

Dear Paula,
March 30, 2000

There is a movie, a James Bond one, the name seems to me is "*Never say never*," or something like this. So, maybe means will be found for you, and other English speaking people, to read my novel nameless and not yet concluded.

I started the reading, and I will finish it today, of the book "The Kings & Chiefs of Old Calabar (1785-1925), by Ekei Essien Oku (an Efik woman, "Chief" being a woman), born in 1924; former Library Attendant at Lagos Public Library. She was the first Librarian trained at the UK, em 1953, becoming the first female Librarian in British West Africa. The book is from 1989.

Reading the introduction of "The Kings & . . . , " I saw: " Ajato Amos writing about the Efiks said: . . .

Question: is it common the name Amos? And from what part of the World it originally came? I know, by reading, another famous Amos, he is a writer in Israel. I was reading his opinions about the present visit of the Pope to Palestine and Israel. Then, prior of the other Amos, but preceded by Ben, with Paula and Girshick, there is you. And there is Dan; and the Hebrew Prophet; and the book of the Old Testament; and then Amos and Handy (more linked, somehow, with the sites you worked and are working now). Yet, there is one who said cleverly: "that learning should be based on pleasure and imagination instead of discipline", Amos Bronson. So

. . .

If you ever would ask the same question for me, I would say that:

Yes, my names José (Joseph, is one of the most common names in Brazil and Portugal); then Luiz (with "z", or new ones like my son with "s", is *the*, the most common name in Portuguese language). Then, Pereira da Costa is a combination of two very common family names: Pereira (probably new-Christians from Portugal) as well Costa (probably new-Christian, or generic name for slaves coming from "The Coast" 'da Costa'. Yet, "da" is means not nobility, instead is just the grammatical conjunction linking two substantives. At the Brazilian quarters both in Nigeria and in Accra you will find both misspelling names with "Da" (capital D), and *kalabuly* pretending nobleness.

Concerning Calabar, as far as I have read, about one of our matters, language, there is a record from as early as 1874, referring to British Africans: "King Archibong was faced with the immediate problem of containing the excesses of Sierra Leonians and 'Accra Men,' who styled themselves 'British Africans' and held 'free papers' issued by the Consul . . . And, a bit ahead: "ran schools where the trading chiefs preferred to send their children to learn English and Arithmetic which was more useful for business than Efik language and Bible studies taught by the missionaries."

Pequeno, in Portuguese (and Spanish) means 'small,' then you may qualify anything 'child,' 'man', (small man = homem pequeno), a Country, so on. Now, is the first time I heard that "pidgin language", may be originated from "pequeno". Indeed I have heard commonly people in the markets of Accra and Lagos, as well in Nairobi speaking "pidgin English." When in Accra, I use to live in a guest house property of the Bank that

was my client. And then I use to have a steward (his name was Alasan, of course a Muslin, and a very sweet character). I indeed always enjoyed his "perfect" *pidgin language*. Let me say: maybe not as much as you did in Edo, but in those times I used to understand *twi*, and say few phrases in such Akan language.

Yet, about idioms, and concerning the Ryder's book, I started by reading "The massacre and punitive expedition" immediately after I've opened the parcel. Now I'm reading bit by bit the whole book, sharing the time with other interesting things and readings, inclusive the new one from Calabar (is an indigenous edition the said book). But not to be irreverent, seems to me that I must pay more attention to the use of Portuguese translations in the Ryder's book. If my suspicion is correct I'll let you know.

The book "The Kings & Chiefs . . ." has several clues leading to the assumption out of the gossips I heard, and conclusions I've made that indeed Calabar was a commercial and *financial* center then, and they dealt heavily among other Africans, and with Europeans. I will return on it.

Best regards,