortable feeling which the Nigerian of the colonial generation experiences in front of two people kissing in our films is one of the signs, minimal, but more easily seen of the uneasiness which Africans, who live between two different judgements of behaviour, suffer.

The slackening of the values of the tribal society, and more often the total dispersion of that society, has discredited the pre-existent system of morality and religious and civil sanctions which prosecuted the transgressors. And this while the new values preached by Christianity and by Islam are not yet extended in all the surroundings which have undergone the phenomenon, and while at the same time have probably not penetrated deeply into the African soul.

The result of the contact between the indigenous cultures and the dominant Western culture, according to an opinion largely accepted and registered by Otonti Nduka, would be “the lowering of moral standards of both the indigenous and the foreign culture”.<sup>51</sup>

The perplexities which spring forth from a television scheduling based on programs largely imported, in a country whose system of ethical values is so compromised, are of a twofold nature.

They concern not only the discussed psychological effect of an exposure to shows of an immoral nature, but also those of an exposure to patterns of behaviour, which, ethically valid in the society that inspired them, appear immoral in the society that receives them.

I am thinking, for example, of the fact that some were upset by phenomena which pertained simply to the customs of a different civilization, as by the restricted structure of the Western family - seen as a sign of egoism - or to the circumstance that the dress of our women tended to show the bare legs, where instead Africans would find it more natural that the dress should leave the breasts uncovered.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> - OTONTI NDUKA, *Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background*, Oxford University Press, 1965, p.93.

<sup>52</sup> - Survey conducted by the sociologist P. Fougerollas among the students of the University of Dakar, where he was teaching. In *Modernisation des hommes*, Flammarion, Paris, 1967, p. 138: “Nous leur avons demandé ce qui leur déplaisait le

The Nigerian television authorities say that they don't take into consideration moral criteria in the choice of Western shows to be transmitted<sup>53</sup>, because they hold that the public are capable of distinguishing what pertains to white ethic from what should inspire their own behaviour.

But the complaints I heard against the phenomena imitating Western customs - from the urge to make money to the mini-skirt - , and the fact that the confusion in judgement, revealed in the case just quoted pertain to university students, allow one to think that one cannot put too much faith in this capacity to distinguish and choose.

Ever less when one thinks that Western behaviour appears to them connected to the prestige of culture, money and success.

In connection with this we call to mind a category of doubts which involves a different sector of living, that of consumption, but which springs once more from the same phenomenon of imitation. I refer to the perplexities expressed by Claude Batallion in one of his articles on mass communication in Mexico and to those referred to by Alain Birou on *The Influence of Mass Communication of the Developed Countries on Developing Nations*.<sup>54</sup>

They concern, to summarise them in short, an accentuation of the discontent among the poorest classes of Latin America, exposed directly and through the mediation of mass-media to the patterns of consumption of their richest fellow-citizens, and to the high standards shown in the publicity and the American films. And, furthermore, they concern an enforced expansion of consumption among the middle class, who pushed

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plus dans la culture et la vie occidentales. Ils ont reproché l'Occident une absence du sens de la famille, de la communauté et de l'hospitalité à l'africaine et, d'une façon générale, un mode de vie imprégné d'individualisme. Ils lui ont reproché en outre, par de fréquences décroissantes, le peu de décence du vêtement féminin, la dépravation des spectacles, l'hypocrisie des relations humaines, l'immoralité des mœurs, les attitudes de supériorité des Européens, leurs tendances au racisme et leur recherche excessive du profit". See also the interpretation which follows.

<sup>53</sup> - Declarations of Segue Olusola, NBC, Controller of Television Programmes; Ayo Ogunlade, WNBS-WNTV, controller of Programmes; Abba Zoru, General Manager of RKTU.

<sup>54</sup> - CLAUDE BATALLION, *Communications de masse et vie urbaine au Mexique*, in "Communication", n.8. ALAIN BIROU, *Impact des moyens d'information des pays développés sur le Tiers-Monde*, in "Développement et Civilisations", 1964, no.2, p.11-21.

on for the same reasons to the immediate use of their income, do not save and are, therefore, incapable of keeping up with the development of the country.

I cannot say if these tendencies can be found also in Nigeria; first of all because sociological surveys in this field do not exist <sup>55</sup>, and secondly because my request for impressions stumbled against attitudes of self defence in the country's television authorities. They tended on average: 1- to deny any discontent and in any case a pre-Revolutionary attitude in the poorest classes; 2- to admit, in those who had studied and in the middle classes a tendency to acquire out of proportion of their resources; 3- and, at the same time, to remind me of the traditional and modern ways of saving of their fellow-citizens, other than the fact that the products advertised were within the economical limits of the Nigerians.

However I had the impression, due to the insistence with which they underlined their sense of responsibility and that of their Government, that they did not fully realise the overwhelming strength which the combined action of the direct demonstrative effects of the publicity and of the mass culture may have in a country with an open market.

They are doubts which, even though they are held only by common sense and by what is happening in other developing countries, were worthwhile noting.

The frequency of Western programs leads to perplexities of cultural, moral, social and economic character, based on data probable more than certain. But the convergence of the probabilities leads towards a negative judgement of this habit.

On the other hand, it does not appear possible to indicate solutions to the dilemma which faces Nigerian televisions.

A suggestion to entirely eliminate western productions from the screens, means advising to reduce hours of transmission, which, in actual fact, would mean a reducing of the motives for acquiring a television set, and abandoning the idea of an expansion of the use of television.

To suggest the creation of an inter-African production centre, means to forget the cultural differences of the Continent, the probable financial failure to which it would fall - given the insufficient market -, and the fact that it has not yet been possible to establish an African News Agency which would diminish the political influence of the Western channels of information.

Perhaps a more restricted and more realistic solution would remain; that of a greater interchange of local programs among the Nigerian stations;

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<sup>55</sup> - Source: Prof. Schuyler, Faculty of Sociology of Lagos University.

but even this presents, as we will see its difficulties.

Finally, it is difficult to get away from the impression that television in Nigeria is in a blind alley; and this in spite of the fact that the television in question is the oldest of Black Africa, and that, having been installed in the most advanced and most populated country, could offer the best possibilities of development.

Even if one would reject as fantasy the perplexities expressed regarding the Western programs, one couldn't fail, however, to acknowledge that the scarcity of receivers at disposal, the restricted areas covered by the signals, the reduced number of the electric links, actually prevent the Nigerian TV stations both from being commercially viable, capable of extracting profits from their activity, and from conducting a function in the public service, adequate to the expenses which they impose on the public budget.

## **RADIOFONIC PLURALISM AND THE CONSEQUENCES ON PROGRAM SCHEDULING**

In spite of the importance of television in terms of perspective and potentiality, the radio remains at the present time the most striking means of mass communication in Nigeria.

It was said right from the beginning, that one of the reasons why Nigeria offers material for reflection to those who are interested in developing countries, is the presence in this nation of various broadcasting Stations, which are autonomous in management and in program scheduling and which have diverse purposes.

Here we propose to observe the ways of this co-existence, the results which this system gives way to and the various tendencies of program planning.

The discussion in which I was involved with the officers of the various organizations about the major and minor conveniences of a pluralistic system of communication in their country, revealed, on the whole, to be useless.

The reason for that is because in theoretical discussion the pros and cons tend to equal and negate themselves.

It is true, for example, that a country based on a great tribal pluralism would demand one source of communication, capable of indicating the collective aims and, at the same time, of impeding the ethnic, spiritual and political centrifugation of the nation; but it is equally true that the deeply cultural, religious and linguistic differences of the population would demand the presence of a local communicator, in order to render it capable of expressing itself according to the way of thinking and speaking of the local audience.

It is true that the plurality of the informers guarantee a greater objectivity of the news; but it is also true that, if all the sources of information depend on political organs united among themselves, the advantage can be reduced.

It is true that a poor country should not waste its own financial means in a multiplicity of isolated efforts; but it is just as true that where the vastness of the country and the limits of technical means do not permit a unique organisation to efficiently reach all the various geographical areas of the territory, the help of other organisations, which are capable of doing this by themselves, may be helpful.

It is true that in a developing country it would be convenient to concentrate the talents in a unique body; but one cannot exclude that, if there exist various organisations scattered in the country, the possibility of finding these talents in peripheral areas may be more vast and successful. And viceversa, it is true that the pluralism of transmitting stations stimulates competition; but it may happen that it stimulates recourse to programs of vast popular acceptance, and of meagre meaning for development.

It is true that competition may enable a rise in the level of quality; but it may also cause a rise in the costs of production.

As can be seen, as long as one remains on a level of possibility, it is not easy to establish anything which resembles a definite acquisition. It is better then to take into consideration the situation of fact and to discuss what may happen at a concrete level of program planning.

In the following prospectus, which was compiled according to the classifications proposed by UNESCO <sup>56</sup> and with respect to the homogeneity of the various categories of broadcasting, the programs of the three radio organisations are described in their quantitative values, which correspond to the third quarter 1968.

| <b>Broadcasting stations</b>        | <b>NBC</b> | <b>WNBS</b> | <b>RKTV</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Weekly hours of transmission</i> | 129.00'    | 126.36'     | 119.00'     |
| <b>Information</b>                  |            |             |             |
| News                                | 23.46'     | 15.05'      | 12.05'      |
| Commentaries on the news            | 4.58'      | 30'         | -           |
| Sport news                          | 45'        | 15'         | 45'         |
| Current Affairs                     | 3.35'      | 2.50'       | 6.30'       |

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<sup>56</sup> - *Statistiques de la Radiodiffusion et de la Télévision, 1950-60*, UNESCO, 1963.

## Education

|                           |        |       |       |
|---------------------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Cultural                  | 1.10'  | -     | -     |
| Programs on development   | 2.15'  | 1.30' | 20'   |
| Documentaries             | -      | 2.27' | 35'   |
| Programs for schools      | 13.30' | -     | 2.30' |
| Foreign languages courses | 15'    | 30'   | -     |

## Entertainment

|                     |        |        |        |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Music               | 50.51' | 83.29' | 61.10' |
| Theatre and stories | 2.40'  | -      | 1.35'  |
| Variety and quiz    | 2.40'  | 1.30'  | 16.55' |
| Live sport          | 1.10'  | -      | -      |

## Particular audiences

|                                                      |       |                     |       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| Religious transmissions: Christians                  | 5.30' | 7.05' <sup>57</sup> | 1.39' |
| “ “ Muslims                                          | 5.10' | 12'                 | 3.22' |
| Farmers                                              | -     | -                   | 1.00' |
| Women                                                | 1.45' | 2.15'               | 2.00' |
| Men                                                  | -     | -                   | 1.00' |
| Children                                             | 1.40' | 3.57'               | 1.00' |
| Armed forces                                         | 30'   | -                   | 3.55' |
| Magazine programs in vernacular lang.                | 3.50' | 1.30'               | -     |
| Program announcements and<br>dialogue with listeners | 1.40' | 3.51'               | 1.39' |

If we subtract from the total hours of transmission those dedicated to the “Particular Audiences” and to the “Dialogue With the Listeners” , we can see in absolute values, and in percentage, how much time the diverse organisations give to each of the time functions generally assigned to social communications.

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<sup>57</sup> - This number concerns religious programmes financed by protestant Churches and this explains the lack of proportion with the time dedicated to the Moslem transmissions.

| <b>Broadcasting stations</b>       | <b>NBC (nat.)</b> | <b>WNBS</b>    | <b>RKTV</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|
| <b>Weekly hours<br/>calculated</b> | <b>107.55'</b>    | <b>108.06'</b> |             |
| <b>103.25'</b>                     |                   |                |             |
| Information<br>(19,6%)             | 33.24' (30,9%)    | 18.40' (17,2%) | 20.20'      |
| Education<br>(3,3%)                | 17.10' (15,9%)    | 4.27' (4,1%)   | 3.25' (     |
| Entertainment<br>(77,0%)           | 57.21' (53,1%)    | 84.59' (78,6%) | 79.40'      |

They are anonymous figures, but they are the bases from which it would be possible to extract those evaluations which we have promised ourselves. And in reality they give us more than appears at first sight.

To begin with, they express very clearly the faithfulness of the Federal Radio to its functions of public service. That 30.9%, of the time of transmission calculated dedicated to information reveals that NBC is hopeful that the radio is capable of doing that which, according to the African cultures, only magic could accomplish. That is "conduct man to the height of a hill high above the horizon, in order that he may see what is happening outside his village, that he may observe places which he has never seen and meet people he has never met".<sup>58</sup>

Or, in other words, that he may succeed in "imagining how life is organised in different lands and in different codes than their own".<sup>59</sup>

What this percentage does not say is that, to reach all the public, the National program of NBC broadcasts, besides the News in English at every hour, another five newsreels in nine Nigerian languages; and that the Regional and the Provincial stations, besides relying all the news bulletins of Lagos, broadcasts, on their own, more news in local languages not accounted for among the National Program.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> - WILBUR SCHRAMM, *L'information et le développement national*, UNESCO, Genève, 1966, p.155.

<sup>59</sup> - D. LERNER, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, The Free Press of Glencoe, 1958, p. 58.

<sup>60</sup> - The Regional Station of the NBC, which operates at Kaduna in the North, for instance, transmits, not only in the languages used by the National Programme - like English, Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, and Tiv -, but also in Idoma, Igbirra, Igala, and Nupe.

The panorama of the NBC's programs would not be sufficiently indicative if one did not also say something about the Regional Programmes of the Federal radio. I will

This attention to language minorities is one of the basic characteristics of NBC; this is confirmed latterly by the presence of programs in six Nigerian languages composed in magazine style, that is according to the more elastic ways of advanced broadcasting systems.<sup>61</sup>

This polyglot way of operating, which demands the constant presence of teams of translators - readers, complicates the production<sup>62</sup>; puts the NBC in the unfortunate condition of addressing itself many times a day to the minorities, losing a great part of the listening public; and imposes delicate problems of linguistic and cultural transposition<sup>63</sup>, but is

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quote as an example, that of the NBC Regional Station of the North.

Weekly hours of transmission: 128,30'.

*Relayed programmes* from the National: hours 44,13' (scholastic transmissions, commercial service, all the news bulletins and news commentaries, "From our Newspapers", current affairs, discussions; and over and above, sport's programmes, special musical programmes and some cultural ones.

*Programs in English* produced by the station 15,13' hours.

" " in Hausa (the most diffused Nigerian Language in the North): 29.2

" " in the languages of the minorities: 10,00' (Fulanti, Kanuri, Yoruba, Tiv, Idoma, Igbirra, Igala, Nupe).

*Musical programs*: 29,97' (Source: Head of programmes of the Northern Station, M.E. Oyelude).

<sup>61</sup> 61 - JOHN CHANCELLOR, *International Broadcasting and the Changing World Audience*, in "The Annals" (American Academy of Political and Social Sciences), July 1967, p.72-79. The author, formerly director of the "Voice of America", describing the new forms of broadcasting policy, writes: "It is not really a programme but a blending of many programme elements: news, comments, correspondent's report, music, features, editorial reviews". (p.75)

<sup>62</sup> - The National Programme alone employs 18 officers, experts in translating into their mother language, directed by Christopher Emdin. He, on account of having as a child followed his father on his journeys along the Niger, and having been censor of the Nigerian troops correspondence during the wartime, knows many of his country's languages.

<sup>63</sup> - I allude not only to the difficulty of making known to the isolated multitudes the ever new realities of the modern world, but also of finding among the variety of dialects of the same language itself, that average which can be understood by the inhabitants of a whole geographical area.

The actual policy of the NBC is that of following, where it is possible, the choices already made in the last century by the missionaries, who, before deciding on one or other of the dialects, conducted linguistic researches.

Another difficulty springs from the necessity of holding in account, in the translations, the particular ideas of the various populations; I may refer, to quote only one example, to the different sensibility regarding death which characterises the Hausas

absolutely indispensable in a country where the list of spoken languages is very long and in which the only means of interchange, that is English, is not understood by a large majority of Nigerian.<sup>64</sup>

Another section of programs which reveals the function of public Service of the Federal station is that which concerns radio for schools.

To try and overcome, as much as possible, the difficulties of the Nigerian scholastic system, all the transmitters of the NBC scattered throughout the territory, broadcast eleven lessons daily which last a quarter of an hour each.

To speak of the levels of success of this service in the actual phase of development, in which one still does not know how many schools have a radio, would be premature.<sup>65</sup>

The more serious difficulties, which emerged from the discussions with the Head of the School Broadcasting Unit and by a reading of the answers to the questionnaires, follow:

- the insufficiency of the signal, due to the limits of all transmissions on short wave, rendered here more serious by the limited power of the transmitters;<sup>66</sup>

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from the Yorubas. Where in fact the Hausas say that a person "is dead", the Yorubas will say instead that "he has ceased to exist", and always feel that the verb "to die", applied to man, as a lack of respect. (Source: Christopher Emdim, Head of Nigerian Languages Section).

For an insight into the problems of broadcasting translations in Africa, see ANDRE' CELARIE', *Contribution à une sociologie de l'information (Analyse d'Enquêtes Ménées au Cameroun, 1962-65*, an unpublished work, library of "Communication", Paris.

<sup>64</sup> - The last census, that of Nov. 1963, did not collect data in this sector. The only statistics available refer to the census of 1952-53, according to which only 6% of the Nigerians know English; and referring to geographical areas: 33.7% in Lagos; 9.5% in the Western Region; 10.6% in the Eastern Region; and 0.9% in the Northern Region. (See E.N. OBIECHINA, *Transition from Oral to Literary Tradition*, in "Présence Africaine", n. 63, p.144).

They are percentages which can only be taken in a wide sense, because in these 17 years the scholastic system has expanded, and in some States primary schools have been provided free.

<sup>65</sup> - The answer to the questionnaires put at my disposal were those of 1965. The answers received in that year were only 153, a number which does not encourage optimism.

<sup>66</sup> - The NBC tries to offset this inconvenience by sending copies of the tape recorded lessons to its Regional Stations so as to reduce the amount of disturbance.

- the impossibility to offer broadcasts which are exactly adapted to the different scholastic programs of the various Regions – programs on the other hand difficult to be unified, given the variety of the situations of development of the scholastic system in the territory-;

- and, lastly, the quantitative inadequacy of the personnel in disposition of the Ministries of Education to link radio to the schools.

But here, at the moment, we are only speaking of tendencies revealed by the programs and of the reply in the vocation to public service. In this sense, the fact that 17.10% of its broadcasting is dedicated to education and the circumstance that all the scholastic lessons are prepared on the spot, under the responsibility of the station, by Nigerian personnel is a precise indication.<sup>67</sup>

A certain portion of the transmissions - equal almost to 10 per cent or the total time - is dedicated by NBC to religious programs.

The decision of the experts of UNESCO to classify this type of programs among those destined to particular audiences, rather than among educational broadcasting, appears rather salomonic.

The schemes of classification, however, do not hinder us to pick out in the presence of these programs, another sign of the finality of public service pursued by the NBC, the actual policy of this organisation in religious matters corresponds in fact not only to its institutional laws but also to the needs and to the interests existing in the public.

The passion with which Africans follow religious broadcastings was underlined to me in Liberia by the General Manager of the protestant radio station E.L.W.A.

Actually this religious station – according to a field investigation of the “Voice of America” on listening audiences - was second only to the BBC in West Africa, and it receives an average of ten thousand letters per month from their listeners, from countries in which illiteracy is still very

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<sup>67</sup> - The initial custom of putting out scholastic programmes prepared by the BBC and by the British Council has been abandoned, despite the economic convenience, to allow for a better adaptation of the teaching to local conditions. “When I returned from United Kingdom Mr. Leijmu, the Controller of School Broadcasting Unit and an enthusiastic supporter of the active method - told me - I tried to explain to my son what snow was, but I was at a loss for words. Well, at a certain point, just to give him an idea, I put his head into the refrigerator”.

In the same way, I found enlightening, with regard to the difficulties which arise from the different pronunciations of English, the protest which a headmaster wrote to the School Broadcasting Unit: “Don’t let these British people speak during the lessons; we don’t understand a thing”. He was obviously speaking of English lessons.

high.

This same fact was also largely confirmed in Nigeria on the part of those responsible for these transmissions and I found a testimony of this in the results of research conducted by I.L.O. in an area of the Western State. The results were that the radio listeners of the towns – Ifo, Otta, and Ilaro – listen to the religious broadcastings to this extent, respectively 11.9%, 18.2% and 9.9%.<sup>68</sup>

The great religious pluralism of Nigeria<sup>69</sup>, however, makes of these transmissions one of the most delicate points of radiophonic policy; and this is a sector in which the lack of responsibility of authorities might cause religious conflicts existing in the North to explode.

The co-existence of two dominant religions in the country, the variety of the denominations in the Christian areas and the presence of unorthodox groups in the Muslim one, place imperatives of equilibrium in the division of the transmissions<sup>70</sup>, in the distribution of the time throughout the day, and of an attentive watchfulness on the content of the programs.

It is therefore to be ascribed to the merits of the NBC - and in this case also to the other organisations - the fact that no one was capable of quoting cases of conflict brought about by religious broadcastings.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>68</sup> 68 - Source quoted at note 7.

<sup>69</sup> 69 - Religious distribution of the Nigerian population according to the census of 1963:

| REGIONS  | CHRISTIANS        | MUSLIMS            | OTHERS           |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Lagos    | 363,384 (54.6%)   | 294,694 (44.3%)    | 7,163 (1.1%)     |
| West     | 4,995,691 (48.7%) | 4,453,531 (43.4%)  | 811,625 (7.9%)   |
| East     | 9,573,622 (77.2%) | 29,964 ( 0.3%)     | 2,790,376(22.5%) |
| Mid West | 1,393,009 (54.9%) | 106,357 ( 4.2%)    | 1,035,973(40.9%) |
| North    | 2,881,437 ( 9.7%) | 21,386,450 (71.7%) | 5,540,773(18.6%) |

(Source: Nigeria Yearbook, 1968, Lagos).

<sup>70</sup> -The presence of the Regional Stations of the NBC allows the Corporation to balance the distribution of the times of transmissions according to the religious adherence of the inhabitants of the zone. As for example the religious programmes for Muslims transmitted by the Northern Station of the NBC, are proportionately more frequent than those for Christians.

<sup>71</sup> - The RKTv has noted a case in which a series of transmissions by a Christian denomination tended to attack another one. But there wasn't any conflict, because the officers withdrew the transmissions before the religious group under fire, had even time

The already noted dislocation of stations in all the territory, the attention to linguistic minorities, the satisfying of the religious needs of the population, the space reserved to the transmission of information and of scholastic education, allows then a first evaluation. And that is that the Federal radio, although it may be partially commercial, remains faithful to its function of public service and to the national meaning to which it is destined by law.

It remains to be seen what the functions of the WNBS and the RKTv are, that is of the Regional Governments-owned stations. These are stations born, as we have said, to cover the local needs which in the years when the NBC was been organised appeared to be neglected, and whose costs of running should have been covered by the income from publicity.

I must say immediately that the period in which this research was being done, for various reasons, was not the best time to discover the reciprocal conditionings brought about by the co-existence of three radio and television organisations.

It is clear first of all that during a period of military regime the lines of conduct tend to be suggested rather from above than from the base, and that therefore the centralising attitudes proper to the military mentality are inclined to stress the local finalities which the civilian governments - an expression of the ethnic group dominant in the Region - had given to their stations.

It was evident then, and we have already noticed this, that the unfortunate war against the Ibos of the East and the concentration of propaganda of the objectives of political unity had produced in the West and in the North a reduction of the traditional tribal loyalty.

It is not up to me to presume to establish if this fact is destined to endure or if it is only a phenomenon due to circumstances of the moment and to the state of fever of excitement produced in the summer of 1968 by the conviction that the resistance of Biafra would have been dissolved in a short time.

It is my duty to refer that in that period the local vocation of the Regional Governments-owned stations was, as confessed by their own authorities overcome.

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to protest.

The Director of News and Current Affairs of the NBC, Horatio Agedah, gave me an example of their sense of responsibility in this field, when the day after the encyclical "Humanae Vitae", on his own initiative, told me that he would not insist too much on the reactions to the "No" of Pope Paul concerning the "Pill", to avoid possibilities of conflict in the country.

And on the other hand, a comparative examination of the news bulletin of the various stations - conducted with attention to the geographical origin of the news – does not reveal differences worthy of notice. Neither the program schedules of the radio in Ibadan and Kaduna spark local interest wider than those revealed by the broadcastings of the Regional stations of Federal radio; it is true, on the contrary, that while the latter take care of the linguistic minorities of the area in which they are situated, the WNBS and the RKTV overlook them.

A realisation of this abandonment of the local outlook means to establish that the WNBS and the RKTV have forgotten the functions for which they were born and that becoming commercial stations, have finished up assuming as a finality what should only have been a means of financing.

With this one does not say that the stations in question do not have their own function in the community, and that they have not a complementary and alternative part to play. It is true on the contrary, that - in a country insufficiently covered by the signals of the NBC and within a broadcasting policy, like that of the mother station, which must frequently abandon the larger part of the flock to go in search of the lost sheep of the linguistic minorities - the possibilities of a positive contribution remain quite notable.

The main problem is to see just how much the WNBS and the RKTV can succeed in opposing themselves to the dynamics proper to all the commercial stations – which forces them to have recourse to entertainment programs, dear to the larger public - and to proceed also with the task of educating the masses, which corresponds to the primary needs of a developing country.

In this sense, that 17.2% and 19.6% of the time of transmission taken into consideration dedicated by these two stations to information is a positive indication.

But the fact that the percentage of the transmissions destined to mass education – 4,1% and 3,3% - is so low, and that of entertainment programs reaches respectively 78.6% and 77%, against 53% of the NBC, is obviously a cause of perplexity.

Before entering into the evaluation of this phenomenon, it will be necessary to say that these stations are sailing in more difficult waters than the NBC. The NBC has duties of national coverage more vast than those of other organisations, but it can follow a certain policy also because it has a staff of a thousand people.

The officers of the NBC can therefore be distributed to very specific

tasks and in these restricted areas it is not difficult to acquire a minimum of specialisation.<sup>72</sup>

The Federal Radio can pay higher salaries, for example, than those of the Ibadan station, and incite, in this way, radiophonic vocations among a much wider circle of candidates. Lastly, this is to be found in the large city of Lagos, where the possibility of finding expert personnel outside the organisation, is certainly much easier than at Kaduna.<sup>73</sup>

Everybody understands at this point, that the recourse to musical transmissions allows to the authorities of the two stations, obviously more at a disadvantage, to fill up the empty spaces of the schedules, and to do this with a type of program which is among other things largely requested and which does not demand translations into local languages; because – as a officers of the WNBS said, - “music is like money; everyone understands it” and he continued affirming that “it is not the case to continue to speak about problems, because speaking about them means multiplying them” and that it was therefore much simpler just to broadcast music, which after all is what the public want”.

The phrase is disarmingly candid; the authorities who occupy the higher positions expressed themselves in more elaborate terms, but the substance of their affirmations did not change.

The will to keep hold of one’s listening public, that of capturing new ones among people in search of entertainment, is obviously the vocation of every radio station, but in this case it is also rendered more decisive by the knowledge that one’s living depends on the possibility of demonstrating the vastness of one’s audience to the advertisers.

The phenomenon is more acute and leads to competition in those areas, as in the West and in the Federal District, where the NBC and the WNBS are speaking to the same public with the same efficiency.

However in the North where RKTV and also the local station of NBC operate, things are different. The incidence of musical programs

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<sup>72</sup> - The programme division of NBC is distributed in this way: Talks Section; Christian Religious Broadcasting; Muslim Religious Broadcasting; Drama Section; Women and Children Section; Variety and Light Entertainment; Music Section; Features Section; Nigerian Languages Section; Outside Broadcasting Unit.

<sup>73</sup> - The Head of Sound of RKTV, D. Mobidde, at this point, brought up the difficulty of finding experts in the various sectors of development, in his own geographical area. At my suggestion to adapt for instance the programmes prepared for Africa by the French O.CO.RA. (Organisation de la Coopération Radiophonique) he replied that even the translation from French of these programs would have become a problem.

remains very high in the RKTV, but for objective reasons rather than intentional ones. There is not, in other words an attitude of rivalry, and this is for a number of reasons; the first is that RKTV has a transmitter so powerful that competition from NBC is unthinkable, and the second is a kind of natural choice of the advertisers; in the sense that RKTV attracts those interested in selling to the North, and NBC those interested in selling to the whole of Nigeria.

There would also be a third reason-which my hosts put first, but which I hesitate to refer to because to us Europeans it seems incredible - and it is precisely this, that friendship, according to their way of thinking, does not permit competition in business affairs. And the NBC considers RKTV as its child, because its officers are all ex officers of the Federal radio.

The relationship between NBC and WNBS at Lagos and Ibadan is on the contrary, as was slightly touched upon above, that of net rivalry. The Federal radio accuses the West's radio of fighting with unfair arms by appealing to the light-hearted tendencies of the population; on the other hand the WNBS accuses the Federal radio of having entered the publicity field, thus stealing clients from them, and of pursuing an ambiguous policy, which is, at the same time, in the public service and in commercial interest.

The battle is in secret and the public does not realise it is going on; but he who observes what happens more openly on the two TV channels of Lagos, and asks himself why the detective story, which is widely followed, is transmitted by WNBS at the same time as the Yoruba drama, which is the highlight of NCB's weekly viewing, could have an indication of this.

The co-existence of different radio TV organisations, I said at the beginning of the paragraph, is a double edged sword: it may stimulate competition and may raise the level in quality, but it may also force one to have recourse to programs of a vast popular reception and of a low artistic level or of meagre interest to development.

Both solutions depend on the sense of responsibility of the authorities and, together on the effective possibility of competition.

In Nigeria, as we have seen, the phenomenon is complex: the NBC is in a position to beat competition as far as the news and the presentation of programs in general are concerned, but it has its weak points in the lack of power of its peripheral transmitters and in its attention to linguistic minorities and opens large gaps in its program schedules.

In these gaps penetrate the Regional Government-owned Stations which have, sometimes, at their disposal transmitters which are locally more powerful, and can allow themselves a more permissive policy with

programs.

The perplexities, which rise from this competitive system, refer not only to the omissions of the commercial radios in relation to development, but more so to the danger that these radio stations may end up by obstructing the tasks of public service of the Federal radio, reducing its listeners with programs of a much larger popular acceptance.

However, in order to affirm that these are not only dangers, one would have to know in what way the Nigerian public turn the knob, especially those who are isolated in their villages from the rest of the world and are only reached through the voices of their transistor radios. The primary answers are partial rather contradictory, and it is perhaps not the case to pay too much attention to them.<sup>74</sup>

The authorities of the Nigerian radio stations don't like to say too clearly just what they think of the results of this co-existence; it appeared to me, however that one could feel in the officers of the Federal radio end in those of the Regional government-owned Stations a sense of frustration: in the NBC because it fears that the public prefers music of other stations to its serious programs; In the WNBS and in the RKTv because with their commercial scheduling they are building up a bad conscience without succeeding in gaining financial profit, being, among other things, linked to their sister televisions, brilliant and spendthrift.

Before concluding it remains to be seen if the pluralism of communicators better guarantees objectivity in the news and an effective possibility of listening to different evaluations of political facts.

It is known that some ethnic groups of Nigeria possess old democratic traditions, which could become the base of a modern democracy at an inter-community level.

But in order that the habits of political participation which exist in some places at group level, may be in a position to operate at a national

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<sup>74</sup> -The WNBS has shown with and elaborated research (see note 2) that 51% of the listeners, of the area covered by its signals, are tuned to it. And it would be a preoccupying indication; but the specimens were chosen in the urban areas and among middle class circles, and this, if it increases the interest of the results from the commercial point of view, it reduces it under the profile which matters to us.

More encouraging is the answer given by the ILO survey, relative to an area, which is situated midway between the NBC and the WNBS transmitters, and which can, therefore, be indicative of what happens in zones, which are under the influence of two different types of programme scheduling.

This survey shows that the village public listens to the news in the proportion of 30.8%, to the educational and agricultural programmes in 9.6% and to the musical and entertainment transmissions in a percentage of 19.2%.

level, it would be necessary that the voices of the parties and that of the Government could actually reach the isolated public of Nigeria through means open to all opinions.

In this direction there exist difficulties of fact even in the field of journalism. To the obstacles which the papers meet in illiteracy, in linguistic pluralism and in the vastness of the country, one must add those of an economic nature, which tend to smother the independent dailies and to enable those financed by the Governments to live on.

In September of 1968 the situation -was still made up of five private papers against four Government ones, but many feared that the situation would have ended up the reverse.

As far as radio and television are concerned, we know that they belong to the Federal and Regional Governments and that the respective Ministers of Information have the faculty to appoint the members of the Board of Governors and to give them general and special directives on the policy to be followed.

Besides these norms, however, there are others in existence, which, following the norms of BBC, tend to guarantee the possibility of expression to all the political and religious groups of the country.

In short, at an institutional level, even although within the said limits, all the varied opinions are offered the possibility of expressing themselves.

On what actually happens in a normal period I am not in a position to say; what I will say, therefore, is valid only for the period in which Nigeria was living at the time of my visit, and I do not intend to prejudice the future. It was a period of war and of military regime, that is a period of emergency,<sup>75</sup> during which the limits of free speech tend to be curtailed in all nations.

I controlled, where I could, the corrections brought about by the local editors to the dispatches of the Western News Agencies or to the commentaries of the television images coming from Great Britain, and it results that given corrections did not alter the meaning of the news, but limited themselves to adequate the terminology of foreign texts to those of internal propaganda; in such a way that for example, "Colonel Ojukwu" always appeared as "the rebel leader Ojukwu".<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> - The Nigeria Yearbook, 1968, quotes the list of 81 political parties whose activity has suspended. (p.48).

<sup>76</sup> - I'll quote a case in detail. Where the text which accompanied the film of a Western Agency said -"USA, Mr. Robert Goldstein, the man employed by the Breakaway Eastern Region of Nigeria, Biafra, to publicise their cause, has announced his resignation in Washington. He reads out a copy of his letter to Colonel Ojukwu"- ; the

It appeared to me also from these types of observations made on the news bulletins, that the chief editor had cancelled from the text of the news any evaluation eventually added by the correspondent;<sup>77</sup> and this distinction between fact and commentary is certainly good.

A third positive element is the fact that all the authorities of the stations declared that interference by the military chiefs in the activity of the organisations was much less than at the time of the civilian government, and that they had limited themselves to let them know their political objectives and to impose the transmission of Government declarations.

Against the reality of these data, however, lies the fact that I have never heard on the various wavelengths or on the various T.V. channels, anything which had the semblance of reflecting opinions different from the official ones and the circumstance that those interviewed by me did not object to this remark, limiting themselves to finding some explanation for it.

The favourable impression brought about by the absence of political censorship in the dispatches of the News Agencies, was attenuated by a REUTERS journalist who pointed out a very obvious thing to me; and that is that censorship has also another system different from that of crossing out and it consists in allowing certain news items to go through, while it blocks others.

The very transmission of discussions, political tribunes, and similar affairs, only allowed one to listen to variations on the theme. The only time I found myself suddenly in front of a true confrontation of opinions was when during a round table discussion on the control of the press <sup>78</sup> one of the participants blurted out that "he did not believe what the Nigerian papers said until he had confirmation in other sources".

My perplexity increased when I observed the almost total absence of information from the front line, and the one-sidedness of the little pieces of news which did get through.

In this case there existed objective difficulties for a more vast and varied information, due to the absence of a Nigerian News Agency, to the

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text read out during the "News Report" on Friday 16th of August on the Ibadan television, corrected it thus: 1) "the Breakaway Central Eastern State of Nigeria", putting the stress on the division into 12 States and suppressing the word Biafra. 2) "Rebel leader Ojukwu", according to the official version of the situation given by the Government of the Federation.

<sup>77</sup> - Observed on the drafts of the news bulletin of the RKT.V.

<sup>78</sup> - The programme "Face to Face", WNTV, Sunday 18th of august 1968.

impossibility of the various organs of information to detach their correspondents in Biafra, to the obstacles which in this eventuality would have arisen to communicate with the centres and consequently to the necessity of depending exclusively on bulletins from military chiefs.

On the other hand it was no mystery for anyone that the Nigerian Generals did not wish journalists in the operation areas, no matter what their nationality was.<sup>79</sup>

The practical result of this was that the organs of information gave the impression of being unable to form their own opinion on facts personally observed.

I must, however, acknowledge that for the sense of responsibility of the authorities of the radio and TV stations, the attitude of the stations was cautious; and that, in general, if the "News Reports" were not telling the whole truth, at least in what they were saying they tended to speak the truth.

To return to what we were saying, it did not appear - at least in the emergency period I experienced - that the presence of three different stations permitted an articulated expression of the various opinions; and, given that the three organisations depend from the Governments and that among them there is not a private station, one cannot imagine how also in normal times, the system can offer the advantages which are proper to the pluralism of sources of communication.

The financial difficulties which are suffered by Regional government-owned Stations, the fact that the Federal radio to-day tend to meet the local requirements and above all the inconveniences observed at the level of program scheduling, make one think that a pluralistic system is not the most suitable for a developing country ; and that, viceversa, a broadcasting system with a unique finality to follow and geographically decentralised in its programs, could better correspond to the situation of these countries.

We have already spoken of the difficulties encountered in Nigeria by television. Here it should be added that it would be utopian to think of the formation of a unique network through the unification of the programs of the three stations, both for the actual impossibility of creating the technical

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<sup>79</sup> - One should not exclude the hypothesis that one of the reasons why the Federal Government during the war lost the battle on the publicity front, was this behaviour of the Nigerian generals towards the means of information.

To this, obviously, one should add the more or less obscure international manoeuvres, and in addition to this, the money spent by Ojukwu in the campaign for public opinion, and the larger emotional hold that his cause had.

connections and for the linguistic and cultural variety of the Nigerian people, which does not allow the same programs to be understood and appreciated throughout the country.

Someone spoke to me of the possibility of giving to the system, which would remain differentiated, unity or administration; but it is still an isolated viewpoint.

The most practical solution is the less ambitious one: in the meantime they would have to unite the efforts in all those education transmissions, which the different scholastic systems render possible; to operate a profitable interchange - now that the video tape-recorders allow this - of programs in English, such as those of current affairs, music and variety and those of Yoruba theatre among the NBC and the WNBS; and, lastly, to actuate a common policy in the hiring and importation of foreign programs, which would bring with it a reduction of costs.<sup>80</sup>

To conclude, I will say that radio and television in Africa offer more fascinating arguments than those actually treated; like that of the strategy of influence to be used among people held back by strong group resistance<sup>81</sup>, or that, mentioned at the beginning of these pages, of inventing a typically African manner of narrating and television scheduling.

Fascinating problems. But in front of which, the modest ones we have spoken about have priority.

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<sup>80</sup> - A convinced advocate of these exchanges is the Controller of Television Programmes of the NBC, Según Olusola, who began negotiations to this effect with the other organisations. In 1963 they had reached an agreement on the sector regarding foreign programs.

<sup>81</sup> - Prof. Ogunshye, Director of the Adult Education Department of the University of Ibadan, organised "Radio Discussion Programmes" to make the Government's plans of development known, keeping in mind the valid conclusions found by Radio Forums in other countries. A plan against illiteracy, coupled with the teaching of the various techniques to the tobacco-growers, already well under way as far as preparation goes, was abandoned at the beginning of 1969 since the television equipment of the University, having been left too long unused, was not in working order.

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