

Quest for Internet

In the 105th installment of our weekly series at emeagwali.com, we present letters pertaining to Philip Emeagwali's war memoir "THUNDER ROAD TO BIAFRA." One million people died during that 30-month Nigeria-Biafra Civil War during which Emeagwali lived from refugee camp in Awka-Etiti to an army barrack in Ndoni to the war front in Oguta.



Hi dr Donita.

Let me introduce to you. My name is Mario Aydar. I am a musician. I live in Sao Paulo, Brazil and for a long time in my live I got the nickname of "Biafra" because I was so skinny and the kids - always the kids - used to associate my body shape with the pictures of people from Nigeria by that time. They don't call me Biafra anymore, although I'm not fat, but I kept a kind of nice feeling about that name. Today I've searched on my computer for Biafra to know more about the war, the place and the people and it was a gift for me to know about Philip.

I am not part of the scientific community, so that was the first time I've heard about him and I got really impressed. I started reading his notes about the civil war, saw the sad pictures and red his biography. What a nice guy. I don't know why am I writing. Maybe because I felt so happy to know that the people from the place that somehow in the past used to be my name where fighting and showing us how to do it. That really moved me.

Sorry for my bad English, say hi to Philip and THANKS.

Mario
July 18, 2003



Late 1960s (Biafran era) Lagosians coming from Church.

Nigeria we hail thee

I am always very glad to visit this site. While the civil war was a tragic event for the nation called Nigeria, the death of our citizens Biafrans or Nigerians should for ever never to be forgotten.

But I must let you know that your site has cleverly failed to educate other Nigerians that some Western Nigerians fought on behalf of the Biafrans. Additionally, Lots of westerners were forced to join the federal army that fought in the east. I personally witnessed Westerners being rounded up in Ibadan and forced to become warriors.

I know for a fact that that if the Biafrans had not gotten to Ore, the opposition in the west to the war would have remain solid. It's also not a secret that abandon properties problem was never an issue in the west. The fact that a large population of Easterners reside in the west today is not an accident, it is a testimony to our hospitality and our beilve in United Nigeria.

Why did you not mention the role that Banjo and other westerners played on the Biafran side ?

Why did not educate young Igbos and other Nigerians about what happened to people like Soyinka during the war? I am sure that that the bitterness that some of us westerners experienced



from our fellow Eastern Nigerians in the USA who wrongly believed that the west betrayed them will not disappear, but surely providing some data as to the contribution of other ethnic groups within Nigeria may assist some in understanding that the war was a tragic event in the history of our nation I want to let you know that I supervised an Ibo man who almost cost me my job because of his ignorance and bitterness because I am a western Nigerian. But God is good, I also gained a good friend from the east who was not as myopic as he was during the same period. I have been reading and researching the war to gain better insight to his madness because of my experience. I hope other Nigerians will never cross a bitter individual such as this man.

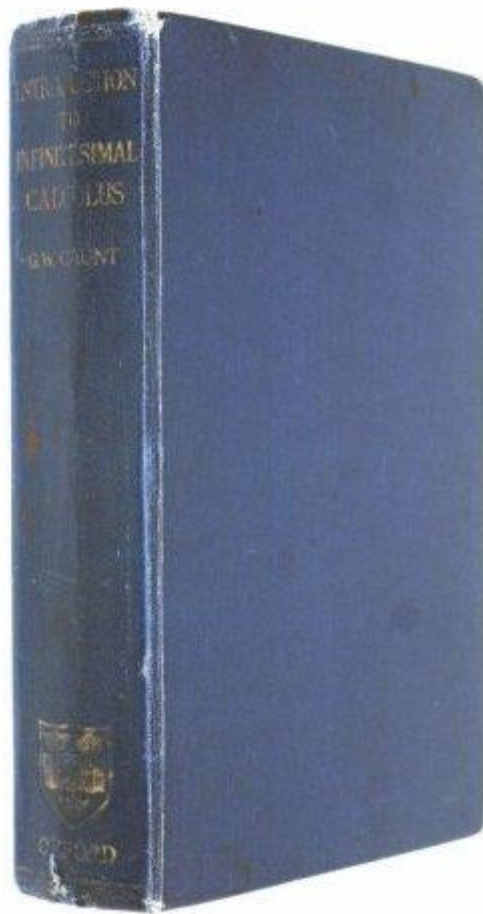
It is my hope that Nigerians at home and abroad will eventually recognize that we are proud people with long history of peaceful co-existence. We have the facts and history on our side. We are the chosen ones destined to lead Africa and the black race. But we cannot reach the promised land if we continue to ignore the contributions that we've all made to our nation good or bad, large or small.

Finally, you are a gem that all Nigerians should cherish. You are one of those few Nigerians that in the USA that I can honestly call a patriot.

Sincerely
Tunde Agboola
August 6, 2003
tunde.agboola@verizon.net

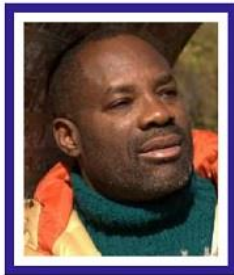


Philip "Calculus" Emeagwali, Enugu, East Central State, Nigeria, 1972. He was nicknamed after the 568-page book (see below photograph) , published by Oxford University Press, titled "An Introduction to the Infinitesimal Calculus With Applications to Mechanics and Physics" by George William Caunt.



DID YOU KNOW?

That a 17-year-old named Philip Emeagwali was positively mentioned in the weekly (Sundays) Science Column of a mid-1972 issue of the *Daily Times* (the *New York Times* of Nigeria). And that a 19-year-old Philip Emeagwali was interviewed in about August 14, 1974 issue of an Oregonian (American) newspaper and in articles in the *Western Oregon Journal* (1974-75, Monmouth, Oregon), and *The Daily Barometer* (1976-77 in Corvallis, Oregon).



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