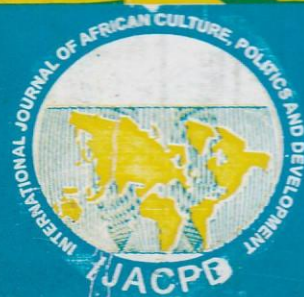


INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF AFRICAN CULTURE, POLITICS AND DEVELOPMENT

Volume 10, No. 1, April, 2016



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF AFRICAN CULTURE, POLITICS AND DEVELOPMENT

ESSIEN UDOSEN ESSIEN-UDOM: A NIGERIAN INTELLECTUAL (1928-2002)

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Volume 10, No. 1, April, 2016

Abstract

Professor Essien Udosen Essien-Udom was a distinguished scholar with international acclaim. He acquired his early education in Nigeria and his university education in some of the leading American universities. After teaching in the United States of America for about a decade, he returned to Nigeria in 1962, to become the first African professor of Political Science at the University of Ibadan. By his cutting-edge scholarship, he left indelible marks in the Department. He was second Secretary to Military Government of the South Eastern State; pioneer Vice-Chancellor of University of Maiduguri, Chairman of the National Universities Commission, member of Board of the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos, a member of the Governing Board of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. In 1983, he was invited by the University of Cross River State (now University of Uyo) to help set up the Department of Political Science. He served as the first Dean of the Faculty of Social Science in the university. Irrespective of his vast role to the development of humanity, his contributions have not been coherently documented, thereby creating a gap in scholarship. This paper therefore fills the existing gap. It adopts a historical narrative methodology.

Introduction

This paper examines the life and contributions of Professor Essien Udosen Essien-Udom (Black Power) to the field of education in particular and to nation building in general. Essien-Udom was a global asset of immense learning whose breadth of knowledge often spanned and criss-crossed traditional academic boundaries, reaching far beyond political science which was his field of specialty. He was an erudite scholar, inspiring teacher and tireless researcher. As one of the most internationally acclaimed African scholar of his time, he planted fertile seeds by mentoring generations of scholars of social science persuasion. As a scholar of distinction, his books were in the realm of *Magnum Opus* in social science discourse.

He is easily remembered for his intense study of the origins, organization, successes and constraints of the Black Movement in the United States of America. The book which resulted from that research: *Black Nationalism: Search for an Identity in America* has been published in several languages and editions since its first appearance in 1962. Till today, the book remains a reference point in the study of Black Nationalism in the United States of America and is widely regarded as one of the earliest, most scholarly and definitive works on the Black Muslim Movement written by any one. Essien-Udom was the first African professor of Political Science in the University of Ibadan, Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences of the same University and the pioneer Vice-Chancellor of the University of Maiduguri. He also held many other important positions within the education sub-sector in the country thereby contributing significantly to the development of the society.

It would not be an exaggeration to note that he “saw it all in life” and that he ploughed the earth, diligently beating many paths that few have dared to tread. He was one of Africa’s foremost professor of Political Science, affable scholar whose intellectual stature was inestimable and intellectual activism traversed the globe. He was a philosopher, an administrator unsparing civil servant and charismatic leader (Akpan, 2008, p. 14).

Dr. Calvin Sinnette, an American scholar who had seen Essien-Udom perform exceptional feats and had studied him for more than 40 years, described him as a “cherished leader, distinguished intellectual, a devoted civil servant, Africa’s true believer in, and an advocate of Pan-Africanism and African American warrior-ally in its emancipation struggle” (Sinnette, 2002, p. 16)

Having served humanity faithfully all through his life and having made immeasurable contributions to the development of humanity, it becomes necessary to re-examine his contributions. Moreover, as Nigeria is still in deep search for credible nation builders to steer the course of the nation out of the present quagmire, the task of the re-assessment and documentation is done with the hope that the present generation of Nigerians will learn some crucial lessons from it. In other words, the paper seeks to achieve this objective.

Clarification of Terms

An Intellectual

Intellectuals are defined by what they do. Their roles are multidimensional. The primary qualification is that intellectuals, wherever they may be found, have always sought to explain the context, the matrix, be that of society or sub-group, within which they are inserted, to its members, to itself, with a view to preserving the status-quo, or over-throwing same, modifying or completely destroying it. Put more expansively, in human history, intellectuals form a body of people who are charged with, who profess to, or are expected to, perform the task of explaining the society to itself, to its members, constructing the metaphors and myths that constitute the complex of

significations that enable us to claim a shared destiny or common membership of polity; of alerting the society to the shortcomings of the ways of being human to which it may have become wedded; of providing the justificatory or at least legitimizing ideologies for their polity's pattern of governance; of leading that society in formulating ways of being human (Taiwo, 2002, p. 18).

Uya (2009) notes that true intellectualism is defined by the work people do rather than by the titles they bear. He added as follows:

- (i) Intellectuals are those who, in the pursuit of professional excellence, generate added value to the proper development of their society.
- (ii) Intellectuals are the life and essence of any civilization, since they give advice to humanity on how to conduct its affairs. A society without a burgeoning class of intellectuals cannot truly flourish. Such society may stagnate or die.
- (iii) Intellectuals are men and women who arise to assert that they can diagnose the ills of their society and cure them with their unaided intellect; "that they can device formulae to alter the structure as well as transform the fundamental habits of their citizens for the better".
- (iv) True intellectuals are men and women of deep thinking and profound mind who invest their time and energy identifying and proffering solutions to the ills. They are usually at the vanguard of cutting edge useful knowledge generation regardless of their disciplines. They provide new directions for the development of their societies. In other words, intellectuals are usually positively controversial and make available their pool of knowledge to the development of their societies.

According to Uya (2009) the specific case of how intellectuals impacted on the development of the Nigerian nation in the pre-1970 period can best be illustrated with reference to the activities of the cream of Nigerian intellectuals that gathered in the University of Ibadan under the leadership of Prof. Kenneth Dike, principally in such disciplines as Chemistry, Medicine, Agriculture, History and Political Science. In the group were found distinguished Chemist like Prof. Donald Ekong, prominent Medical Scientist like Prof. O. Akingube, distinguished Agriculturist like Prof. Victor Oyenuga, eminent Historian like Emmanuel Ayandele and eminent Political Scientists like Professor Billy Dudley and Professor Essien-Udom and others who made Ibadan the recognized centre of excellence in scholarship world-wide.

Birth and Parentage

Professor Essien Udosen Essien-Udom was born on October 25, 1928 at Ikot Osong, in Iman Ibom clan of Etinan Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. His father was Chief Timothy Udosen Essien-Udom while his mother was Adiaha Jacob who hailed

from Ikot Obio Inyang, Iman also in Etinan Local Government Area. He had his early education at Ibiono Native Administration School after which he moved to the Holy Family College, Oku Abak, where he studied from 1945 to 1948. That same year, he took the Cambridge School Certificate Examination and passed with Distinction such that he was exempted from London University Matriculation (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 6).

As it was the commonest practice in those days, Prof. Essien-Udom started his working life as a primary school teacher. For few months in 1949, he taught at the Salvation Army School, Ibekwe, Opobo (now Ikot Abasi Local Government Area). Because of his firm command of English language, he was employed as an interpreter by the Eastern Regional Government and he served until 1951 when he left for the United States of America.

With a determination to attain the best quality of education possible, he proceeded to the United States of America in 1951 after receiving a Fulbright Grant for undergraduate study and enrolled at the distinguished Oberlin College, Ohio. At the end of his studies in that institution in 1955, he obtained his first degree in Political Science and International Relations. A year before the end of his sojourn in Oberlin, he enrolled for Summer Courses at North Western University, Evanston, Illinois. From 1955 to 1961, Professor Essien Udom was at the University of Chicago, Illinois. In that period, he got his second degree in International Relations in 1957 and his PhD in Political Science in 1961 (Essien-Udom, 2002: p. 6).

Service Rendered to the University System in Nigeria and Overseas

At independence in October 1960, Nigeria was still suffering from a hangover of her past history. The earlier overthrow of the political powers at the turn of the 20th century had affected many spheres of the nation's life and the educational history of the nation in many ways. Two areas are worthy of brief consideration, one was the question of personnel. The declaration of the British rule had meant that non-Nigerians assumed control of the planning and execution of educational policy. The new rulers recognized the potency of educational administration as a tool for social and political control and were quick to exploit this. The second issue concerned the actual educational programmes. Also, British rule affected the direction of the educational work begun by the various Christian and Islamic Missions and traditional agencies (Omolewa, 1989, p. 9). It should be noted that the missionaries were the first to give thought to the question of higher education in Nigeria and it was perhaps, for this reason the early secondary schools were often named colleges rather than just schools (Ikejani, 1964, p. 28). The Higher College, Yaba which was established in 1932 was an Institution of higher learning to provide courses for students seeking to be assistant agricultural, forestry, medical, survey, veterinary officers. It appears that the Higher College, Yaba, was established to raise Nigerians "to assist the imperial masters, not to supplant them" (Ikejani, 1964, p. 130).

The irritating circumstances soon aroused agitation for overhauling the Higher College and for the establishment of an institution of true university status. As a consequence, in 1943, the British Government appointed Walter Elliot Commission of Higher Education. The Commission recommended the establishment of a University College in Nigeria. In 1948 the University College, Ibadan came into existence (Ikejani, 1964, p. 135). From 1951, Nigerians assumed control of educational activities and policies following the adoption of the Macpherson's Constitution of 1951, Nigerians began to offer leadership in educational matters. By 1952, Nigerians held positions of Ministers of Education. During this period, Nigerian leaders were faced with the problem of evolving an educational policy (Omolewa, 1989, p. 12).

According to Omolewa On the eve of independence, the Federal Ministry of Education again invited Sir Eric Ashby to head a Commission to investigate how Nigeria could develop suitable education at the post-school certificate and higher education levels. Clearly, one of the most important problems which needed the attention of the new government at independence was the integration of the various peoples of Nigeria "where tribe and tongue...differ" into one nation with common and accepted identity and mission. Education, conceived of as a tool for effecting social change, needed to be deployed to achieve this task of nation building. The Ashby Commission identified this problem and sought to use education for its solution. The Report urged the advisers of the University of Nigeria project to "make its curriculum, research and other activities to meet the economic and social needs of Nigeria." The plan was to make the university an educational institution of unquestionable academic standard in Nigerian problem (Omolewa, 1989, p. 21).

This was the prevailing scenario in Nigeria when Essien-Udom completed his studies in the United States of America. He taught and held administrative positions in some American Universities. The positions included: Teaching Assistant/Research Associate, Department of Government, Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A (1960-1962); Visiting Lecturer in Government, University of Vermont, Burlington U. S. A.; (Summer 1962); and Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. (Fall 1962) (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 9). It could be said with some amount of certainty that the decision of Essien-Udom to abandon his high paying job in a developed environment to return to his father land was triggered by a high sense of patriotism and the need to respond to the deepest yearning of Nigerians (Attah, 2002, p. 2). This was based on the fact that, at the establishment of the University of Ibadan, there was a disparity in emolument between expatriate and members of African academic staff, a scenario that generated strong and protracted dissension by the members of African academic staff and the University management (Ikejani 1964, pp. 149-150).

Being fully aware of the role of universities in nation building, Essien-Udom returned to Nigeria in 1963 and joined the Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan and remained as a staff until his retirement in 1988 (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 8). The Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan grew from what was the Sub-

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Department of Government in October, 1960 with Dr. James Connel as the Acting Head (1960-63) to become a full-fledged Department of Political Science by October 1963, with Prof. Joseph E. Black as its first substantive foundation Head of Department. Essien-Udom took over in 1964 and saw the Department through most of those crisis and conflict years of the immediate post-independence period. These included the years of the Nigerian Civil war and its aftermath ([www. Socsc.Ui.edu.ng](http://www.Socsc.Ui.edu.ng). Retrieved, 22/11/15).

The demands of the war and military rule demands in general had acute effects on the Department, as a number of its emergent crops of teaching staff took leave of absence to serve at various levels of government. The Department survived those acute-war induced staffing pressures and demand to emerge as one of the leading Departments of Political Science on the African continent. It attracted qualified staff from many countries and succeeded in establishing its major fields of specialization, namely, Comparative Politics/Political Economy; International Relations, Public administration/Public Policy; Theory/Methodology. These were served by some of the greatest and best concentrations of teaching and research staff. At one time, the Department had some of its staff drawn from a fairly cosmopolitan mix including, the United States of America; South Africa; Guinea and Nigeria. A major feature of the Political Science programme at Ibadan is the analytical depth, creative thinking as well as critical perspective it seeks to foster among most of its staff and students ([www. Socsc.Ui.edu.ng](http://www.Socsc.Ui.edu.ng). Retrieved, 22/11/15)

In 1965, Essien-Udom was appointed a Professor of Political Science in the University of Ibadan, by that distinguished appointment; he made history as the first African Professor of Political Science at the University (Attah, 2002, p. 2). He was appointed the Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences from 1966 to 1968, after which he returned to serve as the Head of Department of Political Science up to 1972. He was also the Master of Independence Hall of the University from 1967 to 1972. In 1972, he left Ibadan on a one year leave of absence to the University of Birmingham, Centre for West African Studies in the United Kingdom as Cadbury Visiting Professorial Fellow (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 9). By decree No. 20 and 23 of 1975, the Federal Government took over the control of Universities of Benin, Ife and Ahmadu Bello, which were formerly state owned universities. It created six new ones, bringing the total number of federal universities to 12 (including the earliest three: the University of Ibadan, the University of Lagos and the University of Nigeria, Nsukka). On September 25, 1975, the administration appointed four Vice-Chancellors for the new institutions to be sited. The Vice-Chancellors were: Prof. Gilbert Onuaguluchi (University of Jos), Prof. Emmanuel Ayandele (University of Calabar), Prof. Shehu Galadanci (University of Sokoto) and Prof. Essien Udosen Essien-Udom (University of Maiduguri). Also appointed were three Principals – Mallam Mahmud Tukur (University College, Kano), Prof. Tekana Tamuno (University College, Ilorin) and Prof. Donald E. U. Ekong (University College, Port Harcourt) (Uzoigwe and Akalazu, 2004, p. 96).

The University of Maiduguri took off in 1976 by inheriting the facilities of the North-East College of Arts and Sciences (NECAS) which was a post-secondary institution for preparing candidates with secondary education for entry into degree programmes in Nigerian universities after two years of Advanced Level (A Level) General Certificate of Education (G.C.E) ([www. Unimaid. Edu. Org](http://www.Unimaid.Edu.Org), Retrieved, 22/11/15). The facilities such as lecture theaters, library, office blocks, staff and other supporting services taken over formed the nucleus of the University and made it possible for it to commence degree programmes for the first academic session in three faculties, namely: Arts, Education and Social Sciences in the same year ([www. Unimaid. Edu. org](http://www.Unimaid.Edu.org). Retrieved, 22/11/15).

Essien-Udom laboured tirelessly to lay a solid infrastructural and academic foundation of the University. Due to his excellent performance during his first tenure he was re-appointed for a second term in 1979. He however declined the offer (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 9). In 1980, he was succeeded by Professor Jubril Aminu. Today, the University of Maiduguri is one of Nigeria's most respected and prestigious universities. The institution prides itself in the quality education it provides to its students. It currently enrolls about 25, 000 students in its combined programmes which include, Agriculture, Arts, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Law, Management Sciences, Pharmacy, Science, Social Science and Veterinary Medicine. In recognition of Essien-Udom's services, the authorities of the University named a section of the institution after him as "Essien-Udom's Court". The University also awarded him an Honorary Doctorate of Letters (D. Litt.) for his foundational services in 1986 (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 9).

From 1984 to 1986, Essien-Udom was at the University of Cross River State, Uyo (now University of Uyo) as Visiting Professor; he helped to establish the Department of Political Science and Public Administration and also served as the Head of Department of Political Science as well as pioneer Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Director, Centre for Development Studies. Between 1984 and 1986, he was also a member of the Governing Council of the University of Cross River State as well as member of several statutory bodies and ad hoc Committees in the University (Ekpo, 2002, p. 14). Essien-Udom's name was to attract younger scholars to the Faculty of Social Sciences from far and near, today; the evidence of his influence is still to be found in the number of high ranking academic staff in the Faculty of Social Sciences compared with other Faculties in the University of Uyo. He later returned to the University of Uyo when he retired in 1988 and taught there on contract until 1995 when he finally disengaged (Ikpe, 2013).

Secretary to Government in South Eastern State

Professor Essien-Udom was an outstanding administrator who was able to demonstrate a very high capacity in the earlier offices he occupied within and outside the Country. As a result of the high intellectual prowess, Brigadier Udokaha Jacob Esuene, the Military Governor of the then South Eastern State (then made up of Akwa Ibom and

Cross River States) in 1973 appointed him the Secretary to the Military Government (SMG) and Head of Service. While at the helm of affairs in the administration of the young State, he introduced far reaching reforms which were to the benefit of both the government and the civil servants (Essien Udom, 2002, p. 11).

His Contributions to Educational Development

Essien-Udom contributed vastly to the development of education in Nigeria and Africa and the world generally through the numerous positions and responsibilities he undertook outside the core teaching areas. In 1967, he was in the Committee that selected nominees for appointment as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ibadan. He was a member at one time of several statutory and ad-hoc Committees at the University of Ibadan; for instance, he was the University of Ibadan representative on the International Working Panel on Government, West African Examinations Council, (W.A.E.C.) from 1963 to 1965, Assistant Examiner in Government G.C.E. (A/L) between 1966/67 and Chief Examiner between 1967 to 1969. He was the Reviser/Local Expert, Moderator in Government (A/L) from 1969 to 1980. He was also the External Examiner; Institute of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1965, University of Lagos from 1968 to 1971, University of Ghana, Legon, 1967 to 1971, University of Ife, (now Obafemi Awolowo University) from 1970 to 1971 and 1980 to 1984 and University of Calabar between 1982 to 1984 (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 11).

He was member, National Universities Commission (N.U.C.), from 1968 to 1974, member, Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (J.A.M.B.) from inception to 1979, member, Governing Council, West African Examinations Council (W.A.E.C.) from 1976 to 1979. In 1986, he was appointed, Chairman of the National Universities Commission. At the end of the first three year tenure, he was re-appointed for another three year term.

In critically examining the contributions of Prof. Essien-Udom to nation building, it is necessary to adopt the background of the establishment of the National Universities Commission as a template. The Ashby Commission recommended the establishment of a national Universities Commission to advise the government on the distribution of the limited funds available for higher education.⁶ It suggested that the Universities Commission should be set up by an Act of Parliament and should consist of a chairman and nine members, all part-time, giving their services free. The Chairman should be a distinguished Nigerian citizen chosen for the confidence placed in him by all Nigerian citizens. Two members of the Commission, who should serve for a limited period, should be distinguished and experienced scholars from abroad. The other seven should be non-partisan Nigerians. (Okafor, 1971, p. 170).

Many eminent Nigerians had served as chairmen of the Governing Board of the National Universities Commission since its inception in 1962 before the tenure of Essien-Udom as the Chairman of the Governing Council. They included Alhaji Muhammed Tukur, Emir of Yaun (1962-1967), Chief F.R.A. Williams (1968-1973), Chief S. O. Adebo (1973-1979), Justice Moses Balonnu (1978-1983), Alhaji Liman

Ciroma (1983-1986). That vantage position afforded Prof Essien-Udom the enormous opportunity of directing the affairs of Nigerian Universities. Some new Universities were built during the period while the quality of the existing ones was strengthened. Obviously, very few Nigerian academic have had such rare opportunity.

Appointments Held in Nigéria

As a public servant, he served as a member of the Nigerian Constitutional Review Study Group in 1966, member, ad-hoc Advisory Committee to the Military Governor of South Eastern State from 1967 to 1968 and Governing Council, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs from 1972 to 1975. He was on the delegation sponsored by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in July/August 1979 to Beijing, China and another in July 1980 to Sao Paulo, Brazil in 1982-83, he was appointed by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs into the Coordinating Committee for the Oral Documentation Project and from 1982 to 1986, was a member of the Board of Governors, Nigerian Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru near Jos and Chairman of the Institute's Research Committee (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 12).

Also, between 1984 and 86, he served as a member in the Governing Council of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs and the Cross River State Economic "Think Tank". In 1986, he was in the Planning Committee that organized the launching of the Cross River State Industrial and Rural Development Fund.

Commitment to the Blacks in the Diaspora

The Africans have passed through monumental oppression and deprivation in their sojourn in the American continent beginning from the period of the Atlantic slave trade and slavery. The generational in-human condition triggered organized reactions from the African Americans. The African-American civil rights movement whose goals were to end racial segregation and discrimination against black Americans and to secure legal recognition and federal protection of the citizenship rights enumerated in the constitution became very strong particularly between 1954 and 1968. The movement was characterized by major campaigns, acts of nonviolent protest and civil disobedience which produced crisis situations and productive dialogues between activists and government authorities. Forms of protest and or civil disobedience included boycotts such as the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956 in Alabama, "sit-ins" such as the influential Greensboro sit-ins of 1960 in North Carolina; marches, such as the Selma to Montgomery Marches of 1965 and a wide range of other non-violent activities (Shiccliffe, 2004, p. 43).

The Black protest during this phase yielded noted legislative achievements such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that banned discrimination based on "race, colour, religion or national origin" in employment practices and public accommodations; the Voting Rights Act of 1965, that restored and protected voting rights; the Immigration and Nationality Services Act of 1965, that dramatically opened entry to the United States of America to immigrants other than traditional European groups and the Fair Housing

Act of 1968, that banned discrimination in the sale or renewal of housing. The situation made it possible for African Americans to enter politics in America (Tyson, 1998, pp. 540-542).

However, despite the engagements of the Blacks to achieve equal rights, Professor Harold Cruise had in his book, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, traced the crisis of political powerlessness, economic stagnation, social disintegration and fratricidal struggles within the African-American community to the absence of an overarching ideology on which to ground the Black struggles and blamed this on the Negro intellectual inability to forcefully connect with the communities and provide intellectual leadership for their growth and development (Cruise, 1968, p. 132).

One of the most productive allies in the Black movement was Prof. Essien-Udom, who undoubtedly provided an ideological foundation that grounded the Black struggles. He became an outstanding intellect, whose contributions “helped in connecting the Black communities. In this respect, late Professor Okon Edet Uya, an internationally acclaimed authority in African American History noted that:

The Black Power Movement gave Black people a confidence in self, a pride in their culture which reversed the process of self-abnegation and self-effacement they had been subjected to. Secondly, the Movement has had the impact of turning black minds towards Black Community as the best source of strength and leadership for struggle...thirdly, it rekindled the old debate between integration and separation as meaningful strategies for Black liberation...fourthly, more than before, the Black Movement completely internationalized the Black problem in the United States...lastly, the Movement has led to the new type of scholarship on Black people. The traditional images of Black people in white mainstream scholarship are increasingly subjected to brutal criticism (Imbua et al, 2012, pp. 495-496).

Outside the statutory and appointive paid positions, he also held various non-permanent appointments. In the 1960s, he used to deliver lectures to United States Peace Corps Volunteers at Harvard University, he was Field Research Fellow on contemporary problems of the Black Diaspora, between April and July, 1973 and he visited Jamaica, Martinique, Barbados, Trinidad, Haiti, Guyana and some other selected cities in the United States of America. For several years, the distinguished Professor was in the Governing Council, Institute of Black World, Atlanta, Georgia, United States of America (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 12).

As an active student in his days in Oberlin College, he was elected into the Students Union Parliament. In 1957, he was elected member and parliamentary leader, Student's Representative Party of the University of Chicago. That same year, he got elected as the

Executive Secretary of All African Students Union in the Americas and assumed the Presidency of the body in 1960. That year, he led the delegation of All African Students Union in the Americas to the Pan African Students Conference in London, and also met with the then Soviet leader, Nikkei Kruschev (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 13).

Essien-Udom was very popular with students because of his support for the freedom of the black race and they dubbed him "Black Power". He later became known by that sobriquet-"Black Power" than by his real name. In 1964, a year after his return from the United States of America, he hosted Malcom X, an African American Muslim Minister and human rights activist. In his house in Ibadan, during the period they discussed strategies for the civil rights in the United States of America (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 13).

Academic Editorial Work

Apart from teaching, he also contributed to the development of knowledge globally in so many ways. He was Consultant/Reviewer for Quana Publication Incorporated, Dobb Ferry, New York, Reviewer for the Colliers Educational Encyclopedia in 1966, 1972 and 1980 editions; member, Editorial Advisory Board, Journal of Afro American Studies, member, Editorial Advisory Board, Journal of Immigrants and Minorities, published by Frank Cass & Co., London; member, Editorial Board of the Marcus Garvey Papers from 1979 and beyond. He also initiated and served as the General Editor, Ibadan Political and Administrative Studies, General Editor, Africana Modern Library Series from 1965 and beyond 1989 (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 13).

From the 1960's he was involved in the assessment of manuscripts being considered by publishers as well as assessment of publications of academics being considered for higher appointments in Universities both within and outside Nigeria. Under his general editorial direction, at least 17 books were written by Africans and persons of African descent among them: *Fanti National Constitution*, 1968, *The Akan Doctrine of God*, 1968, *In the Land of the Pharoahs*, 1968, *Towards Nationhood in West Africa*, 1971, *Renascent Africa* by Nnamdi Azikiwe, 1968. The initiation of the series was to encourage Nigerian scholars to publish locally. This paid off with the following titles: *Instability and Political Crises in Nigeria* by B.J. Dudley, 1973, *Internal Politics and Foreign Policy* by Gordon J. Idang, 1973 and *Federalism and Foreign Policy* by Bolaji Akinyemi, 1974 (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 12).

His Academic Publications

While he did all these, Essie-Udom also wrote his own books as a further contribution to education and knowledge. His first book, *Black Nationalism: A Search for an identity in America*, published in 1962, is regarded till today as the definitive study on the Negros question in the Americas and still being re-printed.

The book was one of the first studies of the organization, meaning of the Nation of Islam and, by extension, all Black Nationalist movements; this classic work dispels the

still common conception that the movement functioned primarily for political purposes. By observing the daily life of its members, Essien-Udom demonstrated that a nation of Islam served primarily as a means for poor urban blacks to attain a national identity, a sense of ethnic consciousness, and empowerment in a society that denied them these privileges.

In 1978, he co-authored *More Philosophy and Options of Marcus Garvey*, with Amy Jacques Garvey, a Jamaican born second wife of the famous Black activist Marcus Garvey. In addition, he contributed chapters in the following books: *Encyclopedia Britannica 1964 Year Book*, *Nigeria Administration and its Political Setting* (1968); *Malcom X: An International Man?* which he wrote with his wife in 1969. Others were: *Key Issues in Afro American Experience*, 1971, *Encyclopedia Britannica (Macropedia Vol. 11)*, *Race, Science and Society*, 1975; *America their America*, 1969, *The Truth about West African Land Question*, 1971, among others. (Essien-Udom, 2002, p. 14).

Advocate of Minorities Right in Nigeria

Although the fear of the Nigerian ethnic minorities of perpetual discrimination and marginalization by the majority ethnic groups has been re-current since the introduction of regionalism by the Richard's Constitution in 1946, it was the 1953 "civilian coup d'etat, plotted by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe in the Eastern Regional House of Assembly, Enugu, which resulted in the removal of Professor Eyo Ita as the Leader of Government Business of the Region, that precipitated the crystallization of the irreversible advocacy by the Eastern minority groups, under the auspices of the Ibibio State Union, for the restructuring of the Nigerian polity through the creation of states (Akpan, 2014, p. 1).

The Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers (COR) State agenda was vigorously propagated, by the Ibibio, Essien-Udom's ethnic nationality. As a result of the strong currents generated by the state creation movement, the Colonial Government, in 1957, acceded to the request by instituting the Willink's Commission to enquire into the fears of the minorities and the means of allaying them. However, the exercise was marked by intrigues and sabotages by the N.C.N.C., led Eastern Regional government, which never wanted any state to be created in Eastern Nigeria. The consequence of not creating more states before independence proved fatal to the nation and contributed to the demise of the First Republic in 1966.

By 1966, when the states creation agenda was strongly considered by the Gowon's administration, Essien-Udom was one of the elites at the University of Ibadan, whose opinion on national issues was sought by the Gowon's administration. His silent contributions resulted in the creation of 12 states in the country one of which was the South Eastern State. Moreover, it should be strongly noted that the creation of state was one of the powerful weapons that the federal government of Nigeria used to keep Nigeria one. This exercise took the steam off Biafra, thus torpedoing its logistics, tactics and strategy (Umana, 2004, p. 4).

Recognition by His people

In recognition of the numerous contributions he made to the advancement of education and knowledge, the people of Iman Ibom clan in Etinan Local Government Area in 1982, honoured him with the chieftaincy title of *Obong Ifiok Iman Ibom*, (fountain of knowledge) (Obot, 1982, p. 4).

Family

Essien-Udom was married to former Miss Ruby Elsie Maloney from New York, United States of America and the marriage was blessed with a son, Nkereuwem, a legal practitioner based in the United States of America.

Death/Funeral

The academic icon passed on in May, 2002. A memorial service was held in his honor on June 6th June 2002 at the Andrew Rankin Chapel, Howard University, Washington and a reception at Hilltop Lounge of Blackburn Centre of Howard University. His body was flown to Nigeria and was committed to mother earth on the 7th of July, 2002. The funeral ceremony was attended by many eminent Nigerians including the then Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Arc. (Obong) Victor Attah who paid glowing tribute to his memory.

Conclusion

Essien-Udom's contributions to African American history and historiography have been phenomenal. From the legal standpoint, segregation was put to rest in 1964 with the signing of the Civil Rights Act, but centuries of oppression did not evaporate overnight. With the freedom, African Americans began to stand up for their rights without fear, forming a cultural movement to promote the newfound pride they took in their race. The Black Power was a sub-group of the larger strides toward black equality. The active involvement of Essien-Udom through his intellectual activism earned him the sobriquet "Black Power". It is believed that the legendary African American Civil Rights leader Rev. Martin Luther King Jnr. must have been influenced by the philosophy of Essien-Udom, who also admired the courage of Rev. Luther.

Apart from diverse international assignment, Essien-Udom also served as a member of the Governing Council of the prestigious Nigerian Institute of International Affairs between 1972 and 1975 and between 1984 and 1986. During the period, he had the opportunity to contribute in shaping Nigeria's foreign policy as an expert in International Affairs. He was also a member of the Governing Board of Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru near Jos and was involved in examination administration in the West African Examination Council as Examiner and Moderator from the 1960's and served as a member of the Board between 1976 and 1979. He was also a member of the Governing Council of the Joint Admissions and matriculation Board from its inception up to 1979.

Evidently, Professor Udosen Essien-Udom was a competent, reliable, a patriotic Nigerian, a black nationalist and a leading scholar of international repute who strongly believed in the development of education in Nigeria and spent a greater part of his life in that mission. The documentation of his selfless service is done with the primary aim of stimulating other Nigerians because as individuals and as a society, we do not have to learn everything from the start, we simply take over what the past generations have achieved and continue to build on them. Certainly Professor Essien-Udom was a portrait of history; his contributions should be emulated by Nigerians in the process of nation building.

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