

Relevance of Cartography and Maps to the Military: A cursory Look at the Nigerian Army

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Abstract

Several forms of performance arts are underutilized in the past few decades and the Urhobo riddles are not left out. This research therefore examines various methods of preservation and transfer of riddles in traditional society. This study adopted the survey-descriptive approach as the data and information were collected from natural environment and analysed. It is underpinned by Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory that focuses on the unconscious mind of people which can be activated and its latent materials brought to their conscious awareness. The data were collected with audio recordings which were later transcribed and translated from the Urhobo language into English. In-depth interviews were also conducted to obtain first-hand information from respondents. The respondents were purposively selected and interviewed. The data collected in the field were qualitatively analyzed using descriptive and analytical methods. Findings reveal that riddles perform utilitarian functions like entertainment, education, knowledge transfer, coping and distractive strategies and so on. Riddles as linguistic resources should be preserved and documented due to their cultural values. Though there are problems hindering the growth of riddle performances in contemporary societies, orators have devised the use of popular music as new way of preservation and transferring of oral traditions like the riddles to successive generations.

Keywords: folklore, traditional, riddles, psyche, verbal.

Introduction

"Throughout human history, the imposition of order on land through surveying and mapping has been a critical factor in the progress of mankind in different parts of the world" Mabagunje, (1992). It is therefore important to know what a map is. According to the ICA (2019), 'a map is an abstract visual representation of the geo- environment'. A new definition given to a map by Kraal et al (2021), is that a map is 'an abstracted and authored (often) visual representation of geographic phenomena or processes'. Maps therefore symbolic representations of natural and manmade features of the earth's surface on a paper and with a scale.

Maps are key important tools of the military. Maps are important to the military for strategic and tactical reasons. To the front line soldiers out there, to the tank commander, to the artillery gunner, to the signal man on the front line, to the General in his tent in the frontline planning major assaults and minor commando operations, to the commando on specific or seek and destroy missions, and to the corps Engineer the map is considered the most vital weapon for achieving set goals and above all for survival. To achieve set goals

and for survival, a knowledge of the enemy country is vital. So the first step in winning a war is to have good cartographers and good and latest cartographic equipment for up to date and qualitative maps. For the military to impose order on land, they need maps for planning, execution, consolidation of gains, effective contact between units under combat situations, a general knowledge of target areas, and for organizing defense.

Methods

Available book publications, journals, and materials obtained from the internet served as a source of data for this paper. Opinion of colleagues and soldiers who volunteered to assist was also used.

Background of the Study

Despite Nigeria's economic potentials, economic development has stagnated due to issues of insecurity and mismanagement of public funds. Insecurity in Nigeria stems from violence between Pastoralists and Farmers, Banditry, Islamist militancy, Christian and Muslim violence, Armed Robbers, Kidnap gangs, etc. Due to the inadequacies of the Nigerian police towards solving the insecurity issues, the military was then involved. The military has not been able to overcome the security challenges due to insufficient knowledge about the terrain where they are operating because of lack of up to date maps. The insecurity issues 'once common to the northern parts of the country are gradually sneaking to southern parts with institutional and governmental structures appearing helpless in curbing them' (Hamid, 2022). These insecurity challenges which initially originated from the northwest are now spreading rapidly to other parts of Nigeria. 'By every indication, Nigeria's lucrative kidnapping industry is - expanding into previously safe areas - and seemingly beyond the control of the country's army' (Thisday, 2022). For the military to respond promptly to insecurity issues, they need to have knowledge of the area hence, they need up to date maps and trained Cartographers to make good maps for them.

Cartography

Cartography according to Robinson et al (1978) is a "technique basically concerned with reducing the spatial characteristics of a large area and putting it in a form that makes it observable". The form may be a map, a plan, a chart or a globe. A map, plan or chart gives us a visual impression of what is actually obtained on the ground. Robinson, et al (1978) went further to say that the "map allows us to extend the normal range of visions and makes it possible to see the broader spatial relations that exist over large areas". The Encyclopedia Britannica (1990) defines cartography as the "art and science of graphically representing a geographical area, usually on a flat surface such as a map or chart". This involves every operation from original field surveys to the final printing of maps.

The international Cartographic Association (I.C.A) has proposed that there is a great need to redefine cartography in this present age of information technology. The use of satellite-

photography and imagery have brought great changes and developments in the field of cartography. It is as a result of these new technologies that many cartographers now see the need for a redefinition of cartography. Another recent definition of cartography is one by the Caliper, 2022 which States that cartography is concerned with all the phases of map finishing, including the designing of format and symbolization, drafting, editing, and requirements for reproduction. One of the most accepted definitions is the one by Robinson et al, (1995) which stated that "cartography is the art, science and technology of map making together with their study as scientific documents and works of art", To sum it up, cartography involves the reduction of spatial characteristics of phenomena to desirable scales and presenting them as map models. It is the practice or study of map making. 'The work of the cartographer allows us to understand the geographic landscape around us' Porteous, (2021).

Brief History of Maps in Military Activities

"Maps were initially associated with military intelligences" Brown, (1950)). Wars, whatever their mature (either for defense or aggression) require maps if victory is to be achieved. Great kings were therefore known to have sponsored the mapping of their countries as far back as the 17th century. Propelled by the interest shown by kings Louis xiv of France, Cassine de Thury made an 18-sheet map of France drawn to a scale of 1:86,400 in 1789. It was the first general topographical map of a country based on extensive topographical surveys.

"The Scottish Rebellion of 1745 and the baffle that followed the following year convinced the British Government of the importance of mapping the inaccessible Scottish highlands". Balogun, (1999). By 1840, mapping of Ireland was completed. The first map of the whole of Britain was then produced in 1851 at a scale of 1 inch to a mile. One of the reasons why British colonial officers in Nigeria were requested to "collect information on locations or positions of towns and villages was to have better information for military and administrative purpose" Balogun, (1999). All over the world, the military has been involved in the mapping of their nation and other nations. Data on other counties is collected in peacetime since it is difficult to collect data of an enemy country during war.

Military Maps: Definition and Some Attributes

What is called a Military Map is a "topographic map at the scale of 1:50,000, 1:100,000 or 1:250,000, over printed with Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) grid system" Lifidi. (1999). These scales are preferred because they show the local topography in details. This makes the map trustworthy for use in military operations. Military Maps have to be highly accurate in representation of terrain features, have to be constantly revised or updated, consistent, must show different levels of border lines and national frontiers, and must have a reliable scale for reliable or accurate measurements. What make a military map unique is its grid systems. Military maps use the Universal transverse Mercator grid system (U.T.M),

The U.T.M system was first "Introduced by the United State Anny for military use by N.A.T.O countries in the 1950s. Lifidi (1999). It is now the standard uniform perfection for all military forces throughout the world. With the exception of the Polar Regions. It has since been adopted on Nigerian topographic maps.

Clarke developed the U.T.M in 1880. The military adopted it because of the realization that if a place is to be attacked, its location and direction from the attacker should be known. The U.T.M id system is also reliable because it makes calculation of distance easier. Generally, it makes it easier for soldiers to hit their targets more accurately. The U.T.M has 60 longitudinal zones numbered from 1-60 with each zone being 6° apart in a west to East direction because there are 360° of longitude. The latitudes are divided into 20 latitudinal belts starting from the Equator (0°). Each belt is 8° apart up to 80°^N and 80°^S Norway has been allowed to extend it by 4° to 84°^N. Military operational maps are covered in blue for quick referencing and range purpose.

There are differences between normal maps and military maps. The differences between military maps and normal maps as presented by Quora, (2022). Can be summarized as:

- * Military maps shows more features and sensitive areas like bases, or any other secret locations which are never shown in civilian version of topographic maps.
- * Military maps have more accurate projections and datum to reduce the errors and increase accuracy and precision.
- * Military maps are more accurately grided than normal maps.
- * The military maps has high accurate contour lines depicting the terrain's profile in more accurate manner than the normal civilian maps.

Importance of Relevance of Maps to the Military

'A study of history reveals that most pressing demand for accuracy and detail in mapping have come as the result of military needs' (Global, 2022). The purpose of the military's use of topographic maps are many, maps are used by the military to helps them in locating targets of special interest such as communication lines, bridges, factories, air fields, petrol depots, baffle grounds, routes and military barracks. Maps with good representation of relief allows for cross-country movement of troops, movement of small raiding parties and information on good cover for retreat. "The Coordination system (grids) given allows for computation of firing directions, ranging for artillery and situation identification. It is also good for intelligent monitoring of movements of military formations as well as assessment of terrain pattern" Lifidi (1999).

The land Soldier's interest on terrain maps is because his activities are tied down to the land. Mapped terrain is classified into separate units and appraised for military tactical use by the Land Soldier. Mapped terrain is appraised by the military for information regarding movement of troops and vehicles, tracked and untracked, ammunition and supplies. Other reasons are concealment from attack from the ground and air, defense or fortification of places and concealment of troops, vehicles. amour and supplies from reconnaissance

Organized by the enemy. Maps are also appraised by the military to check for availability of local supplies such as water, food and wood. 'Today, the complexities of tactical operations and deployment of troops are such that it is essential for all soldiers to be able to read and interpret their maps in order to move quickly and effectively on the battlefield' (Global, 2022). The soldiers need to be able to read a map (evaluation) to know where they are and for determining the location of targets. "Evaluation helps in collecting the terrain information that can help in ensuring the safety, security and general welfare of troops and improve their overall performance" Lifidi (1999). It also helps in giving an impression of local enemy positions.

Maps are useful to the military in two ways, for strategic and for tactical reasons. Strategically, "the military's interest is on the distribution of economically. Important targets such as Cities, towns, villages, transport, power and communication lines, factories, villages, hills, mountains etc. While tactically, special attention is given to visibility, cross country morbidity, reaction of terrain to deformation and availability of water and construction materials" Patrick, (1999). From these, entire one can see that military operations need maps for their success. The role of the Cartographer here is to compile data on aspects of the landscape, which include topography, geomorphology, geology, hydrology, vegetation, soils and land use. He compiles the information and presents it as a map for easy interpretation.

In Nigeria, the Nigerian Army Directorate of Military training (D.M.T) has a map depot with large collection of topographic maps covering various parts of Northern and Western parts of Nigeria with military grids printed on them. Most of these maps were produced in the 1960s and are now almost obsolete. Most of them do not reflect the true situation of things on the ground. The military in Nigeria does not have fully developed cartographic units. This does not mean that the military forces in Nigeria are not interested in cartography, There is a Nigerian Army Engineers service Regiment at Ogun State. The Regiment "was established with the facilities to produce operational maps for the military" Lifidi (1999). In spite of the presence of this Regiment, "various units and training institutions still buy maps from the Federal Surveys and private mapping companies.

During the Iraq/Allied forces war of 1991 and more recently the Afghanistan war, attention was focused more on the use of maps for military operations. The American Defense mapping Agency produced about; "600 maps in digital form, 760 line maps, 26 city maps, 308 interim coverage (terrain) maps, 125 satellite and other image maps and 76 hydrographic maps. All of these were photo copied and made available to troops fighting in Iraq" Clarke, (1992). For the first time, maps were sent to Saudi Arabia as priority shipment daily on a C130 plane, exceeding in priority shipment of even medical supplies, spare parts, for missile launchers and other supplies.

Implications for the Nigerian Army

Knowledge about the terrain or topography is a vital factor when discussing security and

insecurity of a space' Darma, (2022). Presently, the Nigerian army is engaged in fighting the Boko Haram, Bandits, IPOB and other insurgents. In the northwest, the terrain is forested, rugged and dissected by many rivers and streams. Wide flood plains and swamps also exist. The military has failed to solve the issues of insecurity because of insufficient knowledge of the terrain due to lack of up to date maps. In the northeast, the Adamawa highlands, Sambisa forest and the small scattered islands in Lake Chad imposed many challenges on military operations. In the south of Nigeria, the forest and swamps also contributed to the failure of military operations. In all of these areas where the terrain proved a challenge to military operations, there are no sufficient and up to date maps to help in carrying out successful military operations. These failed military operations have exposed the weaknesses of the army. Some of these weaknesses obtained from verbal interactions with some soldiers include;

1. The Army does not have enough trained digital cartographers to produce up to date and enough maps.
2. The Nigerian army has not obtained enough and up to date imagery from Commercial Satellite companies to produce maps.
3. The existing Nigerian Army Military Maps have not been sorted, classified and catalogued.
4. The army has no enough Computers and associated equipment to generate maps.
5. The Army has no capacity to establish an Engineering topographic laboratory in the field to produce field maps for combat purpose due to lack of modern equipment.
6. Existing maps are obsolete and are good only for mock baffles, artillery and infantry ranging purpose.

Conclusion

The growing insecurity in the country and the dictates of modern tactics of warfare in which, the causality level and the overall cost and duration of wars are to be reduced, and the overall goal of having a trained and well equipped Army makes it a must for the military to have up to date maps. Recent wars fought with bandits and insurgents have exposed the weakness and level of combat readiness of the Nigerian Army. The Nigerian Army therefore needs to be revolutionized in this new era of computer and space technology. The Army needs to establish a Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) with the responsibility of producing maps on a large scale for defense purposes.

Recommendations

Since the first step in waging a war is having adequate knowledge of the terrain characteristics of the enemy country, one cannot therefore argue about the fact that cartography is an essential support service in Combat Situations. It is in view of this importance that the following are suggested, that: -

- Digital Cartography should be introduced in the Department of Geography of the Nigerian Defense Academy and all the Departments of Geography of institution of higher learning in Nigeria.
- Pupils, Students and Youth Corp members should be taught brief courses on military maps since every young Nigerian is a potential Soldier in view of his pledge to defend his country Nigeria.
- Sponsoring of officers and other ranks overseas for training as digital Cartographers
- The Army should liaise with commercial satellite companies for training and easy access to imagery.
- There is the need for constant updating of the available maps so that they can reflect changes on the terrain.
- The various map producing units in the Army should be supplied modern equipment to enable them produce maps of quality within a short time.

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