CAAS ARCH PERSONS-FACULTY - PUBS-Sudor Kasa, Millian

## THE CENTER FOR AFROAMERICAN AND AFRICAN STUDIES, 1970-75

by

G.N. Uzoigwe and N. Sudarkasa\*

During the 1968-69 academic year, Dean Stephen Spurr of the Rackham School of Graduate Studies chaired a study committee on the feasibility of establishing a program in Afro-American studies at the University of Michigan. The committee was established at the impetus of Black students at the University of Michigan and in response to the general demand of Blacks across the nation that Black Studies Programs be made an integral part of university offerings. This demand represented a logical extension of both the Black Power movement and the earlier "sit-in" movement organized by college students. It also gave rise, during the late 1960's, to scholarly debates among American educators regarding the intellectual, educational, and social validity of such programs.

This debate created a crisis in American higher education. Factions representing progressive and "establishment" Blacks and those representing conservative and liberal non-Blacks, all articulated their points of view with great vehemence. The various types of Black Studies or Afro-American Studies programs that were fashioned as a result of this nation-wide debate are watered-down versions of the earlier, more radical demands.

<sup>\*</sup>Written in December, 1979 for publication in The University of Michigan: An Encyclopedic Survey, 1940-75, forthcoming.