

# NIGERIA

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*The Anatomy of Her Existence*

By

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to God Almighty,

and all those that died during and after the Nigeria's independence.

I also dedicate this book to my wife and children. I love you guys really good.

## APPRECIATION

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my parent ( Mr & Mrs Friday Asikhia), Sisters, Brothers, and nephews).

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## INTRODUCTION

Nations come into existence through different means, and the nature of germination greatly influences and shapes the future progress, problems, challenges, successes, and unity of these nations. Some countries, like England, were established through geographic isolation, while others, like the United State of America and Australia, came into existence through emigration, and that means, displacing the native nations. The progression for the countries in this latter group is the gradual culmination of thought, thereby through concerted ideation, thinking themselves into nationhood.

For some other countries, they come into existence through the collapse and withering away of old kingdoms and empires. In this regard, Italy, France, notably comes to mind. Other countries enter existence by means of peace treaties, and others, like most of the African nations, through the design and machination of colonialism.

Nigeria, a country in the present-day West Africa came into existence by the march of the 20<sup>th</sup> century colonialism. But the deeper analysis will trace the advent of Nigeria, like many other African countries, to the 1884-5 Berlin conference which begun the scramble of Africa. What this so-called scramble spelt for Africa was the possession and dominance of the people, kingdoms and territories by foreign powers and blocs that only collapsed her original boundaries and integrating them into new entities once referred by Wole Soyinka as nation spaces.

For Nigeria, it all began with a different Northern and Southern protectorate administered separately by Britain until 1914 arrived, accompanied by Lord Lugard and Flora Shaw, hence the amalgamation of the protectorates and the birth of a new country, Nigeria. The most populous black nation, clearly, came into being by a compulsive conglomeration of

diverse people without regards for their consent, whose characteristics, ideologies, philosophies, cultures and religions were incompatible, but who by the interests of the colonial masters were gathered into a unit, and made a country.

This book, driven by a dedicated ambition to address the foundational problems of Nigeria before prescribing solutions, recognizes the emanation of these problems from the very outset and formulation of the country. Today, the challenges facing the country is hydra headed and complex, ranging from economic inequality, social injustice and flowing into nepotism, corruption and political lackluster. This book contends to establish how virtually all the thematic problems of Nigeria has the imprints of the first original issue: lack of consensual definition of what Nigeria is or should be for the people, an absence of agreement by the people of what the country should be for the people.

In the face of its sweltering problems and cantankerous history which, at one time featured a 30-month war, the country continues to exist as a unit, betraying a seeming resolve to remain in existence as one body. But this continued existence has not been one without challenges, and have in times neared implosion, inciting urgent needs for discourse over the future and definition of the country. Chinua Achebe (1983) opined that “Nigeria is not a great country, it is one of the most corrupt, insensitive, inefficient places under the sun, it is dirty, callous, noisy, ostentatious, dishonest and vulgar; in short it is one of the most unpleasant places on earth.” Such angry view is the opinion of the literary icon towards the country and in the same book, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Achebe summarized that the problem with Nigeria is squarely and primarily the failure of leadership.

However, opening his last book, Achebe narrated that the problem with Africa, which Nigeria is prominently among, started in 1884-5. “The rain that beat Africa”, Achebe wrote,

using rain as a metaphor for problem and challenges, “began four to five hundred years ago, from the ‘discovery’ of Africa by Europe, through the transatlantic slave trade, to the Berlin Conference of 1885.” Agreement to Achebe’s diagnosis finds support in many scholars and texts which one of them is Walter Rodney who wrote the famous *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*.

Yet regardless of this argument and much of the validity and veracity that attends and characterize it, Africa, and Nigeria, has throughout the span of its contemporary existence come upon defining moments that provided the opportunity to shape its destiny, to chart a new course, to develop a path, to build itself and to define what it is and what it should be. For Nigeria, whose independence came October 1<sup>st</sup> 1960, the opportunity immediately came to define itself, to shape her path and operational structure. With coups coming in January 1966 and its consequent counter coups, Nigeria followed a totally and initially unconceived direction; yet in its abrasiveness, these experiences when closely studied, proved to have in the grand scheme, provided opportunities in the end of it all, to once again form and build a country. Some of these opportunities appeared at the end of the Civil War that lasted between 1967-1970, which its end was a great opportunity to make good of Nigeria; another chance surfaced once again in 1980 when Shehu Shagari’s civilian government was sworn-in, bringing the halftime of the military junta. It flopped, the government, as the country remained blighted by the same problems persecuting her from its birth. When 1999 arrived, finally sweeping away the military, ushering the current democratic dispensation, avenue for Nigerian greatness appeared again, but till now, keeps flickering and dwindling into oblivion.

Nigeria today stands in a myriad of problems, making the country a hotbed of contentious issues, dragging the reputation of the nation down in the comity of nations. The over 250

ethnic sects lumped into a whole in Nigeria continues to suffer the progressive ambitions of Nigeria as no clear formula has been found and adequately applied to rescue the nation from the malady of nepotism stemming from the mindless favouritism of leaders at the helm. Often times, this attitude sacrifices competence and meritocracy at the altar of mediocrity.

Once, Quota System and Federal Character were promulgated as principles to answer the question of ethnic complexities and equal representation, but leaders continue to flout it, and when respected, is greatly influenced by party politics to a point of maddening abuse and insult of the masses sense and understanding of pertinent quality. In mainstream parlance, Nigerians call this: square pegs in round holes. This often give rise to a total disinterest and belief in the government by the people. The average Nigerian believes that the government lacks the political will to drive the country towards sustainable development.

Evidence of this abounds, just as many challenges beset the country, dragging and slow-pedaling the little spark and charge of resolve towards greatness. By the behavioural disposition of federal governance, a section of the country strongly believe it is being marginalized and classified as second grade citizens in their own country, while another quarter believes it is their right and inheritance to rule Nigeria. The South Eastern Igbo people, who were the opposition to the Nigerian force in the Civil War of 1960, a war entered into because of their secessionist ambition, remain till today, with the same secessionist inclinations. Marginalization remains the popular question enlivening the separatist proclivity and the extreme apologists of these understanding has since long formed unions like the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra, MASSOB, and most recently, actively, the Independent People of Biafra, IPOB.

Injustice pervades the country, still, and divides itself into folds: economic, social and security. There exists in Nigeria an unfair balance and distribution of resources, occasioning a wide and widening class gap. There is social injustice with some citizen, in enormous impunity, living above the law. The executive arm of government often disobeys court orders, for example against Col Dasuki who is detained for arms fund embezzlement scandal, mocking the setting of separation of power while the legislature remain lulled in sleep by inane party politics. The elite bourgeois and the leaders secure themselves with state resources, employing the best hands in the police and military, protecting themselves from the insecurity their incompetence created, leaving the masses embroiled in deep insecurity. Kidnapping is rife in the country and insurgency through powerful sects like Boko Haram, claim a large chunk of the country's territory.

With every rising dawn, it appears Nigeria is stuck and eternally devoid of redemption. Is that true, this book asks, seeking to offer solutions but not without first, diving into the depths and bottoms of Nigeria's intricate problems. By suggesting that the state and religion should be separated, hence making Nigeria a full secular country, this book aims to establish the background for further development geared towards progressivism. Yet it is not without factoring the ingrained and deeper fusion of religion into the fabric of a vast demography of Nigeria.

Recognizing the relevance of Achebe's diagnosis, this book identifies and ask for a more intellectual leadership, which with foresight, zeal and will, can gear the nation into developmental motion. It is because all tenable solutions needed to resuscitate Nigeria, can be subsumed into leadership: Education; Human Capital Development and Investment; Strong and Robust system structuring which will factor the necessity of digitalizing the economy, electronically recording and registering births and deaths,

institutionalizing social security and credit cards, hence retiring the raw cash circulation; equitable appointments and deliberate employment of youth into governance etc.

However, this book admits the limited nature of man's mind and intellect, hence withdrawing any form of guarantee that all needed elements for the achievement of the ideal Nigeria is laid herein. Even, there is no consensus on what the ideal Nigeria is, hence the obtainable difficulty. Yet this text offers an incisive anatomy of the problems while offering palliative measures, therefore assuring that while it may not answer all, it still is a nice place to begin the conversation, or at least assist and spur the dialogue.

## CHAPTER 1

### NIGERIA NEVER WAS

#### NIGERIA'S PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Humans exist and operate within the system of cultures. Culture is the very nucleus of a people, carrying the soul of a people's ideological orientation. Culture can rightly have said to be the backbone of a people's existence, for no community exists in a vacuum. Whenever and wherever two or three thousand of people are gathered, forming a society, they are bound to operate with a certain philosophical, sociological, psychological and political attitude. This commonly, can be held as the people's culture.

What is today known as Nigeria is a collection of varied people who previously, before the era of colonialism, were too different in ways and practices that some of them had no immediate relationship history. The binding forces of colonialist economic and political intentions, however, banded these vastly differentiated people into corporately existing, recognizable unit.

Archeological evidence from various parts of Nigeria suggest that parts of country have been settled by man since the Paleolithic or Old Stone Age period 500, 000 – 9000 B. C (Obaro Ikime, 1980). Nigeria is made up of 250 ethnic groups (USA Embassy, 2012), boasting of 527 languages of which 20 are now extinct. The population is estimated to be over 180 million people, making the country the most populous black nation in the world. Yet in the face of its diverse ethnicities, the population is unevenly distributed as 70% of the constituent people emanate from a certain ethnic group termed the majority—Yoruba,

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Hausa and Igbo. The remaining 30% is made up of the other minority ethnicities which has notable groups like the Tiv, Kanuri, Efik-Ibibio, Ijaw, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Edo etc.

The United State Embassy, grading the popularity and influence of ethnic groups in Nigeria, opined that the Hausa-Fulani is the most populous and politically influential of all the ethnic groups in Nigeria with a statistic of 29%. They are followed closely by the Yoruba 21%, Igbo 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, and Tiv 2.5%. These ethnicities are situated strategically in the country's design with the dominant Hausa-Fulani residing in the Northern of the country, the Yoruba in the Southwest, and the Igbos in the Southeast. Other popular but less numerous groups which are subsumed in the minority, namely, the Edo, Efik-Ibibio, Ijaw, Itsekiri, Urhobo occupies a geographic location peculiar and specially designed by Nigeria, known as the South-south. The highest containment of Nigeria's variegated ethnicities is in the Middle Belt where over 180 different groups are situated.

With its capital currently at Abuja, Nigeria exists today in the current world as active actor especially for the African and/or black race. Known as the Giant of Africa for its huge economic potential and human capital, Nigeria hold and retain a special reputation, and yet for its staggering economy and other scourge that blights it, also ridiculed and disrespected.

However, by the virtue of its great diversity, numbing complexity arises when an understanding is sought about the country. For this, to make sense of Nigeria, learning is approached through separating the peoples of Nigeria and understanding them individually. The culture, tradition, language, vocation, topography, and geography of the six major ethnic groups in Nigeria vary hence making it hard to obtain the spirit, culture and identity of Nigeria, as a country. There may be no such thing as there is in other



places—Danish Culture, Irish Identity, Scottish Mentality—and it is because of the multifaceted, widely variegated and separate identities that make up what is today known as Nigeria.

In light of this and to create a background for the grand scheme of this book, it is imperative to enter a brief analysis and elucidation of the majority ethnicity who factor prominently in the functioning and dynamics of Nigeria as a country.

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#### THE EDO PEOPLE AND THE BINI EMPIRE

The study of Nigerian history beyond the 20<sup>th</sup> century is mired in obfuscation given the oral nature of transmitting and documenting events by the peoples that constitute the present-day Nigeria. Such characterizes the record and history of the Edo people and their famous Bini Empire although it is not phenomenon peculiar to Edo people. Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa histories share these same qualities yet scholars have greatly dedicated energy in the study of the people and empires, and much has been written.

The Edo speaking people of Benin, known best for their erstwhile Kingdom and Empire of Benin, are situated immediately east of Yorubaland. By factors arising from proximity and a degree of cultural and political similarities, arguments have been made, seeking to establish links between Yorubaland and the Edo people. The Yoruba town of Eko, now known as Lagos, has been fingered to have its origin traced to the Edo of Benin, hence the belief that Eko was founded by the Edos. While this remains a subject of fierce debate among the two peoples, the first historic Oba of Benin is strongly believed to be of Yoruba descent. To buttress this contentious argument, it has been suspected that the beautifully

crafted and famous bronze heads of Benin were made using the same processes of Yoruba craftsmen and artists at Ife (Obaro Ikime, 1980).

The Benin kingdom rose through conflicted history in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and ceased to exist in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The end of the kingdom significantly occurred at the hands of the British. The city was destroyed after an earlier British expedition was quelled and assaulted. The emissaries of the expedition were told not to enter the city in a period of certain religious festival, but they paid no heed and resolved towards entrance, hence fetching themselves the assault. In a vengeful response, the British burnt down the city after pillaging it, carting away the cities sculpts, bronzes, ivory and other treasures.

Fierce contentions exist till date on the origin of the first Oba of Benin, the scope of the empire and its influence. Different accounts exist but share striking similarity especially in the regards of the tale of a time where the Benin people sought a ruler from the people of Yoruba Ife. Before a total disappearance of the trail, the last framework for reference to an origination is traced to Ogiso, the first ruler of the Benin Empire, who is taken to be 'Kings of the sky'. But A. F.C. Ryder states that "it is possible that the whole concept of the first Ogiso dynasty is a mirror-image of the historical kingdom evoked to explain a period for which no other frame of reference is remembered." (Obaro Ikime, 1980).

The Ogiso dynasty ended following the great dispute over a successor. The great palace intrigue and the battle for power erupted between the warrior crown prince Ekaladerhan, son of the last Ogiso and his young paternal uncle. In anger over an oracle, Prince Ekaladerhan left the royal court with his warriors. When his old father the Ogiso died, the people and royal kingmakers preferred their king's son as natural next in line to rule, bringing to an end, the Ogiso reign. The Benin Empire evolved over time to what it is today

known by incorporating and lending a ruler from another land than from their ilk. This ordeal fraught with divergent narratives, became itself a problem in understanding the Benin history.

But a simple account of the situation is found thus: "The exiled Ekaladerhan, who was not known, gained the title of Oni Ile-fe Izoduwa, which has been corrected in the Yoruba language to *Ọ̀ṣani* (*Ọghẹnẹ*) of Ile-Ife Oduduwa. He refused to return to Edo but sent his son *Ọranmiyan* to become king in his place. Prince *Ọranmiyan* took up residence in the palace built for him at Uzama by the elders, now a coronation shrine. Soon after he married a beautiful lady, *Ẹrinmwide*, daughter of *Osa-nego*, the ninth *Enogie* of Edo. He and *Erinwide* had a son. After some years he called a meeting of the people and renounced his office, remarking that the country was a land of vexation, *Ile-Ibinu*, and that only a child born, trained and educated in the arts and mysteries of the land could reign over the people. The country was afterward known by this name. He caused his son born to him by *Ẹrinmwide* to be made King in his place and returned to Yoruba land Ile-Ife. After some years in Ife, he left for *Ọyọ*, where he also left a son behind upon leaving, and his son *Ajaka* ultimately became the first *Alaafin* of *Ọyọ* of the present line, while *Ọranmiyan* (the exiled Prince *Ekaladerhan*, also known as *Izoduwa*) himself was reigning as *Ọṣani* of Ife. Therefore, *Ọranmiyan* of Ife, the father of *Ẹwẹka I*, the *Ọba* of Benin, was also the father of *Ajaka*, the first *Alaafin* of *Ọyọ*. *Ọṣani* of Ife. Allegedly *Ọba Ẹwẹka* later changed the name of the city of *Ile-Binu*, the capital of the Benin kingdom, to "*Ubinu*." This name would be reinterpreted by the Portuguese as "*Benin*" in their own language." (*The Sun*, Wednesday, 17 September 2008).

The Benin kingdom today, like most traditional monarch system in Nigeria, has experienced a great decline in reverence and significance due to urgent growth towards civilization.

Some of its mysteries, which contributed to the respect and power it commanded in the past, has been demystified through the interaction of traditional religion and Christianity, hence sieving off the empire's leverage to authority.

But in the remainder of traditional societies in Nigeria today, the Benin Monarch system remains among the tentatively powerful. Its customs are still adhered to and respected, with traditional practices still faithfully abided by. Albeit what obtains in the current times pales drastically to the very ancient system, placed among its contemporaries today, alongside the Yoruba Ife traditional monarch system, the Benin Monarch retains an admirable significance.

Edo State, the current home to the Benin Empire and people, is located in the South-south geo political zone of Nigeria. Delta State, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers and Bayelsa sits with Edo in this geo political zone, with each state taken as the Niger Delta, the oil rich region of Nigeria. The Bini people are today known for their academic penchant and excellence, and, in what looks like a threadlike attachment to their origin, known for their great cultural symbolic dressing.

Taken as one of the minorities, the Bini people of Edo attempt national political influence through strategic angling of their interests and tactical party alignments. With the former Governor of Edo State, Adams Oshiomhole, as the National Chairman of the current ruling political party in Nigeria, All Progressive Congress, and the Chairman of the Niger Delta Development Commission, Dr. Pius Odubu, all originating from Edo State, the Bini people appear to be in the favour of the prevalent political tide.

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## THE IGBOS

The Igbo people are an ethnic group native to the present day south-central and southeastern Nigeria. Like all people who share a common identity, the Igbos have their own history, ideology, structure, hence culture. The Igbos have traditions, values, principles and social order that is peculiar to them, even though not generally uniform across all Igbo societies.

The Igbos are, in population, the least of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria who prior to colonial rule, was a highly decentralized people. Their language, also called Igbo, is vastly spoken throughout the present day five Igbo states, despite the presence of variations in dialect. Arriving Igboland, colonialism in its overhauling strides met an Igbo people who were egalitarian in nature and republican in structure.

Igbo communities were highly dispersed and had very few occasions where they were compact. The dispersion of the Igbo communities implies the absence of a strong and united political structure. Yet, this lack of political leadership or monarchs do not suggest the absence of order. The structure of leadership, in the dispersed nature of the villages, were obtained through headship of the extended families most aged men. While it was a patriarchal society, women wielded a level of power specially designed that it was revered and respected till date.

Yet even as the power was designed to exist in its own way in the Igbo villages, authority never resided solely in the hands of any individual or family and although there were chiefs, usually elderly men, there was no ruling aristocracy which wielded authority as a specialized full-time occupation (Reuben Udo in Obaro, 1980). The highly decentralized nature of the Igbo people and their dispersed units, often existing in designs that shows no

unitary and comprehensively defined political aspirations, earned them the description of stateless people.

Like most of the tropical rain forest settlers of the pre civilization era, the Igbos were mostly agricultural people who farmed produces like yam, cassava, cocoyam, corn, melon, beans, okra and pumpkin. The yam is a highly revered produce in the Igbo community, often used for major ceremonies and symbol of traditional bureaucracy. While the men farm and cultivate yams, women deal on other crops often used for trade while the yams are used for household feeding, and weighing the degree of a man's wealth.

The design of the Igbo people's societal structure made the application of the colonialist system of Indirect Rule a tough task as there were no identifiable authority able to lord the communities and apply policies. This problem led to the introduction of warrant chiefs who were absorbed from a certain demography of the Igbo population that was outside of the distinguished fulfilled elders and title holders. The emotions and tensions this aroused, combined with the unscrupulous and highhanded activities of this erring new warrant chiefs, put to the inventions of ways not previously known, like the tax system, all contributed in causing crisis like the Aba Women riot of 1929.

The religious system consists of a belief in a creator god, Chukwu or Chineke; an earth goddess, Ala; and so many other deities represented in shrines. There system designed a personal access to the spiritual through Ikenga, the physical presence of the individual and personal god, Chi. There also was a general belief in the ancestors whom prayers and libations are offered, seeking they watch and protect the living. The major dominant religious practice within the contemporary Igbos is Christianity and a tiny number still adherent to the traditional religious system.

The contact with the colonial masters did not only transform the religious ideology of the Igbo people, however education was to an overwhelming degree, adopted and followed. This led to the Igbo people overtime producing educated elites across various fields of study. Their inclination to trade witnessed transformation as it blossomed from the crude barter of subsistence products to bulk international trade enterprises. Today, the Igbos are specially known as great traders and business people who traverse the breadths and lengths of the globe, spurred by a fantastic brand of bravery, in pursuit of business opportunities.

Entering post-colonial era, the Igbo people, having amassed great education, were qualified for the ranks and files of administrative and professional offices vacated by the departing colonialists. By this time, the village loving and residing Igbo man, in his pursuit for education, and then opportunities, have spilled out in great numbers from there rain forest hamlets, migrating in all directions, to faraway cities in Nigeria.

But they met 1966, the year of the first coup d'état led by Kaduna Nzogwu (Chinua Achebe, 2012). This year marked the beginning of the new chapter the progressively marching Igbos would face as citizens in Nigeria. The January 1966 coup, famously dubbed 'the Igbo coup', conspired with a growing suspicion of Igbo domination agenda, as they were virtually, although by excellence and qualification, dominating the civil service, academia and military. By the erroneous name tagging of the coup, a counter coup followed briefly, just months later, and a pogrom, killing the Igbos by their number in many other parts of Nigeria. Elaborate details of the intricate activities and factors that characterized these times will be handled in a later chapter of this book, but ultimately, the culmination of events within this era led to the secession degree and the consequent civil war that lasted from 1967 to 1970.

The Igbos continue to exist corporately within Nigeria as Nigerians but despite the war ending on a brotherly note, touting the doctrine of ‘No victor, No vanquished’ and the principle of 3R’s—reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation—a great degree of the Igbo descent believe they are being marginalized as an eternal punishment for charging the country to a warring duel. As if to honour Wole Soyinka’s thinking that “an idea once conceived, is indestructible”, a faction of the Igbo people remains till today, in love with the secessionist idea and ambition of Biafra.

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## THE YORUBA PEOPLE

The Yoruba people are situated in the Southwest of Nigeria and have held strong historical and political relevance in Nigeria. Unlike the Igbo precolonial settlement, the Yoruba had a compact socio-political system where powers were defined and finely distributed. This system was a decentralized monarchy that conferred on the Oba a stretch of powers that although were not absolute but was high degree.

Within the system, the Oba was the cultural, political, and somewhat spiritual leader. He however had chiefs and lords whom some responsibilities of power were delegated to, with the Oba overseeing the affairs. The council of chiefs, natively called ‘Oyomesi’, performed the functions of checks and balances interrelatedly with the Oba. The Oba with his chiefs exercised judicial powers especially over serious crimes, allocated land to people, settled land and other inter-ward disputes and saw to the general welfare of the people, (Ibiyemi O., 1998).



This council of chiefs, headed by the 'Bashorun', who acts as the prime minister of the kingdom, had more powers outside of handling the affairs of their designated portfolios. They were kingmakers but more than just crowning a new king at the demise of the old, they also deposed kings who were erring and going against the dictates of his duty and of the kingdom's custom. They communicate this message, which informs the Oba that he is wanted no more, hence stripping him of his position through offering him a "parrot-egg gift which made the Oba commits suicide" (Chikendu, P. N. 2003:23). For the old Yoruba system, once the Oba gets to a point he is rejected, his life often goes with it.

The chiefs running their offices, resolve issues of governance and come to some unanimous decisions. They therefore consult and inform the Oba who, quite often accepted their decisions, but not bound do as he can upturn or reject the decisions. This way, the system practices a monarchy where no one person arbitrarily led and directed the affairs of the people.

In the old Yoruba social system, precisely before the colonial gust swept through the present day Nigeria, there was yet another very important group within: The Ogboni Fraternity. They were a secret society that comprised prominent elders and headed by the 'Oluwo', and the fraternity checked the excesses of the kingmakers in the area of dethronement of an Oba and performed rituals on behalf of the kingdom (Ezeh R.C, 2016). This group, by the implication of their duty, completed the stretch of checks and balances in the system, thereby making the kingdom's setting thoroughly decentralized, ensuring that no political officer or unit abused their powers.

With the village heads (Baale) and ward heads (Mogaji) appointed by the Oba, the decentralization of administration came to its effective zenith. Various 'Age-grades' played

roles such as security and general maintenance of law and order, environmental sanitation, civic duties like construction of roads, markets and public buildings as well as mass hunting, and organizing joint planting and harvesting. Generally, the Yoruba pre-colonial political system was semi-feudalistic, semi-monarchical and theocratic (Ezeh R.C, 2016).

(Reuben K. Udo, 1980) observed that although the Yoruba were predominantly an agricultural people, they have a unique and longstanding tradition of living in large towns, the largest of which include Ibadan (627, 380 in 1963), Ogbomosho (319, 880), Oshogbo (210, 380), Ilorin (218, 550), Abeokuta (187, 290), Ilesha (165, 880), and Ede (134, 550). The Yoruba are the most urbanized group not only in Nigeria but throughout the African continent, Reuben opined.

While with revolution of time, through expanding urbanization and migration of other Nigerians, a tangible amount of Yoruba became traders, the main occupation of their men in the earlier times was farming, and their women, subsistence trading. There was also, as (Reuben 1980) observed, a considerable number of professional artists and craftsmen who excelled in wood carving and other crafts. Existing proof of this is the famous terracotta and bronze heads of Ife, which are reputed to be over 800 years old.

The Yoruba are significantly remarked as deeply religious people who also hold high regards for the aged and hierarchical superior people. This reputation is often conflated, leading people to rate them as sheepish people, but the contrary is what is true. As (Reuben 1980) explained, “the Yoruba is extremely independent, diplomatic and resentful of despotic leadership, qualities which have been clearly expressed not only during the pre-colonial Yoruba civil wars but also in the politics of Yorubaland since Nigerian Independence.”

This is critically evidential in the post-colonial regional politics of 1963 and 1965 where intra ethnic conflict blighted the Yoruba and saw their leaders, Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Ladoke Akintola, enter deep fight over varied reasons that share a political theme. The searing conflict drove Obafemi Awolowo to prison but was later released 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1966. Since then, the Yoruba has been instrumental both in military and civilian leadership of the country.

The Yoruba speaking people, in present day Nigeria, takes a core occupation of six states: Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, Ekiti and Osun. However, a residue of Yoruba people can be seen in confluence states like Kwara and Kogi, where there is a mixture of peoples and cultures. Apparently emanating from their precolonial setting and practices, the Yoruba people are today, a very active political people and have contributed more leaders in the political leadership of Nigeria than any other ethnic group in Nigeria excluding the Hausa-Fulani. This also may be as a result of the numerical superiority and advantage of the Yoruba as they are the second largest ethnic group in Nigeria, again, after the Hausa-Fulani (USA Embassy, 2012). Since the beginning of the current and fourth democratic republic in 1999, running into its twentieth year, the Yoruba have produced a two-term (eight years) president in the person of Olusegun Obasanjo, and a serving vice president, Yemi Osibanjo, entering his fifth year. This portrays the political relevance and vigorous participation of the Yoruba in Nigeria, unlike the Igbos who for various under-spoken reasons, are viewed as apathetic to the country's political tussle.

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## THE HAUSA-FULANI

While the Hausa-Fulani has come to be integrated and viewed as one, it usually was not the same at the earlier times of Nigerian history. Until the jihad led by Othman Dan Fodio, the Hausa existed independently, as an ethnic people of their own and with peculiar practices. As (Reuben, 1980) observed, that “the Hausa political scene featured a number of city-states which were never unified until the Fulani conquest in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.” It was after the Fulani conquest, Reuben further buttressed, that Islam became more widely adopted, even though it had been introduced as far as back as the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Till today, following the cited conquest, most Hausa profess the Muslim and both their political and social life, including the land tenure and legal systems are very much influenced by Islamic principles (Reuben, 1980).

The Hausa land has become the home of the Fulani, who as Reuben observed, appear to be the only ethnic group in Africa with no distinct territory. The Fulani in this understanding, have been found in almost every country of the Sudan Zone, extending from Senegal in the West to the upper Nile in the East. They are believed to have migrated into Nigeria through the west, settling amongst the Hausa, before the eventual conquest.

The Hausa economy like a good number of Nigerian ethnic sects, featured cultivation except that theirs was at an intensive degree. They farmed at this massive ratio, guinea corn, beans, groundnut, maize and millet, and this made them settle in small agricultural villages. But they nonetheless had traditional towns like Kano, Katsina, Zaria and Sokoto. Despite owning livestock like cattle, those were entrusted to the nomadic Fulani settling among them while the Hausa limited their pastoral control on goats and chicken rearing.

Reuben 1980 classified the Fulani into two categories: Cattle Fulani and Settled or Home Fulani. The Cattle Fulani, Reuben explained, is characteristically a nomadic cattle rearer

who, especially during dry seasons, migrates frequently with his cattle in search of water and good grazing. This brand of Fulani leads a simple life, lives in a camp of tents or grass shelters which is deserted immediately a death occurs. This category of Fulani, rarely intermarry outside their tribe, hence have succeeded in maintaining their identity in spite of years of sojourn among other people. Unlike the Town Fulani, the Cattle Fulani is not always a devout Muslim as they practice numerous customs of traditional religion.

The Town or Settled Fulani, Reuben 1980 opines, live in the conquered towns of Hausa land where he is often an administrator or farmer. A tangible amount of them own large herd of cattle but which they entrust to their nomadic brothers. The Home Fulani is a devout Muslim and have been at the vanguard driving the spread of Islam in the Hausa land and in parts of the Middle Belt.

The British colonial method of Indirect Rule found huge success in the Hausa-Fulani precolonial socio-political setting. This is because of the highly centralized nature of the emirate system where the totalitarian structure set an avenue for the colonial lord to only sway and abduct the mind and loyalty of the person in the helm and therefore have the whole system, whom still pledged to the emir, indirectly subservient to the colonial masters. This was to a very great degree, diametrically opposite to what was obtained in the Igbo traditional system, while the Yoruba's positions somewhere in the middle of the spectrum.

In this centralized Emirate political system, (Ezeh R.C, 2016) explained that the Emir, who was under the Sultan of Sokoto, was the spiritual (religious), political and administrative head of his Emirate. This Emir, Ezeh further narrates, was assisted in the administration of the emirate by a number of officers whom he appointed such as the Waziri (Chief Adviser),

*Inexistent Country*

Madawaki (Army Commander) Dogari (in charge of police), Maaji (responsible for the Treasury), etc.

Critically examining the Emirate system, (Ezeh R.C, 2016) summarily described the political setting, as against the semi-feudalistic nature of the Yoruba Oba setting, as “feudalistic, monarchical and theocratic.” Ezeh picking apart the details, wrote that: “The emirate was divided into districts, villages and wards-each with a head. The whole legislative processes were based on the Islamic religion through the Sharia or Quoranic laws. The Alkalis who were trained in interpretation and application of the Sharia laws presided over Alkali courts in the villages, districts and the capital city while the Emir was the overall head of the judiciary and presided over the court of appeal (on serious criminal cases and land disputes) in his palace.”

The present day Hausa-Fulani setting despite existing within a secular, federal Nigeria, retains as much posture as what was in the past. The Sharia law still applies within the northern region hence, adopting different views and postures to actions and inactions of citizens from what obtains in the other regions of the country.

The numerical dominance and the geographical advantage of bigger landmass sets the north up for political superiority over the rest of the constituent people in the Nigerian project. As evident in the number of seat and representative distribution in the legislature, the decisions made in the parliament must, as orchestrated by numerical mathematics, have the support of the northern and/or Hausa people before it can pass. On the contrary, a bill can emanate from the north, and by their size advantage, pass into law with little or no support of the south. This have led some people into believing that the country is lopsided.

The post-independence history of Nigeria bears a significant mark of the Hausa-Fulani as they have come to be the major political and military actors over the years. From the substantial position of Tafawa Balewa in the first republic as the Prime Minister, through Sani Abacha's infamous tyranny, to the present but recurring leadership of President Muhammad Buhari, the Hausa-Fulani dominance and political might has been prevalent and unquiet. The Military Junta, the much-regretted period of military incursion in civilian politics, enjoyed the supremacy and drive of the Hausa-Fulani. From Yakubu Gowon, Murtala Muhammed to Ibrahim Babangida and Abdulsalami Abubakar, the Hausa-Fulani, in civil and military rule, has more than any Nigerian group, provided leaders for the country.

## **Conclusion**

Nigeria as country may be a hotbed of ethnic contentions, with the strife spiraling the country into wrong directions, yet it is not for no reason. With hundreds of more ethnic nationalities making up one country, Nigeria understandably becomes and remains a canvas of colourful dilemma that, even in its tasteless details, makes for a great tale. Except that the sometimes horrible tale and other times heartbreaking plot, signifies the future and fate of over hundreds of millions of people staked to impossible conflicts.

It is pointedly clear that Nigeria never was, and perhaps, when put in a particular context, never is. What it implies is that historically, centuries ago, there was nothing like Nigeria, and in the few years behind us, stepping us up into the moment, and to the future, there still is nothing like Nigeria. While in the comity of nations, in pages of historical and political literature, in lips of many humans, the term Nigeria lives; but as an ideology, a unanimous and corporate understanding, a gap still exists, leaving Nigeria a replicate of the falcon like

in W.B Yates's Second Coming, that is turning round and round in the widening gyre, having lost touch and can no longer hear the falconer.

For Nigeria, it is worse. There was never a falconer. But if we must insist there is, it is therefore one we may hate to admit: the colonialists. The exodus of the colonial government, although pursued with great enthusiasm and hope, marked the beginning of the collapse. It more or less seemed like the band of black rubber tying a broomstick to a tightened resolve and unity, giving way, bringing at its leave, the faltering of a nation.

But far from being a lie, it is exactly not the truth unless we are given to superficial analysis. Clearly, agreement can be reached about the lack of readiness by the nationalistic founding fathers who inherited the country, offering as proof, the shot number of years it took them to drive the country into frantic contentions and conflicts. By 1963, intra and inter party disagreement were raging and in the next three years, 1966, earned with boasting barrels and loquacious guns, the military regime arrived.

But the bug biting Nigeria, sucking it to a dormant and weakened life, did not start at independence. Perhaps dormant or in their larvae stage, they were nonetheless present, gradually growing fangs, coming to the point of its brutal crescendo, where ripe and mature, began bleeding the country. For a country with 250 ethnic groups and over a thousand dialects, the first factor of the Nigerian impossibility is presented, bearing in mind that each language, being a vehicle carrying its intrinsic culture, tradition and philosophy, means a travel of differently thinking people to what should have been a different direction. But unfortunately, they were banded together, made to sail in one direction. But what is said of ships and captains? For Nigeria, from its often touted 'diversely rich people',



who will ride the ship and at which compass direction? Answers may lack, but the coming chapters have more to tell.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE 1800-1914 NIGERIA: AN EVOLUTIONARY APPROACH

#### INTRODUCTION

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was no Nigeria. But the people who made up Nigeria were very much existing, distinctively, oblivious of their common future until men with skin different from theirs appeared in their territories. With different intentions, work soon began, perhaps at first without the ambition of colonialism, but trade and adventure. Yet these

different black ethnicities over time arrived that destiny, much hated now by many, much confused in it now so many, but they are nonetheless in it: Nigeria.

One may wonder, how did it happen, how did all begin? Some logicians whom many people simply take as sophists intoxicated by a bloated sense of intelligence always say “the end narrates the beginning.” Except that Nigeria is not ended nor is it no longer existing, at least physically. But to at least create an understanding, we therefore can decide to stand at the hill of 1960 and look down the valleys, down to the very fringes of 1800.

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#### EARLY 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The determination of African countries’ history, more than just that of Nigeria, once beyond the 20<sup>th</sup> century, deplete into blocks and units as the stories dissolves into that of the scattered and independent settlements and ethnic groups. Given that Nigeria, as presently constituted and known, was never in corporate existence at the times of early nineteenth century, her history unavoidably becomes that of her separate and scattered but collected stories of her constituent peoples.

Evidence of life in any of the parts that make up what is known today as Nigeria, according to archeological findings points to the Paleolithic or Old Stone Age period of 500, 000 – 9000 B.C (Reuben Udo, 1980). However, the disparate accounts of the various peoples of Nigeria at the time notwithstanding, there exists external factors that facilitate in the progression of these separate people, heading them towards the bounded fate of nationhood.

(E.J Alagoa, 1980) stated this external influence, classifying them into categories. First, the merchants of various European nations with the British predominating; second, the

missionaries beginning operations in Calabar, and later in the Niger Delta and along the Niger; and third, the official British presence represented by naval officers, consuls, and eventually colonial administrators. Yet with the presentation of these categorizations, it however remains a problem on how best to approach the 19<sup>th</sup> century history of Nigeria: if to narrate the different experiences of the Nigerian peoples, or, to describe the notable events both internal, of and by the people, and, external, of and by the foreign peoples activities in the region or outside the region but affecting the region.

The overall theme of this book is suggestive of the latter formula towards approaching the history of early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is made more rational given that preceding chapter dedicated effort towards understanding and portraying the historical evolution, identity and activities of the ethnic groups of Nigeria. Hence it appears more attractive to follow the history in a timeline method, clarifying the prominent activities concerning, emanating and directed from and to the constituent people of modern day Nigeria.

By the early years of the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, what was the rave and searing issue regarding the peoples of Nigeria was a matter of external urgency but with internal concern. The slave trade which has been booming from the preceding 18<sup>th</sup> century had reached its crescendo, attracting much profit for Britain and other slave demanding economies; but at his same time, had come to a point it attracted backlash and arguments for its abolishment. The most prominent of this arguments were those of the abolitionists of the British parliament.

This has been one of the acts of the morning of that century that foreign scholars and historians like to cite for what appears as atonement for other heinous crimes, and to bleach their global image in the fate of history's pages. The humanitarian zeal to banish

the suddenly realized 'evil' practice of slavery was too strong among the British. But it has been realized later that it wasn't an honest agitation as the movement only gained popular and official support because the institution has served too well for the British economy and there was more pressing need to be accomplished. Hence the abolition of slavery was a card played to tip the board in another direction and for a bigger kill.

As captured by (K.O Dike, 1944), by the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Britain had already created capital out of the slave trade and its American plantations, and this capital launched the Industrial Revolution. The slave trade, (E.J Alagoa, 1980) observed, "was, accordingly, no longer vital to the British economy; whereas the palm-oil and kernels of the Niger Delta and its hinterland were required by British industry." Therefore, missions changed.

Before the eventual abolition of slave trade in 25<sup>th</sup> March 1807, an event of notable significance regarding a group of the present day Nigeria occurred in America, May, 1803. Remembered today as the Igbo landing, as (Robert Ciucevich, 2009) wrote, a shipload of captive Igbo slaves rose up in rebellion, taking control of the ship and drowning their captors, in the process causing the grounding of the *Morovia* in Dunbar Creek. "Apparently the Africans went ashore and subsequently, under the direction of a high Igbo chief among them, walked in unison into the creek singing in the Igbo language 'The Water Spirit brought us, the Water Spirit will take us home', they thereby accepted the protection of their god Chukwu and death over the alternative of slavery," Robert Ciucevich wrote. This experience, known today as Igbo Landing and some other times spelt Ibo or Ebo landing, was the final scene of events which in 1803, amounted to what was taken as a 'major act of resistance' by the Africans, hence catalyzing and inflaming the abolitionist debate.

Finally, in 1807, Britain proscribed slavery in all its territories, compelling subjects to abandon the inhumane practice. But the banning of slavery took a culmination of years and activities for over a decade before it materialized in the British Parliament. As of the time, slave trade was Britain's most profitable business and as (Martin Meredith, 2014) noted, "In the decade between 1791 and 1800, British ships made about 1,340 voyages across the Atlantic, landing nearly 400,000 slaves; between 1801 and 1807, they took a further 266,000."

These statistics more than mere proving that slavery was Britain's most thriving venture, offers a glimpse into the nature of resistance anti-slavery movements faced before the activism of William Wilberforce led to the eventual victory. This because these numbers indicate and shows business progress for the venture owners who ran the slave business. The earliest moves directed towards the antagonism of slavery began 1787 when the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was formed by a group of Evangelical English Protestants who were allied with the Quakers, hence joining forces to advance the abolitionist movement in Britain. This alliance saw slavery as immoral and a criminally inhumane, and for this reason, they dedicated all their energies towards changing the situation.

The abolitionist alliance began building base and capacity in the parliaments, finding that their plea will be attended and voted for by parliamentarians. By 1807, their numbers had appreciated to tangible sum, hence increasing the velocity of their activism. The highest number of abolitionist loyalists recorded was put at thirty-five to forty seats. Other factors facilitated the triumph of the abolitionists which among them is the dedication of Lord Grenville, whose short term as Prime Minister devotedly supported the movement, fighting for the abolition in the House of Lords. The movement assisted by Foreign

Secretary, Lord Howick, in the House of Commons, the abolitionist victory became imminent. With the Act of Union of 1800, which integrated Irish members of parliament to the British, and who's joining hundred members had the majority being abolitionist in ideology, the victory became conceivable.

Finally introduced to parliament in January 1807, the bill went to the House of Commons on 10<sup>th</sup> February. Eventually, on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, after intensive debate lasting ten hours, the house in an overwhelming support of 283 votes to 16, agreed to the discontinuation of slave trade within and in all British areas. The signed bill was granted Royal assent on 25<sup>th</sup> of March 1807, rounding up the 20-year process pursuant of slave trade abolition. Nonetheless, even as slavery was abolished throughout British Empire, the practice continued at least for a generation, before passage of Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, abolishing comprehensively, the trade of slaves.

The Abolition Act enacted fines that would deter and be imposed on ship captains who continued the business. Establishing that ships conveying slaves are to be taken as equivalent to pirates, fines reaching up to hundred pounds per slaved person found a ship, was enforced. This led to captains dumping slaves overboard at the sight of the Royal Navy carrying out this supervisory task. To broaden its scope, the Royal Navy established the West Africa Squadron in 1808 to patrol the coast of West Africa, and as recorded by (Martin Meredith, 2014), between 1808 and 1860 seized approximately 1,600 slave ships and freed 150,000 Africans who were aboard.

The abolition of slave trade now achieved, but coinciding with a new British quest, only gave way for a deeper exploration and exploitation of the place and the people. In 1827, (E.J Alagoa, 1980) opined, "a naval presence was established at Fernando Po, and in 1849

John Beecroft was appointed the first British Consul over the Bights of Benin and Biafra (now Bonny).” This implies that despite the end of slavery, commercial activities, although in a different dimension, and a significant presence of Britain remarkably grew, and even given official designation.

This increased presence aimed to establish dominance and make an impression of British might and ownership of the people. This was manifested through the ostentatious demonstration of British naval power through confiscation of slaving ships and gun raids on local settings. The native locals were compelled through force or financial gratification, driven towards signing treaties, accepting the unequal but legal trade relationships with the locals. This process initiated the gradual loss of autonomy and sovereignty for the native locals, with its zenith coming by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The end of slave trade with quiet progression of time, with contentious activities, soon gave rise to palm oil trade. But this transition was an easy one as the native locals, having seen the end of the productive slave trade, need to invent new methods to carry out the demands of the palm trading vocation. It therefore occasioned the exigent need to beat their way and penetrate deeper into the hinterlands, expanding their trade areas. This led to two situations: a new rise of a new and different kind of slavery, that which occurred internally, and the rise of more and more coastal clashes and wars, as they fight for scarce resources. As (E.J Alagoa, 1980) analyzed, “it would seem, in fact that the internal slave trade increased in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, judging from the accelerated growth of new lineage or house units in the delta states.”

What toughened the plot and setting of this socio-economic evolution was Britain’s increased interest and quest to explore and penetrate the hinterlands. Their incursion

enabled and catalyzed the many clashes in the region, deposition of native rulers, and weakening of traditional institutions. This economic interest made Britain offer license, commissions and subsidies for explorers, companies and traders.

This official support established, the Lander Brothers arrived, finding the Niger Route in 1830, followed by Macgregor Laird, a subsidy beneficiary sent to follow up the so called 'Niger Discovery.' This increased and aggressive interest and activity of Britain brought it at loggerheads with native coastal states and rulers, and which led to the famous, if not infamous, confrontation and deposition of King Jaja of Opopo in 1887.

There were evident signs of resistance and repulse for the British and all other foreign incursion, stating clearly that the Nigerian people of pre-colonial times did not, as some times misconceived, in a laid back indifference and purposelessness to life, allow their lands and resources to be taken, and governance foisted upon them. However really the fact of economic and militaristic superiority of the British and European foreigners that assisted the defeat of the people.

That notwithstanding, there existed a third component to the engulfing drive of foreign dominance in the local people at this time: the missionaries. Without the forces of might, the missionaries commanded a subtle influence that drove home, the thorough domination of the foreign people. E.J Alagoa noting this same fact documented that "the Presbyterians in Calabar from 1846, the Church Missionary Society under the leadership of Bishop Ajayi Crowther at Bonny from 1864, Nembe from 1868, Elem Kalabari from 1874, and Okirika from 1880, and up the Niger Valley from about 1856, obtained local support, and even invitations."



In a time where the natives of the coastal regions were witnessing and experiencing greater forces greater forces and might superior than their crude means and armaments, the invitations may not immediately signify acceptance, but a concession made under duress with an expectation of imagined benefit. The highly resistant Igbo society has been cited historically, for example by F.K Ekechi, to have finally accepted Christian mission because of the western education it carried along, which the society found to important for socio-political and economic development and enlightenment.

Other motives for missionary acceptance and invitations were, as the disparate rulers imagined, to attract trade and to be friends to the new British system. For some others however, they were motivated by a spirit of competition, therefore inviting missionaries in order to catch up and get even with neighboring states and towns which they felt had overtaken them. These motives can be found finely incorporated into the literary trilogy of Chinua Achebe; *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, and *No Longer at Ease*.

However, the fierce contention between Jaja of Opobo and the British might notwithstanding, what made him ignore the attention of the church missionary Society was because, as recorded by E.A Ayandele, the CMS had its delta headquarters in the rival state of Bonny.

But even in the presence of the benefits that attended the missionary advent, the expectation of traditional rulers halfway met, there were experiences of disruption and clash of ideologies, and as the missionaries had greater force, both in influence and might, the present traditional institutions were weakened and in the extreme instances, swept away. The message and content of the Christian mission after all, it was found, was at odds

with the traditionalist philosophies of the native coastal people, hence a threat to the known and established ways, institutions and values of the host communities.

Aduke Ekundayo (2018) pointed out the adverse effects of the penetration and exploration of the hinterlands on its people. However, before that, he revealed the stratospheric increase in the number of companies that emerged at the time as led by the vanguard of the Lander Brothers and Macgregor companies. In Aduke's words "It was true that the British traders were fully established in the Niger Delta with trading companies scattered all over from the Itsekiri kingdom in the west to Calabar in the east." This comfortable establishment was manifested through "the efforts of Macgregor Laird, [as] British firms established trading firms at Aboh, Onitsha and Lokoja. Other trading firms like Alexander Miller Brothers & co; the Central African Trading Company; James Pinnock & Co. had reached Akassa, Ndoni, Osomari and other areas of the Niger valley."

This dominance spelt problem for the native people who owned the resources at the base this contentions, exploited and shipped abroad for the metropolitan development of Britain and all other present traders. "In the first place," Aduke Ekundayo (2018) revealed, "the European traders tightly controlled the trade through acute competition; they combined to fix prices which were usually very low." Furthermore, it Aduke explained that the "more devastating in its economic implication was that this European penetration threatened the livelihood of the Delta traders and the people in general. The numerous trading firms used their streamers, passed above the delta middlemen and intercepted the produce that used to pass through the hands of the middlemen. To the Delta people the commercial expansion and exploitation of the firms brought untold hardship and economic pressure which they were determined to resist."

Therefore, what this highhandedness led to was the development of resistance on the part of the exploited people. What was at the center of the disagreement here is the trade structure. While the British aimed to trade directly with the locals, a certain King Dappa Pepple who was in control of the Bonny region refused and intercepted such motive, interpreting it as an insult to his authority. Ikime, O. (1995) revealed that by 1844, with the crisis becoming impossible, a war ensued and King Dappa rising to the occasion, “damaged British warships, seized a number of the traders and promised to ‘roast them alive.’”

This led to the increase in the reputation and power of King Dappa who henceforth controlled trade activities more closely, continuing in this stride through 1850 until 1854 when he met an unceremonious fall from power. Ekundayo, to this end, revealed that “the contentions between King Pepple and Consul Beecroft continued until an occasion, flimsy of course was found to depose him in 1854. He was accused of stopping all trade and trying to revive the trade in slave. Based on this he was taken to Fernando Po where he remained until 1860.”

Similar experience repeated with Brass, a coastal town that had a trade relationship with Aboh. In turn, Aboh obtained trade consignments from the “inland markets of Igala, Isoko, Onitsha and Ukwuani which she sold to Brass in exchange for arms and ammunitions and other European goods.” (Ekundayo, 2012). But there was the presence of the Macgregor Laird trading boys in the area whom their aggressive inland push led them towards handicapping the Aboh traders through seizing trade protocols, monopolizing means and dictating their own prices. Worse, they intercepted trade coming from Onitsha and Lokoja to Aboh and driving straight to the European stations at these towns.

*Inexistent Country*

Aboh in response and vehement resistance led a brutal opposition to the Macgregor Laird business to the point Macgregor had to close down its stations. This development however raised the curtain for the Royal Niger Company (R.N.C) who under Goldie, bought up these closed stations and repeating the actions of Macgregor Laird: monopolized means, dictated prices and cut Aboh off from the trade flow stream. Infuriated by this intimidation and blatant exploitation, Aboh rose again opposition and rebellion, attacking Goldie's stations in 1882. In retaliation, British naval invaded and bombarded Aboh killing several hundreds. Aboh fell, its economy crushed, it faded away in eerily silence, taking alongside Brass, who depended on its activities for economic viability. That she failed in this resistance to economic exploitation, Ekundayo noted, was due to the presence of British naval power which littered the coastal communities at this period.

Going further, the Royal Niger Company worsened situations, introducing an insufferable economic monopoly. Aduke Ekundayo (2018) writing for the Department of History and Diplomacy, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Nigeria, gave a rich detail of what ensued:

*Brass traders were forced to obtain expensive licenses before they could trade as well as pay other dues and fees. Brass who depended on trade to survive could not meet the above conditions, her people became hungry and were reduced to poverty, hence the wide spread opposition to the Company. King Josiah Constantine Ockiya (1863 – 1879) and king Ebifa (1870 – 1894) led diplomatic appeals and negotiations to the European traders to leave their markets to them, but all failed. In the failure of all diplomatic appeals, the struggle to free Brass people from economic exploitation took a different dimension of violent opposition*

*and resistance. Writing on this, Ikime declared that on January 29, 1895, king Koko successfully mobilized his followers, equipped their war canoes and attacked the R. N. C depot in Akassa, during which they killed some African servants of the company and locked up the stores. Brass resistance to economic exploitation was fierce. Although Brass was finally overpowered by superior British forces, Brass fought violently in defence of her age long economic sovereignty. The people fought to free themselves from economic exploitation occasioned by the stringent economic measures and monopolistic tendencies of the RNC.*

While all this kept on going, the other divide of the Niger was not free from this violent exploitation. Nana Olomu championed the resistance and struggle of the western part of the Niger. The Olomu family, Ikime. O (1995) revealed, was a very rich and influential family within Itsekiri land such that with its vast connection and networks, they had influence in Urhobo land, and also held the trade area in tight grip and control. The degree of his firm control was to the extent that palm oil was supplied to him directly and frequently by his Urhobo customers.

Having established such monopolistic and corporative dominance, life was made tough for the British traders and companies looking to break the system, access it and exploit it. Every attempt by the British to control trade and economic resources on the Benin Rivers was fiercely resisted, Ekundayo explained. This gave rise to tension as the British merchants on the other hand were furious and exceedingly devoted towards breaking Nana's monopoly of trade to their own advantage.

From 1870 when there sizable prescence and attempts began, there was no luck for them until 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1891, when finally they thwarted Nana's fierce resistance, burning down his capital, Ebrohim. Ekundayo noted with sad finality, that this ended the prescence of any meaningful resolve to resist British control of trade and economic exploitation in that part of the Niger Delta. A vast collection of people, penetrated, exploited, conquered, put through untold pains, finally crumbled, their spirit dissolving, bowing, to a different kind of servitude.

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TOWARDS AMALGAMATION: THE LUMPING OF PEOPLES AND THE BIRTH OF NIGERIA

The vigorous activities in the southern part of Nigeria did not replicate itself in the north given that the substance of the period's trade vocation, palm oil, was dominantly found in the Niger side of the country. However, as spread and scattered as Britain's interest and ambition was in Nigeria, with the rise in the quest to obtain a united political structure in what became Nigeria, the might and dominance of the British people began to spread to the north.

Nonetheless, trade activities still occurred within this period in the north but not with the contentious texture that characterized that of the south. The major goal then, it appears, was the expansion of Niger Royal Company. Yet even in its expansionist march, the company did not prove a threat to the supremely reigning Sokoto Caliphate. But that changed with time as the ambition to unite all British empires and form blocs of countries grew stronger.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the most significant activity of the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, which was preceded by the annexation of Lagos in 6<sup>th</sup> of August 1861. These activities, more than anything, marked the earliest part of developments that gave rise, or drove the move to the becoming of Nigeria. The annexation went underway by the threat of force by Commander Beddingfield of HMS Prometheus who was accompanied by the Acting British Consul, William McCoskry. According to Elebute, Adeyemo, Oba Dosunmu of Lagos resisted the cession for 11 days while facing the threat of violence on Lagos and its people, but capitulated and signed the Lagos Treaty of Cession. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1862, Lagos was declared a colony.

As with other places of today's Nigerian constituent, Lagos and other parts of Yorubaland continued to witness and experience clashes and contention as regards trade. The frequent faceoff between the indigenous people of what is today Nigeria, was joined by the clashes between locals and foreigners as the contention for resources and trade control raged on. However, as Africa, and Nigeria specifically was nourished with resources and raw materials that was found and considered important to the British economy, what was coming was bigger than what has arrived. The ownership of a people and their resources, the governance and control a people and their resources, made legal and normal, through treaties and agreements, backed by a superiority of military might. And then came the Berlin conference and all that it represented.

Convened by Otto Van Bismarck, the first Chancellor of Germany, conference took place just to seek one purpose: the regulation of the increased imperialistic and colonialist activity in Africa. The conference holds no more meaning than the gathering of exploiters who aimed to recognize each other, create boundaries and through signed and documented agreements, respect the autonomous control of fellow exploiters over

created territories. It is for this reason and similar narratives that the meeting has closely been related with the 'Scramble for Africa'.

Germany with their rise to global power, began to dispatch its own explorers into Africa in search for colonies, hence posing a threat to British and French statesmen who were deep rooted in the system. King Leopold II of Belgium, seeking to quell any conflict, convinced France and Germany that common trade in Africa was in the best interests of all three countries. Therefore, on Saturday, 15 November 1884, the conference opened and involved participants from Europe and USA, having invited thirteen countries.

Present in the meeting which took place at Otto Van Bismarck's official residence on Wilhelmstrasse were, Germany, Portugal, United Kingdom, USA, Russia, Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Spain, Sweden-Norway, Netherlands, and Italy. When the meeting ended, they all had a colony, or at least became beneficiaries, directly or indirectly, of Africa's commonwealth. By the time of their dispersal, there came into being, contraptions like: German Colonial Empire, Portuguese Colonial Empire, Italian Colonial Empire, British Empire, Russian Colonialism, French Colonial Empire, Dutch Empire, Vassal and the Tributary states of the Ottoman Empire.

Here, more than anywhere, began the greatest tragedy of modern day Africa. Of the greatest and ominous consequence is that the idea of Africa, the borders and locations and sizes of their countries were drawn up and distributed without the littlest consultation or seeking of the African's opinion. By giving legal background to their unwarranted occupation, these group of colonialist powers opened a new chapter to the approach and method of accessing and governing the Africans.



One among the many territories that fell to the British laps, known as the British Empire, is what is today called and referred as Nigeria. Alas, the mighty existence of the Giant of Africa and many independent countries of Africa, like we indicated in the introductory part of this book, did not will, think, or at least fight itself to existence. It was autocratically conferred and given. Worse, it came from a place of economic greed and exploitation, hence stating that the design of the countries was not made with the intent to achieve progressive nations but profitable contraptions. This, till this day, haunts these countries.

From the Berlin conference till 1914 when all scattered peoples and places of Nigeria were united and made one entity, all the activities that ensued can primarily be summarized as the fine-tuning of a machinery to serve at the optimum level of Britain's will, for Britain's profit and benefit. Tell me, what is Nigeria again? It is an existing inexistent country. The coming chapters shall throw more light.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE 1914 AMALGAMATION AND THE CONTENTION FOR SELF-RULE

#### BACKGROUND

Nigeria prior to the amalgamation was constituted by disparate ethnic nationalities. The point of interaction between these ethnic nationalities was mainly through trading activity. Inter-communal relations were restricted to neighbors who had similar cultural practices and rarely shared history from a single progenitor. Linguistic differences were also predominant between these parallel nationalities which constitute present day Nigerian state. The scramble and partition of Africa at the Berlin Conference in 1884/5, amongst European powers, in an attempt to maintain peace in Europe through a clearly defined territorial division in Africa, a consequence of years of navigation across African waterways, set the ground running for the emergence of colonialism into Africa.

Early European contact with Africans was propelled by the quest for commercial overtures (Egwemi). Africans hitherto contact with the Europeans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was a hotbed of Islam, through the Saharan desert. The advancement in navigation system which boosted transportation, brought Europeans through the Atlantic Ocean, face-to-face with Africans. Subsequently, there was a turnaround in the extent of interaction with the discovery of the New World (Americas), necessitating human labor from Africa and ushering the genesis of African connection with other parts of the world. Furthermore, this phase remarked ably witnessed the influx of the largest forced human migration in history, the slave trade. At the abolition of the slave trade in 1908 by the British, coinciding with

the industrial revolution, came the legitimate trade requiring raw materials from Africa. Africa again became a turf for European political power play.

Before 1914, present day Nigeria was existing as independent protectorates and colony, administered by different colonial officers. Northern Nigeria, its headquarters domiciled in Lokoja which presently constitutes 3 geo-political zones in present-day Nigeria, was administered by the Royal Niger company with the mandate to “administer, make treaties, levy customs and trade in all territories in the basin of the Nigeria and its affluents.” (Coleman,1986). The Oil River/Niger Coast was administered by a foreign office consul and the crown colony of Lagos by a colonial governor. Subsumed to the annals of history, ostensibly for a lack of utmost significance to Nigerians as well as her development, it is noteworthy to state that prior to the amalgamation of 1914, there has been amalgamation of the Nigerian territory (Egwemi). British direct control of these colonies was established in 1900, with the revocation of the charter of these trading companies in 1900, previously holding brief for colonial Britain. This also marked the disengagement of native educated elites from administration, marking the incursion of native authority administration – indirect rule (Nwabughuogu,1981). The earliest amalgamation was in 1906, when the protectorate of Lagos merged with the protectorate of Southern Nigeria.

Nigeria’s utmost birth was to come in 1914. This birth which has garnered criticisms from several quarters and pointedly fingered as the ultimate constraint of the development of Nigeria, “was a unique birth, being presumably, the only country to have been moulded into one piece from two protectorates and a colony.” (Agbese,2008). The amalgamation marked the beginning of the single entity Nigeria, while ushering in a new wave of ethnic strife different from the inter-tribal wars which were existent among these nationalities before the dawn of colonialism, this time manifesting itself in socio-political spheres.

Lugard's acclaimed amalgamation of Nigeria predicated on justice for African native institutions (Nwabughuogu,1981), plunged Nigeria into the quest for a unifying force, yearning for an identity which is forlorn. Amalgamation, which was an offshoot of British imperialism, successfully congregated a rich mosaic of people locked into a nation –state they had no part in designing...the people gathered within its borders had different cultures and stood at very unequal levels of development (Karl, 2000), plunging the people into the endless search for the basis of its existent. Present-day Nigeria is characterized by the clamours for true federalism, restructuring, states creation, self-determination by several ethnicities who view themselves as being alienated from Nigeria in its socio-political system, lending credence to the widespread opinion that Nigeria's unity is threatened. In whatever garb they appear, the indubitable fact is that, these nations have been seeking for a single identity, that singular basis for its continual existence as a coherent unit. The seed of the plant for Nigeria's social-political trajectory, was planted by the British overlord Luggard, and more than a century later, widely criticized for knitting a state with weak foundation into existence as a single entity. (Agbese, 2008) opined Nigeria is a country in conflict with itself for reasons that are as many and as varied as the slew of experts on the country. But to be fair to the country and its people, it has been in earnest search for an all-time formula for its unit.

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#### WHY AMALGAMATION?

The rationale for Lugard's preference for amalgamation of disparate groups, with little or no concern for previous interactions of these ethnicities, has been a contentious issue in Nigeria political discourse. Most scholars have attributed the preference of amalgamation culminating to the adoption of indirect rule and strengthening of the historic native

authority system to several factors irrespective of skepticism and presaging of conflict between these ethnicities by some colonial officers, at the introduction of Lugard's amalgamation proposal. A.J. Harding, a first class clerk in the Colonial Office, in his memo on Lugard's federal structure of Nigeria, observed:

“Sir F. Lugard's proposal contemplates a state which is impossible to classify. It is not a unitary state with local government areas but with a central Executive and one Legislature. It is not a personal union of separate colonies under the same governor like the Windwards; it is not a confederation of states. If adopted his proposal can hardly be a permanent solution and I gather that Sir F. Lugard only regards them as temporary – at any rate in part...” (Osadolor, 1998)

Also pointing out the lacuna inherent in the adoption of amalgamation by colonial officers, Sir Hugh Clifford who succeeded Lugard, stated:

“Assuming... that this collection of self-contained and mutually independent Native States, separated from one another, as many of them are, by great distances, by differences of history and traditions, and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social and religious barriers, were indeed capable of being welded into a single homogenous nation... a deadly blow would therefore be struck at the very root of national self-government in Nigeria, which secures to each separate people the right to maintain its identity, its individuality and its nationality, its own chosen form of government; and the peculiar political and social institutions which have been evolved for it by wisdom and by the accumulated experience of generations of its forbears” (Omu, 2001).

Like a messianic prophecy, the prediction of Harding before amalgamation, is visible in several spheres, bringing Nigeria closer to the cliff of division. In this book, the basis for colonial inclination towards amalgamating the northern and southern protectorates of Nigeria would be discussed extensively in two broad sub-headings: Economic and Administrative reasons.

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## ECONOMIC REASONS

At inception of colonialism, Nigeria was administered directly by colonialists alongside educated elites in Nigeria through a Crown Colony system of administration (Nwabughuogu, 1981). This meant that the British expensed huge sums towards the administration of these colonies, attracting outcries from British citizens on limiting tax payers' expenditure on colonial administration. The British public space was filled with propaganda through lobbying, public lectures, mass media and book publications outlining the dire financial cost of administering colonies. Public opinion was galvanized by individuals who were accomplices of Lugard beginning from 1905. Circa 1895 to 1911, witnessed the astronomical rise of this propaganda. A notable propagandist, Mary Kingsley, in a bid to protect traders of British descent - involved in the trade in spirits along the West African coasts - that were under fire by fellow Englishmen, through her writings advocated the amalgamation of Nigeria and the consequent adoption of an indirect rule system placing administrative authority in West Africa in the hands of natives. Crown Colony system which incorporated Colonial and native educated elites was argued as being expensive. Further advocating its failure to fulfill British imperial administration in West Africa and advancing the argument for amalgamation on the basis of cost, Mary opined: "it was intrinsically too expensive in men and money, so that the more you develop it the

more expensive it becomes...unless commercial experts are represented in the government which controls its administration” (Kingsley, 1964). This opinion of economic burden of British colonial dependencies resonated with British populace and her government officials who saw amalgamation and the stripping of Nigerian educated elites of their responsibilities, bestowing this on traditional leaders who commands reverence from their populace, a better bargain.

Furthermore, advancing the basis of amalgamation of these two diverse groups, the northern protectorate was not viable economically, rationalizing the proposal of Lugard. The efforts of Lord Lugard who was governor of the Northern protectorate, to stabilize the budget of the Northern protectorate as well as bridge the gap in development between the northern and the southern protectorates, provided amalgamation as a panacea to this disparity. This protectorate which was impoverished, was highly “dependent on imperial grants-in-aid which stood at 405,000 pounds in 1905 and on subsidy from the Southern Nigeria Protectorate and Lagos which provided 75,000 pounds in the same year” (Nwabughuogu, 1981). Expressing the necessity to align the northern and southern protectorates under a single government, pointing towards development, Lugard quoted in (Perham, 1904), in a letter to his wife stated: “as to development – it is folly to talk of real development, when we have no sea – board and no customs of our own and when we were hampered...by the colonial office officials. Attempting a comparative analysis of the northern and southern protectorate, (Flint in Nwabughuogu, 1981) points out, “in comparison with the southern administration, the northern regime was a failure, whether judged in terms of administrative efficiency or economic development (the normal criteria for assessing the progress of a colony). The Colonial Office seeing reasons with Lugard’s proposal and also buoyed by its imperial interests in its colonies, was contemplating

amalgamation of the north and the south, primarily to remove the dependency of the northern protectorate on the British treasury (Lugard in Nwabughuogu, 1981).

British imperial interests had led to the penetration of the hinterlands by British officials. This influx of British officials from coastal areas unto the hinterland accelerated the incursion of development from the south, such as railways, missionary propaganda; European mining and commercial interests which increased the flow of cash to these varied interests spurred and garnered support for the amalgamation of the north and the south. Quite remarkably, educated elites played the strategic role of middlemen in the trade relations between the Europeans and locals in the elites. This penetration into the hinterland spelt doom for Europeans vested interests with the continual existence of the old administration.

More so, the unsanctioned political marriage between the south and the north was also a propaganda to advocate for the individual interests of British merchant men in Nigeria. Conflicts between the British officials and the educated middlemen were a frequent occurrence. These middlemen were mostly involved in the slave trade before it was abolished. With the proscription of the slave trade and the ascendancy of legitimate trade in agricultural produce, these middlemen impeded the entrant of the colonial trading representatives into the hinterlands. Lugard, having governed northern protectorate, understood the excessive powers which northern traditional rulers wielded. They were seen by their subjects as not solely political rulers but divine rulers vested with divine authority to exercise authority over them. In order to abate the blockade of their penetration into the hinterland, the colonial authority accepted Lugard's proposed political structure, which he saw as a "mechanism for managing conflicts between two types of self-determination" (Eliagwa in Agbese, 2008).



Self-determination of these educated elites was seen in their efforts to curtail British economic interests into the hinterlands. The adoption of an indirect rule system after ambulation, greatly advanced the wish of the British colonial government, as they leveraged on the ignorance of these political elites towards the attainment of their economic goals, surreptitiously portraying an advancement and respect for traditional political institutions. Native administration was used more remark ably to stifle popular institutions which existed in certain areas of Nigeria before the advent of colonial rule. These traditional rulers were also saddled with the responsibility of providing forced labour for British companies.

Furthermore, taxation was an imperative for the achievement of British economic interests which led to the colonial Introduction of a native treasury system. According to Lugard, amalgamation “would enable him set up a system of administration through the Native Chiefs somewhat on ‘the model of the Northern provinces’ (Lugard in Afigbo, 1972). Recent event in Europe, have completely altered the outlook and it may be that the institution of direct taxation will be necessary not only for its indirect benefits but in order to enforce revenue. It is quite instructive to note that this epoch in British history was marked with a plunging economy.

Government finance was dropping accelerating the calls for less spending on the economy of colonial appendages. Northern Nigeria, undoubtedly had an already existing taxation system, with its major finance derived from its population, which was ostensibly the largest populated protectorate. This poor finance was accentuated by the geographical location of Northern Nigeria. Unlike the northern protectorate, the South had no clearly defined taxation system, except for few that depended on tributaries through kind. Its favourable location to water bodies placed it at a vantage position to garner taxes from excise duties.

But by 1913, with a war looming and less trade activities undertaken by the colonial government consequently leading to less revenue, the British government gradually tilted towards adopting alternative sources of income. Lugard in reiterating his proposal for unifying the protectorates opined:

“I am entirely in favour of organizing Native Treasuries... a fund formed primarily from taxation, and from fees for market-stalls and such like sources. To this fund the fines and fees of Native Courts may be added. The fund is administered by the Commissioner in consultation with the paramount chief (or perhaps with more than one chief where there is no single paramount chief). It is devoted to paying salaries to chiefs and others who are responsible for the control of their communities, and (if Native Courts receipts are added to it) also the salaries or sitting fees and other expenses of Native Courts” (Lugard in Afigbo, 1972)

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#### ADMINISTRATIVE REASONS

Advancing the British colonial policy hinted on the Dual Mandate, Lugard pointed out that amalgamation:

“Is to hasten the transition from the patriarchal to the tribal stage, and induce those who accept no other authority than the head of the family to recognize a common chief. Where this stage has already been reached, the object is to group together small tribes, or sections of a tribe so as to form a single administrative unit whose chief severally or in council ... may be

constituted a Native Authority ... through whom the district officer can work” (Lugard in Afigbo, 1972)

Traditional institutions and natives were viewed as not being developed enough to the standard of adopting British system of administration which was viewed as being complex to be operated by elites educated by missionaries. Thus, it was proposed that amalgamation which incorporates existing traditional institution in its affairs would gradually prune African rulers up to development. Arguments put up by the respective British amalgamation apologists would be apt to state here. Mary Kingsley, who was a vociferous advocate for this union, had stated that: “the African was an inferior being who must be treated differently” (Kingsley in Nwabughuogu, 1981).

Moreover, political upheavals experienced necessitated the need to strengthen traditional system in the teeth of spirited opposition by the people, aggravating the agitations in some quarters for the incorporation of native chiefs developed from the existing British protectorates. (Nwabughuogu, 1981). Also advancing the necessity for unification of these sectional ethnic groups, it was argued that it was futile making efforts for the African to look like an European by establishing institutions to offer European education, and ruling him through political institutions modeled after that of the Europeans, in consonance with what the missionaries and the colonial offices had been doing. Further pointing out that for governance in Africa to be brought closer to the people, it was pertinent to alienate educated Africans who were not close to the citizenry, neither do they identify with local needs (Kingsley in Nwabughuogu, 1981). Irrespective of the contentions postulated by these proponents of amalgamation on native inclusion and civilization of these crude institutions, the overriding interest of the colonial government and her officials were predicated on economic rationale.

Possible disintegration of the northern protectorate was looming and hovering around the British colonies which subsequently metamorphosed into Nigeria. This possible disintegration was a likely effect of the penetration of Christianity in the northern protectorate. Deriving cue from the Muslim uprising experience in Mahdi, Egyptian Sudan which was a revolt against the penetration of Christianity by British missionaries, the British colonialists, were circumspect of the concomitant effect of abolishing indirect rule in the north, which might alter the already existing system. Inroads by colonialists into the northern region, was accompanied by southerners who were more educated than the northerners, and accomplices of the colonialists in the spread of Christianity. This policy of non-interference with the socio-political condition of Northern Nigeria instigated the British to take the stance of amalgamation, unifying the hitherto divided protectorate into one administration in order to curtail the springing up of an uprising, and curb the fears exercised by northerners on the possible erosion of its institution; which took its root from Islamic religion dating back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century. (Lugard in Nwabughuogu, 1981).

Lugard who was previously, northern governor till 1906, had established a close understanding and affinity with the northern political leaders. Pointing out to the Satiru Rebellion which was crushed by the British, Lugard attributed it not to British colonial authorities' superior firepower but to the loyalty and support of the emirs and chiefs, earning for himself huge followership. This testimony by Lugard, and mulling on the inherent advantages in the adoption of an administration incorporating native authorities, consequently led the British to accepting the strategic roles of the traditional authorities and the possibility of its adoption as proposed by Lugard towards attaining its economic aims and objectives (Northern Nigeria Annual Report in Nwabughuogu).

In addition, the period before the amalgamation, British colonies experienced a plunge in colonial officials mostly, those with military experiences. Hostility in Europe was gradually degenerating to World War I in 1914, requiring the recall of colonial officials who were hitherto sent to these protectorates. Recall of these officials greatly accentuated the degeneration of stability in the colonies as there was frequent breakdown of laws and orders. Afigbo recorded that:

...in Bende Ofufa, a section of the district, was said to have seized the opportunity offered by this neglect to renounce all alien control. Its people refused to attend any court, to obey any summons or to allow arrest to be made there. It became a place of refuge for 'criminals' and run-away prisoners, In 1914 a policeman, a court messenger, a road-maker and a carpenter had been sent there to make a rest house and roads but had been chased out by the people, and yet by 1916, nothing had been done to punish this 'outrage' (Dayrell in Afigbo, 1972).

At its ultimate was the need for unification of the divided protectorates. Prior to 1914, the respective protectorates were under different political administrations. A phenomenal which led to uneven development between both protectorates, northern protectorate with greater population and an established taxation system which was its primary source of income, was backward infrastructural wise, as its income were not sufficient to undertake developmental projects around the protectorates. Their southern contemporary, with access to excise duties was far more advanced, as funds were readily available to undertake these developmental projects. This glaring disparity between both protectorates, led to the wish by Lugard for amalgamation which would engender even development across all protectorates of Nigeria.

All these factors gravitated the colonial government towards unifying the northern and southern Nigeria as a single unit culminating to present-day Nigeria.

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#### AMALGAMATION AND THE INTRODUCTION OF COLONIAL RULE:

The amalgamation of northern and southern protectorates marked the genesis of colonialism directly under British control through native authorities popularly known as indirect rule. The incorporation of this system of government bestowed on the native authorities far-reaching political powers as well as introducing economic reforms into the country. Indirect rule system of government which seeks to incorporate native authorities in British colonial administration had the aim to develop traditional institutions as well as civilize these institutions which were viewed as crude. Modelled after an already-existing system in the northern protectorate, notwithstanding the deposition of the Sultan of Sokoto, Sa'ad by the British authorities and administrative powers placed on colonial officers, the continuation of a Fulani political hegemony in the northern part of the country meant that the fears of political domination by the British was assuaged (Falola & Heaton, 2008). In the Western part of the country, historically operating a monarchy, indirect rule was not met with stiff opposition. On the contrary in the eastern part of the country, indirect rule was alien to the people except the coastal inhabitants who through trade had developed a despotic and clearly defined traditional governance system, delineated in houses. In the Igbo speaking region, governance was through clan heads who took collective decisions with no established ruler. This status quo was upturned by the British seeking to achieve their economic aims through the imposition of chiefs with warrant on the people. These warrant chiefs most notably according to Afigbo (1972), were misfits in the society who were not popular to the traditional populace. In fact, these warrant chiefs

were presented to the colonialists in the course of selection by the people who shielded their leaders on the grounds of fears of the intent of the colonial officials. Subsequently, these warrant chiefs' attained notoriety through their high handed and despotic actions leading to opposition from the people. Palmer (in Korieh, ) observed:

It is true that permanent chiefs comparable to the Emirs of the north or the Alafin or Oba of Benin do not exist. This is however not to be expected among people still in the "clan" stage – where the (Chief – Eze in Ibo) like the Arab Sheikh or Taureg Amanokel is little more than the elder brother of the clan, the experienced senior who is consulted in important questions, but not necessarily obeyed.

Contrary to the position of promoting mutually beneficial relationships between the colonialists and traditional institutions in Nigeria, amalgamation upturned the socio-political system of Nigeria, placing political powers on traditional institutions at the behest of British colonialists. These traditional rulers imposed by the British, were not only taking directives but also imposing British political and economic will on their populace, with any form of dereliction of British policy punished by deposition.

Direct taxation was introduced by the British colonial officials after amalgamation. A fiscal policy which was introduced to mitigate British spending on colonies, was existent in the north alone, where every form of economic activity was levied. Commenting on taxation in the northern protectorate prior to amalgamation, Lugard opined:

Greed was one of the chief characteristic of the new dynasty, and tax after tax was enforced upon the people, so that at the present day there is no conceivable trade and no profession which has not its own special tax. Every

form of handicrafts, the dyers, weavers, blacksmiths, etc., was taxed. Even the collectors of honey in the woods paid their dole to the chiefs... (Colonial Annual Report, in Ekundare, 1973).

In the western part of Nigeria, with no defined taxation system in place, tributaries by conquered territories to their suzerains were common. In the eastern part of the country, there was no tax system existing. One common denominator existing in the eastern and western part of the country, was the inexistence of individual tax system. The introduction of individual tax system was a cause for widespread riots, which the citizens considered exploitative by the British colonial authorities. In Oyo and Abeokuta, tax introduction was repelled the first time it was introduced in 1916 and 1918 respectively, the people voicing their resentment at the newly acquired despotic garb their traditional leaders were wearing (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Voicing their frustration at this development of forced taxation imposed on the people, infrastructures were destroyed. The south eastern Nigeria census of 1926, ushered in the era of taxation in this region. Meanwhile, taxation met its albatross after women from the Owerri province embarked on a riot against the colonial authorities on fears of being burdened by imposed colonial taxation in a plunging economy. Popularly known as the Aba Women's Riot of 1929, this upheaval extended to Calabar, leading to the death of fifty-five women and the widespread destruction of properties. This development led to the resignation of the British colonial authorities on the impracticability of indirect rule in eastern Nigeria, engendering the need to proffer a new system of administration which would be appropriate and widely accepted by the populace.

Furthermore, as part of the British policy to achieve its economic policy in its respective colonies in Africa, in consonance with its adoption of amalgamation as a means of



developing these primordial African societies existing in Nigeria, colonial economy which focused on cultivation of cash crops and indulgence in the extractive industries was introduced. The basis of adoption of this system of economy was hinged on provision of raw materials for British industries, while ensuring a ready-market for the sales of products from these industries based in the mother colony. Reiterating the strategic economic importance of British penetration of the hinterlands, High Commissioner Ralph Moore pointed out: “the effective occupation of the interior produce market would result in largely increased prosperity both to the administration, the commercial community, and to the natives themselves” (in Korieh, 2010). Cash crops were introduced into the country where they could thrive in the respective regions that constituted Nigeria. Western Nigeria was the hub for cocoa plantations which was introduced in Nigeria towards the end of the nineteenth century. Eastern Nigeria soil was a fecund ground for palm trees, opening a new phase of interaction between the easterners and their riverine neighbours of Okrika, Bonny, Calabar (Korieh, 2010). Northern Nigeria was a fertile ground for growing cotton hugely meeting the needs of British textile industries and also groundnuts.

This new form of economy was effectual to the transformation witnessed in the socio-political and economic system of Nigeria. Colonial economy required intensive labour, which Nigerian natives were not willing to adopt, as they saw the introduction of policies such as a plantation system alien which might further threaten their territorial sovereignty, requiring them to give up their farmlands to the colonialists. Irrespective of fears nursed by these natives, introduction of subsidies, interventions, government aids, tax and ultimately the introduction of a formal currency, compelled these native farmers to key into the colonial economy. Intensive cultivation of cash crops led to infertility of the land, loss of the vegetative cover and strife for lands/frequent land disputes between natives

mainly in the eastern region (Korieh, 2010). Subsistence farming which was the foundation of African agricultural farming practices was abandoned for the more profitable cash crops, leading to scarcity of food crops accelerated by the First World War with the cut in food supplies from Britain and the economic depression of the 1920s. Profitability of cash crops plunged in the course of World War I except for palm produce, other crops were affected. Alternative means of income was being sourced for with the associated fall of the cash crop market, leading to intensive exploration activities sponsored by the British government around Nigeria. Coal mining commenced in 1915 in Udi, Enugu; tin mining was prominent in Jos; around the 1930s, the rise in gold demand and its price in the world market, led to its exploration.

Infrastructural deficits evident in Nigeria, mostly northern Nigeria, militated against British economic interests and its supposed development of these native African ethnicities, which were several miles distanced from each other. Some southern Nigeria producing areas were about 200 miles away from the coast. Northern Nigeria which was the centre for groundnut, cotton, hides, and other agricultural produce was about 600 miles from the coast. Jos, where tin, an important mineral resource was produced, was distanced from its nearest seaport at Port Harcourt by about 550 miles (Ekundare, 1973). Perceived economic breakthrough for the British colonists through proposed fusion of the southern and northern protectorates predicated the extension of the railway connecting both protectorates in 1912 (Ekundare, 1973).

Most importantly, introduction of motor transport and the associated development of feeder roads connecting the production centers of these cash crops mainly rural areas with the respective markets transformed trade as it eased the inadequacies of conveying goods and farm produce from their production centers' to the coast for onward shipment to

Europe. Between 1914 and 1920, the total mileage of roads maintained by local authorities was about 21,000 and 22,000 respectively in Northern Nigeria, and about 1,400 and 3,000 respectively in Southern Nigeria (Ekundare,1973). The observable disparity was mainly necessitated by the geographical terrains between both protectorates, the north which is mainly savanna vegetation, easy to construct roads than the southern forest belt. Mc Loughlin and Bouchat (2013), quite aptly observed that : “the railroads improved inter-Nigerian trade in food and cash crops, exported minerals from the interior, allowed the spread of ideas, and fostered migration to pursue economic opportunities – thus more closely integrating northern and southern Nigeria.”

A shift from the traditional subsistent agrarian economy to a larger colonial economy, incorporating cash crops, mineral exploration and subsequent infrastructural development, led to the exponential increase of sprawling towns, hitherto settlements for the respective ethnicities constituting Nigeria. Colonial policies such as taxation and currency introduction as discussed earlier, led to a large influx of population from the interior to these newly developed cities which required labour, and promised higher economic potentials for residents seeking assimilation as either colonial officials or labourers. Labourers and clerks were needed in these respective colonial cities which had developed as a result of infrastructures. Most individuals having acquired scanty knowledge of English – the medium of communication – were willing to seek overtures out of their respective settlements as servants to Europeans.

Also at the behest of colonialism and amalgamation was the introduction of English language as the official language of Nigerians. English was a unifying force to unite these prior disparate groups with individual languages. The quest to seek education which was provided mainly by the missionaries was aggravated by the availability of economic

opportunities for mainly individuals who could understand the colonial medium of communication, English. Educational institutions however were readily accepted in the southern part of the country and the fringes of the northern minority who adopted western education and Christianity in order to reassert their independence against the predominant Islamic northern population (Mc Loughlin & Bouchat, 2013). Missionary activities and education was however restricted in the Northern part of the country in order to allay their fears of prospective cultural and religious interference in the polity.

The introduction of education through colonialism led to the ascendancy of new educated elites in the Nigerian society. There was the transmogrification of the societal by these elites whose taste for European ostentatious lifestyle, further plunged African traditional economy base of the society subsequently leading to their gradual demise due to this change in consumption pattern, unavailability of labour and the mad frenzy for education requiring migration. Observing this trend, Edward Morris Falk, a district officer for Aba Division in 1920 remarked:

“The native produces food stuffs, palm oil and kernels. He is a consumer of a long list of European commodities such as clothing and textiles, liquor, imported foodstuffs, iron monger, crockery, kerosene oil, gun powder, soap, matches, tobacco, camp equipment, cheap imitation jewelry, cycles, in fact anything which the natives see the white man use from gramophones and sewing machines to thinned salmon or boot laces” (in Korieh, 2010)

The increase in educated elites sparked the cord for nationalism, with these elites having acquired Western-modeled education from Western institutions either in the shores of the country and outside the country, desiring self-rule from the colonialists. Nationalism was

to subsequently lead to the independence of the country after prolonged bickering and dilly-dallying between nationalities of the northern and southern divides of the country.

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#### SHORTCOMINGS OF AMALGAMATION

British amalgamation of Nigeria, had its impact on the present structure of Nigeria. Colonialism in Nigeria at the wake of amalgamation, is a mish-mash of happy and sad tales. Although colonialism undoubtedly led to development of Nigerian hinterlands and the formation of new cities mainly due to trade, it is evident that British colonialism only developed areas of Nigeria which it considered important for its economic needs. The unification of Nigeria by the British colonialists plunged Nigeria into an identity crisis. Reiterating this view, Agbese (2008), averred:

“We are a nation of hundreds of tribes and sub-tribes. We are also distinctively a nation of multi-hyphenated individuals with the word Nigerian as a common factor at the end of the hyphenation line. Thus we have the Yoruba-Nigerian, the Igbo-Nigerian and the Idoma-Nigerian. Then we stretch this to accommodate other distinctions peculiar to us as a people: Christian-Yoruba-Nigerian; Hausa/Fulani – Moslem Nigerian. Then of course we must drag our states along for purposes of individual identities: Yoruba-Christian-Osun-Nigerian. But in addition to our state identities that are required as proof of the politico-geographical corner we occupy in the land, we are grouped into geo-political zones: Zuru-North-West-Moslem-Nigerian. We complete this absurdity with our local government identities that are also required by employers and school admission officers to show where we truly came from”.

As had been highlighted in previous sub-themes, Nigeria hitherto colonialism was constituted by disparate ethnicities, with individual identity. At the dawn of Nigeria's birth, these differences were not taken into cognizance ushering Nigeria into the continuous quest for identity. Nigerians only identify themselves as Nigerians outside Nigeria border and partially when struck by violence. Fusing individual ethnic groups with different political system, has not only endangered Nigeria's unity, but has also fostered an acrimonious relations between these ethnic nationalities, disjointed on a system to adopt and seeking the pre-eminence of one over the other in its political sphere. Cohesion has eluded Nigeria with every individual group thrown into a conundrum on the identity to align with, impeding her political/ social development. The offshoot of amalgamation which is strife and the struggle for dominance across the north-south divide and Christian-Muslim divide would decades after this impulsive and self-centered creation, continually plague its development.

Nigeria's unification in 1914, foisted over 250 ethnic groups across three major ethnic nationalities – Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, creating an environment of mistrust and fear of political domination between these three major ethnic groups on one hand and between these three major ethnic groups and the minorities forcibly united as a single unit without their consultation, on the other hand. Coleman (in Agbese, 2008) observed: "it was possible to distinguish between a majority group of about two-thirds of the population and minority groups amounting to about one-third." In the course of independence struggle, this deep-seethed distrust led to the consequent introduction of the Willink Commission in 1957, to allay the fears of ethnic minorities, unfortunately, this child of Lugard keeps manifesting itself in different forms, with every political era contending with one socio-

political crisis or the other including the more recent farmers-herdsmen crisis rearing its ugly head, since its formation.

With the shift from a parliamentary and regional system of government which Nigeria practiced at independence to a Federal system, accompanied by state creation which was believed to ensure equitable representation of all parties in the state, this problem still persists in the Nigerian state, mostly reflected in the struggle for political power at the central government. Ethnic strife between the three major ethnic groupings is lucid in the derisive names which they call themselves. The Yoruba's describes the Igbos as *Koboko* - a scorn for their perceived love for money coined from the Nigerian coin – kobo, Hausas call the Igbos *nyamiri* – an adaptation of the Igbo word meaning 'give me water', Yorubas call the Hausa/Fulani *ajegoro* – coined out of the Haus/Fulani love for kolanut, Hausas call the Yorubas *bayarabe*, other tribes call the Yorubas *ngbati-ngbati* a corruption of the Yoruba word *nigbati* (Agbese, 2008).

Amalgamation was viewed as an extension of Hausa/Fulani socio-political structure to other parts of the country. The Nigerian Times in an editorial shortly after Nigeria's unification averred that it was a "conquest and subjugation of Southern Nigeria by Northern Nigeria" (Nwabughuogu in Agbese, 2008). This view of Nigerian Times was further emphasized by northern Nigerian political elites who saw other ethnic groups not as a single unit but as territories which are to be conquered and incorporated into the Northern agenda. Incorporation of indirect rule at amalgamation and other socio-political forms as practiced in northern Nigeria, massaged the ego of the northerners to continually perpetuate the born-to-rule ideology despising the capacity of other ethnic constituents. Thus, this ideology was not only emboldened during colonialism but was also encouraged by the British at independence. Presently, years after independence, the northern political

elites not only lay claim to governmental powers but has also successfully had their ways in governmental policies through a carefully created dysfunctional structural defect of the Nigerian state.

Furthermore, at Nigeria's inception at 1914, infrastructural and other colonial policies were unified and brought under the control of the colonial government. Education, a fundamental aspect for the attainment of civilization which the British claimed was a major basis for its implementation of amalgamation was not uniform across all protectorates. Northern Nigeria upheld its pre-colonial quranic educational system which it favoured and held in high esteem, whilst their southern counterparts, embraced western education which was mainly established by missionaries. Shielding northern Nigeria from western education was hinged on the containment of Christianity into Islamic territories which the north represents. However, the western education was introduced and accepted in northern fringes, which constitute what is known today as the North-Central geopolitical zone which is contiguous with the south.

Non-uniformity in the educational system was predicated by the British to prevent and allay the fears of the northerners towards possible obliteration and subsequent domination of the traditional system in existence. With the rise in educated elites demanding for independence, these nationalists pre-dominantly from the south, the north opposed independence fearing domination of the more educated southerners at the demise of colonialism. In contemporary Nigeria, in a bid to accommodate the undereducated northern population, meritocracy in admission process into educational institutions is swept under the carpet through an administrative system known as 'educationally less developed states'. Moreover, northern Nigeria till date is yet to recover from this grievous shortcoming of amalgamation as educational policies enacted in a bid



to propagate widespread education of children, has yielded nothing, accounting for about 60 per cent of out-of-school-children in Nigeria.

Nigeria's judicial system at independence was inherited from the hitherto existing colonial setup system. Sharia law, which has not only created a huge chasm between existing laws between the northern and the southern Nigeria, has also propelled the impediment of the Nigerian judicial system. The judiciary has not only suffered the conflict of a colliding judicial system as a result of amalgamation, but had also impeded its operation several years after the unification of these prior disparate groups. It is also imperative that limpidly state that the operation of sharia law and its extension to other ethnicities living within northern territory had accelerated ethno-religious crisis in the Nigerian state.

### **Conclusion:**

The geographical territory today known as Nigeria, took its form from the 1914 amalgamation of its numerous ethnic groupings. The reasons for amalgamating these prior distinct ethnic nationalities were hinged on administrative and economic reasons. Consequently, with the unification of these numerous ethnicities was the official incursion of colonialism. British colonialists also introduced indirect rule into these societies which existed as individual nationalities with several systems of administration advanced on the premise of developing these traditional institutions. This culminated into several socio-political and economic changes into these societies.

Most notably was the extrication of native middlemen from colonial administration, further strengthening the powers of traditional institutions in order to achieve their economic objective. Economically, a new colonial economy was introduced placing emphasis on the production of cash crops and the exploration of minerals. Labour

demands which were an integral aspect of colonial economy – skilled and unskilled, accelerated the founding of new urban settlements, effectually aiding education and rural-urban migration, as well as causative for the development of infrastructure.

Trade opened the hinterlands to development. Colonialism through amalgamation though involving traditional institutions in the administration of their affairs, had its numerous shortcomings mainly, unifying these nationalities without their consent and applying an administrative system extant in a single unit to other sub-sets of Nigeria. Moreover, a large majority of these unified territories were strangers to each other, with no record of socio-political or economic interactions between them. The quest to forge a unified nation through colonialism proved abortive as these ethnicities after the demise of colonialism and many years after independence is still struggling to live as a unified country; fueled by political, ethnic and religious disparity amongst them.

## CHAPTER 4

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MISSIONARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

#### PREAMBLE

This book has before now approached subject matter with historical caution, only narrating account of events with little or no injection of judgment. But now, the book arrives a juncture where it addresses matters subjectively even while detailing the objective account of events. This is because as we emerge from the fiery creeks of blurry Nigerian history, entering a more recent period of time, engaging a sector of the country that by its current status, continues to contribute to the underwhelming state of the country, it is therefore made necessary to be critical with analysis.

Education in Nigeria despite undergoing evolution over time has yet remained in a discouraging and negligible state. The United Nations in a recent convention advised that her member countries allocate at least, 25% of their yearly budget to education. But for Nigeria, this has not come to effect as the country whose budget has the larger chunk of its allocations devoted towards recurrent expenditures, consistently allot education, figures far below par. This underfunding problem gives rise to hydra headed situations that drastically reduce the quality of education offered and made available in the country.

Schools frequently go on strike as the teachers eternally contend over unpaid salaries and unremitted pledges toward infrastructural and institutional development of the sector. For this problem, there seem to be no solution in sight as the leaders who should devote towards finding means of improvement lacks incentive for doing so, with their children all

studying abroad. With this festering lack of political will, the state of education continue to plummet, leaving those who cannot afford foreign academic study trapped in the rotting quagmire.

For some group of Nigerians who are caught in the middle of the society's class stratification, of the middle class membership but not too financially capable to afford the exorbitance of abroad studies, they divest into the fairly better private school education available in the country. The private school business thrives and continue burgeoning because of the incompetence and indifference of the country's government and her leaders. It could have been forgivable, except that many societies, like that of Nigeria, are majorly constituted of a larger number of poor to lower middle class masses who cannot afford the alternatives of abroad or private school study. So for this greater majority, what is and should be their fate?

The greater problem however, is that going by the purpose of state's existence, the optimization of all citizen's potential, the security of their lives and ambitions, constitute the priority of the state's activities. But against the background of what is obtained in reality, at least education wise, one can see without doubts, that the country is failing its citizens, and in the same way, herself, becoming a failed entity. This is made worse by the fact that education is what cultivates and nurtures the mind of man, formulating the content of his character and preparing him for his duties, roles and obligations towards the society. In this sense, by failing her citizens, the country fails herself.

This cyclical chain of cause and effect is not unconnected to the problems that blights the corporate sanctity of Nigeria and its claim to development. It unarguable that no nation progresses, advances, and come to the rank of global respect with a dilapidating and

shambolic educational system. So at the end, Nigeria by its disrespect for education, steep itself in deeper problems, having the edge of numerical population, but lacking the advantage of capable work force who through their innovations and applied endeavours, can relieve the country from the grip of global scorn, poverty, underdevelopment and debts.

Nigeria after years of their first experience of western type education still imports expatriates who lead and execute their constructions, research, armament, military rescue, and repairs of industrial machinery. This gaping lack indicts Nigeria and her education, questioning critically if there really is any existing socio-economic benefit Nigeria gained from western education. With Nigerian companies and businesses respecting and electing to favour people with foreign certificate over indigenous graduates, one understands that the disrespect for oneself is deeply entrenched and the insufficiency of Nigerian education, proved beyond reasonable doubt.

Hence, this chapter shall concern itself with the inquiry into education in Nigeria, casting light to the advent of western education in Nigeria, its features, purpose, yields, evolution and its current situation. For the raised challenges and problems, solutions are infused as attempts at providing suggestions for rebuilding the sector are made even as the country seem to be a fatally infected patient of a bigger and terminal ailment. Yet even as this chapter reveals its great ambitions, it can no more or less fail to humbly begin with understanding and clarifying what education is. So one may ask, what is this education that Nigeria allegedly fails in and hence clustering their own chances at progress and development?

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## THE DEFINITION OF EDUCATION

The field of Humanities and Social Sciences are filled with concepts bereft of generally accepted definition. This condition of definitional complexity is occasioned by the intellectual contention obtained in the field which has orchestrated a clashing and splashing of epistemological and paradigmatic orientations of these defining scholars as informed by their disparate intellectual backgrounds. So as the contest to assert and establish scholarly superiority, or by a genuine attempt to create an understanding of a given concept for their different audiences, new definitions arise and older or insufficient ones wither away.

Education falls greatly within the boundaries of concept suffering this definitional dilemma. For education it may even be worse as the debate begins too early with the disagreement if it is a concept or a process or an activity. Worse, it experiences conflict even in the most simplest of ways upon which we arrive definition: etymological translation. Many scholars, stretching from the earliest time of scholarship, has proffered their definition of education to the point that they have become classified into schools of thoughts and the concept itself undergoing drastic evolution.

Harry Schofield (1972) dedicating a full chapter to the fierce perimeter of education definition made an elaborate opening into the contention, stating that “we are now in a position to say that education falls into the ‘needle/pin category, especially for teachers. It has been, and will continue be, so much an essential part of their day-to-day lives that they are appalled when asked to define ‘education’ and find that they cannot.” Schofield went on to state that “even educational ‘experts’ find great difficulty in defining education.”

Yet in the same dedicated chapter, definitions were sought from nooks and crannies of scholarship and across epochs, hence bringing to light, a vast perspective and

understanding of the education question despite the fact that, as opined by R.S Peters in Schofield, modern philosophers have abandoned the attempt. Schofield started off by citing one of the foremost scholars to attempt the explanation of education, Plato:

*By education I mean that training given by suitable habits to the first instincts of virtue in children, when pleasure and pain are rightly implanted in non-rational souls. The particular training in respect of pleasure and pain, which leads you to hate and love what you ought to hate and love, is called 'education'.*

Coming from Plato, this definition carries the properties of its time, carrying a roundedness that also seems vague and leaving a modern reader struggling to grab the real meaning of education. From the time when Plato was defining, there was no foundational thought, no previously concerted efforts made at defining education. Also what Plato's definition offers also, is a glimpse to what built up to the future contentions as scholars begin to define from a subjective viewpoint. Looked closely at, Plato did not say 'education is', instead he stated thus, 'by education I mean... .' This will later give rise for the emergence of two broad approaches to definition of education: descriptive and stipulative. Plato's is stipulative as he suggests his personal understanding of the concept. Finally, it is worthy to note, as Schofield pointed out, that Plato's definition of education has a 'moral emphasis', since it talks about 'good' and 'bad', 'pleasure and pain.' This perhaps can be linked with modern day academic certification taking consideration of worthiness both in character and learning.

Another stipulative and/or subjective definition was made by Milton in Schofield: "I call, therefore, a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly,

skillfully and magnanimously, all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war.” This definition of education while unequivocal and less worded than that of Plato, is however less precise and vast when we try to create an understanding of what and what, where and where Milton’s educated man must cover and know. Schofield (1972) trying to buttress the scope of Milton’s education explained it covered areas as: “Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Italian, Chaldaic, Syriac, arithmetic, mathematics, geography, physics, astronomy, meteorology, mineralogy, anatomy, physiology, fortification, architecture, engineering, navigation, ethics, economics, politics, law, logic, rhetoric; the scriptures, theology and church history.”

In other words, what Milton understands of education and demands of the educated man, is to know all. Schofield commenting on this definition agreed to the same sentiment by citing a reader who observed and stated that “what Milton is saying that if you know everything, you can do everything”, hence the image and demand of the educated man by Milton and Comenius to know all. Elaborating on this, Schofield elucidated that the exact word used by these two scholars was *pansophia* which comes from two Greek words, *pan* meaning ‘all’, and *sophia* which means ‘wisdom’ or ‘knowledge.’ However, it is instructive to state that as of the time of Milton’s scholarly attempts, the existing body and compartments of knowledge was little and smaller than it is today.

R. C Lodge (1947) offered two definitions, stating that there are two uses of the word ‘education’, one of which he calls ‘wider, and the other he calls ‘narrower.’ For Lodge’s wide viewpoint, “education is equivalent to ‘experience’, the experience of a living organism interacting with its normal environment.” Lodge’s narrower definition, flowing from the wide, upheld thus: “experience or nature, is still the teacher, but in the specific social institution known as ‘schooling’ it is guided by the teacher.” Yet it is still warranted



to note Lodge's approach to definition whereas he, mired in the complexity of defining education, rather stated that 'education is equivalent to' instead of 'education is.'

Sometime ago, it was the conventional practice to try and create an understanding and definition using the etymological approach. The practice traces words to their roots and origins, usually Greek or Latin, then making a direct translation, word to word, into English. Yet in the peculiar case of education, it is not made easier understanding the concept using this method as, in fact, it gave rise to a dichotomy between people who etymologically interpreted this way and people who interpreted it the other way. Hence another fierce contention.

C.J. Ducasse (1958) leads the way in this etymological contention, stating that etymologically, deriving education from *educere*, "to educate is to lead out or bring out." This becomes the first 'is' definition we encounter, the first descriptive and specific definition, yet it immediately gets hit by disagreement. Harry Schofield (1972) buttressed summarily, the conflict that attended this definition:

*Unfortunately, this particular theory was sterile, as another school of thought denied that education comes not from **educere**, to lead out, but from **educare**, which means 'to form or train.' If we realize that the two greatest opponents in educational thinking, the 'formalists' (who believed that education was a discipline and that children learn what is good for them, are seen and not heard, and are made into specific people by their education) and the 'naturalists' (who believed that education should merely 'let the child develop'), both claim that they are right in terms of*

*‘etymological definition’, we see how futile it is and was at the time to give this definition further thought.*

Nonetheless, C.J Ducasse (1958) later expanded his definition, saying that “education takes place through instruction, training and indoctrination.” However it raises a contentious curiosity as one begins to wonder if it is intellectually accurate to suggest that ‘education’ should ‘indoctrinate.’ All these deepens the conversation over the definition education, steeping it in more complexity.

H.H Horne in his adumbration approached education descriptively, saying that “education is the process of superior adjustment of the physically and mentally developed, free, conscious, human being to God, as manifested in the intellectual, emotional and volitional environment of man.” This definition proves by mere study, to be vague and abstract especially when thrown under the light of modern understanding. This descriptive definition, with its definiteness, is yet complex and almost unnecessarily sophisticated.

G. Langford (1967) offers a concise definition, simply stating that “education is an activity which aims at practical results in contrast with activities which aim at theoretical results.” Reacting to this simple and concise definition, Schofield (1972) thoroughly addresses its problematic negation, stating:

*Although we have to think what ‘practical’ and ‘theoretical’ results are, we can immediately think of ‘science’ as aiming theoretical results. (We even talk of ‘scientific theory’.) “Activity seems to imply a ‘process’, and we can agree with both terms, since education teachers and learners are active.*

*However, Langford goes on to liken education to other activities which aim at practical results, such as 'politics', 'manufacturing', and 'farming' and contrasts it with activities which aim at theoretical results such as 'physics' and 'psychology'. This rather dashes our hopes. If politics, manufacturing, farming and education are all practical activities, which aim at 'practical' results, we want to know how anyone differs from any other one.... We may now begin to see that Peters is justified when he says that the task of defining 'education' is extremely difficult.*

R.S Peters (1966) maintaining that defining education is difficult, however, in its place proposed the use of criteria that will guide readers in formulating an understanding as to regards what is education and what is not. The difficulty that characterizes the definition of education comes from the fact that education, as Peters noted, "forms a family of ideas united by a complicated network of similarities, which overlap and criss-cross." To assuage these difficulties, Peters suggested the following criteria:

1. Education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it.
2. Education must involve knowledge and understanding and some sort of 'cognitive perspective' which is not inert.
3. Education at least rules out some procedures of transmission on the grounds that they lack wittingness and voluntariness on the part of the learner.

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## ADVENT AND INTRODUCTION OF WESTERN EDUCATION

Western education penetrated Nigeria as early as 1840s when European Christian mission made their first successful advancement and occupation of the territories along the Atlantic Ocean in the south. Older research and reports tends to establish a fact about the use of education by this Christian missionaries, arguing that it merely served as a tool of attraction and leverage to win over the natives. Osoba and Fajana (1980) stating similar view opined that “different studies have adequately demonstrated that in establishing themselves on the Atlantic Coast of Yorubaland and the Niger Delta, and in penetrating the hinterland, the Christian relied on, among many other methods, the attractions of Western education.”

This particular approach and goal by the missionary significantly influenced the nature, content and design of education given. Osoba and Fajana going forward expressed the purpose of which education served the missionaries:

*Thus conceiving education as a major means of proselytization, the missions had a very narrow view of education for Nigeria. It was therefore a familiar strategy that when a mission established a new post anywhere in this area, one of the first facilities it endeavoured to provide was a school. The missionaries, recognizing that the task of converting the ‘unyielding’ adult ‘pagans’ to Christianity would be a herculean one, tended to turn their attention to the children whom they hoped to catch through the school. Given this strategy, the curriculum was heavily weighted on the three Rs—reading, writing, and arithmetic—sufficient to enable the children to operate under the missionary banner.*

What this occasioned was the provision of education that has no much interest in the true intellectual development of the students since the primary purpose was using education to cultivate Christian followers. “It was envisaged” Osoba and Fajana wrote, “that the products of this education would operate in their familiar social milieu and would, therefore, be able to transmit the new message of salvation to their own peoples.”

This exposes the very low bar with which the earliest academic ambition operated. The scope of this aspiration aims for the male students to later graduate and become vessels of the church in capacities like catechists, deacons and priests. For the women there was no more as aspiration than for them to be wives to these brand new educated products. The early missionary education did not express the intention to, through deep intellectual engagement, initiate the natives into the scientific and intellectual knowledge that will lead to inventions, discoveries and the comprehensive understanding of reality. They were given crumbs of knowledge. This was further worsened and portrayed by the almost uniform indifference of the foreign mission to encourage the education of the natives beyond the primary school level among their converts with a little exception in Yoruba land. However, by the growing and exploding curiosity and ambitions of Nigerians, and the demands of the newly created colonial administration, the missions and the colonial government was coerced into making a shift in the purpose, method and scope of the education for the natives.

Yet, even in the face of this paradigmatic shift, much was not achieved in the plight of Nigerian education. This were for some reasons including the suspicion by the missionary bodies that secondary and higher education will make the natives arrogant and materialistic. This fear of the natives becoming ‘intellectually arrogant’ is not unconnected to the fear of the colonized to learn too much and sooner than later, flout and/or challenge

the authority of the colonizer (missions and government). What emanated consequently from this whole situation is the suffering of the few secondary schools that existed: they were hardly funded, hence frustrated.

They were schools like CMS Grammar School Lagos (1859), the Roman Catholic Teacher's College (later St. Gregory's College), Lagos and Methodist Boys High School (1878). These schools, established by the whims of the various missions, yet were often overlooked or not taken into concrete consideration by the founding missions. These schools therefore had to compromise for sustenance, hence, for some, surviving by the proceeds of philanthropists who donated to them. For this, the education given was understandably poor. It is for this reason that later, the then Governor of Lagos, MacCallum, in 1898 described most of the clerks produced by these secondary schools as "illiterate and arrogant."

The deeper significance of this is that even the primary education is not left with better condition. They lacked efficient and qualified staff. Although attempts were made to recruit teachers from the West Indies and the older British settlements of West Africa, as Osoba and Fajana wrote, the staffing situation remained bad in 1901 such that it drew negative comments from the Inspector of Schools, as documented by E.A Afigbo (1968):

*Very few teachers in the schools in the Protectorate hold any certificate or have received any training as teachers. They are for the most part mission agents of whose duties teaching in the Mission schools forms only a part and no educational qualifications or attainment are required for them.*

But compassionate consideration can be accorded these missionary pioneers of Western education in Southern Nigeria, given the nature of their ambition in the first place in the colonial territories. Although without doubt, the missions could be declared as the forerunners of British colonial rule in Nigeria, their own activities in different parts of Southern Nigeria preceded the establishment of formal British occupation by approximately thirty and fifty years. In this context, within this period, given the nature of the missions' ambitions, it is explainable, and understandable that the educational endeavour is driven in the spiritual and sectarian direction of the churches these schools represented. The secular dimension of education became a possible aspiration with the eventual establishment of the colonial administration hence making it a pliable road by the closing of the years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But even at that, inputs weren't sufficient.

Whatever devotion pledged by the colonial demonstration, if not outright façade, were more empty promises and symbolic gestures than concrete policy for the true promotion of Nigerians' education. "The most important goal for the British administration set up in the Niger Delta and Yorubland between 1885 and 1900 and which, along with the Lagos colony, were crystallized into the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1906, was to establish an effective British presence in these areas at minimum cost to administration to the British taxpayer" (Osoba and Fajana, 1980). By implication, one understands that for a long period of time, the British administration placed premium on military and diplomatic among the people, while giving the advancement of education little attention. It is against this background that that the 1882 Education Ordinance Code of the Southern Nigeria should be understood. Despite its good intentions, the practice of its prescriptions was drawn back by the unfortunate place of education in British administration's scale of preference.

There may exist arguments contending to establish that the colonial administration through the Ordinance of 1882 and the 1903 Code, achieved little or nothing in the educational system because the Missionary has for long, monopolized the school system of the Southern Nigeria, hence resisting the reforms due to their conservative agenda against the administration's secular content. But this viewpoint fails to satisfy when consideration of the Northern Nigeria, where there was no Christian presence, is made and therefore proving the reluctance of the administration to devotedly pursue the ends of education for Nigerians. The truth being that Lord Lugard and those who came after him, were guided by typical considerations of effective colonial administration and by the of Southern Nigeria, "where the products of missionary schools, invoking egalitarian Christian concepts, were already becoming a thorn in the flesh of both the colonial authorities and the traditional rulers, decided on an essentially government-sponsored secular education for the Muslim emirates. However, in spite of the secular character of the Lugardian educational system in the North, it had severely limited objectives, and betrayed the traditional colonial government stinginess in financing the education of subject people." (Osoba and Fajana).

In line with the foregoing, Lugard made clear through actions that the main goal of his academic programme in the North was to accentuate the Islamic core of the traditional emirate authorities, which understandably important and relevant to his administrative strategy of ruling over the territory through the agency of the emirate institutions, and to insulate the North from the alleged corrupting influence of the Western-educated natives of the Lagos Colony and Southern Nigeria. This way, all other promise of fund to the North for the pursuit of education designed according to secular motives were, however, mere words without actions. To the contrary these koranic schools were starved of funds that



ultimately they diminished, by quality and quantity, in comparison to the growing academic activities in the South of Nigeria. This deceleration somehow finds its consequences still alive in the wide gap existing between educational conditions and reality of the Southern and Northern parts of Nigeria.

Applying the lessons from what was considered fatal mistakes made by the missionaries in the South, Lugard and his successors decided to meticulously control the degree and direction of the dissemination of Western education in the Muslim emirates. The educational programme designed for the North, besides isolating the North from the corruption of enlightenment in the South, was built with the design to inculcate upon the pupil an understanding of a different kind of segregation and numbing out any yearning for equality and advancement as obtainable in the Southern part of Nigeria.

With all these going on, education at that period became a shadow of what it should be. While the missions were interested in converting more souls and humans to their own brand of Christianity using the bait of school, the colonial administration used the school as a means to an end, as a factory for the production half baked, unenlightened individuals that will serve administrative purposes in the lowest echelon of the system. “Even though it is true that between 1882 and 1929, various measures including the Lagos Education Ordination of 1882, the Southern Nigeria Education Code of 1903, the 1916 and 1926 Education Ordinances attempted to establish some kind of administrative machinery for the supervision and control of education and as well provided increased government financial support for the schools—all of which resulted in some statistical growth in educational facilities—it is equally true that, compared with the needs of the country, government initiative in promoting education was grossly inadequate.” (Osoba and Fajana, 1980).

Many other spin off consequences emanated from the approach of the missionary and the administration to education. Being like the forbidden fruit, Nigerians haven bitten the fruit of knowledge, yearned for more in order to gain entrance into the mysterious world of the Whiteman. This thought was assisted by the understanding dominant in the South of Nigeria, where by the long exposure of the natives to the Whiteman, education was seen as the corridor that will pass individuals who gets it, into the wealth of knowledge possessed by the colonialists. What this occasioned was the springing up private schools that sought to, beyond taking themselves up into knowledge, but attend to the problem of expanding population seeking education but stranded by the colonial government's reluctance to expand the scope and funds for schooling. This mushroom schools that grew as an answer to a problem, became itself, a problem. This was because they too were of poor quality both in structures and in content of their education.

By 1915, there already existed a massive number of independent or unassisted schools in Southern Nigeria, eclipsing the number of government-owned schools. Numbering 587 schools, compared to 53 government-owned and 82 government-assisted schools, the trend soon became a worry for the administration and they sought ways to control the development. At best, these attempts to control the spread of such schools were half-hearted, as they are merely pretentious and its devotion only existing on paper. These attempts took the form of enquiries into the Southern Nigerian schools in 1925—of which the reports showed that many schools were deficient in diverse ways.

These inquiries proposed different suggestions of which one aimed to grant government the power to close down inadequate schools and to determine the adoption of a uniformed curricula that is equally beneficial to the people. Other measures were established in order to help enforce the former policy and they included the formulation

of a Board of education, the registration of teachers, and the introduction of supervisors who were to keep in close touch with the schools in their charge so that they might raise the standard of education being given. But these policies were received with opposition by the Nigerians involved in the process who saw the policy as a way of victimizing the existing schools and shutting natives out of education. Worse, they saw it as a sabotage on schools trying, against difficult odds, to provide an amenity the government can and should provide, but wouldn't. To the advocating Nigerians, the administration was trying to, with their seeming draconian policies, frustrate the uprising schools fighting to reduce mass illiteracy in Nigeria. The rejection of these policies led to popular viewpoint that "any education is better than no education."

By the virtue of the opposition mounted by the enlightened Nigerians to the harsh policy of shutting down this unassisted schools that was once disparagingly referred as 'hedge schools' by Hugh Clifford, but mainly because the government was not ready to commit fund and other resources to the execution of the prescriptions and therefore ferociously improving the standard of schools or providing better alternatives in the event of their closure, the policy ended up going from mere threats and preachy admonitions, to deadened silence. As Osoba and Fajana stated "the statistical data (proving) the preponderance of non-grant-aided schools in 1947 clearly reveal that the government did not attempt to execute vigorously its policy on 'hedge schools'. In any case the colonial government right up to the early 1950s had no answer to popular demands for mass education. The report of a meeting of the Nigerian Board of Education held in 1929 clearly betrays government's unwillingness to embark on a programme of educating the masses." By its compelling and heartbreaking nature, it serves to quote, at length, the very content of the report here below:

*What step does Government propose to take to provide education for the mass of children unable to obtain schooling? Here is our old friend again. The answer is that Government is quite alive to the problem, but it is useless to open schools until they can be sufficiently staffed, especially when the Code is framed to obtain the closure of those which are inefficient and not in the interests of the children. Immediate solution would entail importation of teachers and the provision of a large sum of money. Now financial difficulties cannot be overcome immediately. Government gives large grants to assist schools for salaries and buildings when their own schools sadly need rebuilding. When I am asked what government is doing for education I quote Education Estimates, which show the approximate totals of grants paid to be as follows: 1926 – 53, 000 pounds, 1927 – 71, 000 pounds, 1928 – 88, 000 pounds, and for 1929 I estimate 110, 000 pounds at least will be required. Education can only have its share of Government Revenue, and it is getting that. I do not believe that ‘any education is better than none’. In Nigeria, under present circumstances, it is a lie if it includes schools of the inefficient type.*

The quoted session ends on a sadder note as the Board of Education urges Nigerians, in such dire time where prevalent circumstances indicates that Nigerians beyond their yearning for education, truly needed it for all round development. But to the contrary, the Board of education tables a wicked and heartless suggestion:

Inexistent Country

*On the other hand, there is an enormous field for community service of every description, which properly and wisely applied, will confer more lasting benefits than inefficient schooling. Also it has the merit of requiring neither certificated teachers nor expensive buildings. Such service is educational equally with schooling and it affects lives of the people even [if] it does not satisfy those who speak of their needs. (A Bulletin of Educational Matters, Vol. 3)*

This classical indifference and blatant unwillingness continued to characterize the education scene in Nigeria until 1951-2 when the first majority African governments came to power in the regions and in Lagos, made possible by another reluctant policy fast with words and slow to action. Despite the 1929 report of the Board of Education cited above making boisterous claims that education was receiving its own fair share of Government Revenue, what obtained in reality, as shown in the table below, was different, showing that for a long period of time, Education in Nigeria got a paltry percentage and a meager sum.

Year	Expenditure on Education (Pounds)	% of total revenue	% of total expenditure
1914	47,900	1.3	
1919	49,216	1.1	
1924-5	116,301	1.7	1.8
1929-30	263,456	4.2	4.3

*Inexistent Country*

1934-35	225, 038	4.5	4.7
1939-40	264, 461	4.3	4.0
1944-45	485, 113	4.5	4.8
1949-50	2, 208, 530		8.1
1951-52	8, 324, 000		16.9

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Table Source: Osoba and Fajana (1980), Educational and Social Development During the Twentieth Century.

The figure in the table clearly expresses government's posture towards education within the period in question. The most generous observer safely come to the judgement that there, a dispirited approach to education, showing the lack of political will to promote the sector. Important to note is 1934-35, two years after establishment of the much criticized Yaba Higher College, instead of rise or at least remain stable so as to carry the demands of the time, education expenditure rather fell below what it was five years earlier. The incremental surge of the 1949-50 can be accounted for by the initial capital expenditure allocated to the sector for the building of the University College, Ibadan, established 1948.

The foregoing nonetheless, the incline of 1951-52 is barely surprising, given the fact that it was the first year of the implementation of the Macpherson constitution which saw the emergence and governorship of African governments in the different regions of the country. This African/Nigerians immediately took to effect, their long coming agitation for educational expansion and upgrade. Citing an example, "the Action Group government in

Western Nigeria had to amend drastically in 1952 the first budget which it inherited from the colonial officials to provide 80, 000 pounds for 200 post-secondary scholarships tenable in British and American universities and at University College, Ibadan whereas the original colonial budget did not provide for even one scholarship.” (Osoba and Fajana, 1980), (Obafemi Awolowo, 1960).

Such was the pattern that repeated across all regions of Nigeria, ensuring a surge in the dividends of education. The investment and interest overall in the country grew too significantly that by 1958, excitedly more had been achieved in educational development than in the preceding ninety years of missionary and colonial government’s sponsorship of education. This growth was not limited to secondary and tertiary education, nor was it restricted to the North, rather it affected the primary education and reached the Northern part of Nigeria.

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#### OBSERVABLE IMPACTS OF WESTERN EDUCATION IN THE EMERGING SOCIETY OF NIGERIA

1. Western education, especially the variety of it provided in missionary institutions, was from the very beginning aimed at subverting the indigenous cultures of the people regarded as primitive and sinful and at producing young men and women thoroughly immersed in the supposedly superior European Christian culture. Hence, the erosion of Nigerian peoples original cultures, orientation and ideology.
2. Another radical impact of Western education on the development of the Nigerian society is in its disruption of the pre-colonial social structure and distribution of political power in the various communities.

3. One other significant consequences of the growth of Western education in Nigeria is the acquisition by a growing corps of Nigerians of new technical and professional skills whether under in typical Western-style institutions or under the indigenous apprenticeship system (a pre-colonial form of education), which had itself undergone some significant modifications under the impact of Western education and British colonial economy.
4. The Urban Settlement: Prior to Western education and the colonial administration, urban-rural settlement disparity was not a common thing in Nigeria. The extent and character of urban existence is, perhaps, one of the most important social developments that have been most radically affected by the injection of British colonial rule and economy and Western type education into the ingenious Nigerian setting.
5. One obviously important influence of Western type education in Nigeria is the introduction to sections of the Nigerian society of the Western variety of medical and health care as against the heavily herbal dependent health system native to pre-colonial Nigerians.
6. Western type education led to the introduction of a new and different kind of judicial system as known and practiced till today which is originally different from the practiced judicial system in the different communities of Nigeria prior to colonialism and Western type education.

## **CONCLUSION**

The emergence and introduction of Western type of education revamped the Nigerian system, changed the whole course of direction of Nigerian ideological evolution, influencing the value system, principle and character of the Nigerian communities and



being. Sectional arguments may exist as to the true relevance and effect of Western education incursion into the dominant systems and values original to the peoples of Nigeria, but there is no denying that Western type education do not have great and positive impact in Nigeria and for Nigerians. Western type education sped up the development of Nigeria and her people, serving as a spring board for Nigerians and Africans alike, to catch up with the pace of the world.

However, the intention of this education, especially at its earliest stages and by those who brought it, wasn't entirely honest as it failed to encourage the application of the full capacity of the Western education. The hoarding of the deeper intellectual, scientific and technological dimension of Western education from Nigerians, if not outright wicked, is clearly unkind especially in consideration with the heinous reasons that informed the decision to be stingy with knowledge. The reason cited—lack of fund—is unacceptable given that this same colonialists have for long, exploited Nigerian resources, shipping it abroad for the socio-economic benefits of the Great Britain. But when the mental and infrastructural development of the owners of the resources became the question, the colonial administration became eloquently intelligent, entering heartbreaking oratory and sophistry, justifying their inhumane policies.

The worst consequence of the hap-hazard, halfhearted and crumb nature of introductory education made by both the missionaries and colonial administration is that it laid a blueprint for the continued and currently existing approach and understanding of education in Nigeria. Today in Nigeria, thanks to the forerunners of education in Nigeria, there is no deep appreciation or manifested yearning for technological and scientific dimension of education in Nigeria. While it may not be a

sufficient reason to justify or explain the rot ongoing in the Nigerian educational system, it is however important to note that the seed of that aspect of education was at first, not planted in the very beginning.

## CHAPTER 5

### RISE OF NATIONALISM AND INDEPENDENCE

#### INTRODUCTION

Nationalism in Nigeria though was witnessed at the introduction of colonialism through pockets of ethnic resistance. It is instructive to note that these forms of ethnic nationalism were not widespread across every part of Nigeria, as most did not occur concurrently and also; they were responses to different forms of colonial incursion usurping the traditional socio-political structure which these native were used to. As obtainable in most human interactions, an attempt to change an existing system is met with opposition which might be counter-productive or otherwise. Noteworthy is the truism that these reactionaries to the imposition of colonialism were not seeking or fighting for the 'Nigerian' cause at this time, nor independence but were mainly involved the defense of their respective economic or political pre-colonial systems. The superior fire power of the British

colonialists, were successful towards the expulsion of colonial rebellion and enforcement of perceived alien rule in these nation-states.

The presence of colonialism as postulated in the previous chapter, led to widespread socio-political developments in Nigeria. Conquests of ethnic nationalism notwithstanding, the colonialists were faced with the uphill task of administering the country through the introduction of far-reaching colonial policies. These policies imposed on the people were not readily accepted by the natives. The imperative of the British to curb these uprisings, laying the foundation for exploitation and subsequently achievement of its colonial objectives, consequently led to the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914.

Notably the beginning of the entity Nigeria, one notable effect of colonialism was the development of true nationalism in Nigeria. Subtly permeating across all ethnicities, Nigerians demanded their inclusion in governance of the colonies culminating to the introduction of the first constitution in Nigeria which provided for indigenous inclusion in governance in the 1920s, albeit limited. At the end of the second war; there were invigorated calls for political inclusion and subsequently independence stimulated by numerous factors both within and outside colonial Nigeria, which were all instrumental towards the achievement of political independence on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1960.

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#### FACTORS THAT AIDED THE EARLY GROWTH OF NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

The growth of nationalist movements in Nigeria cuts across several individuals, institutions and also events within and outside colonial Nigeria. Religion was a major rallying point for the growth of nationalist sentiments in Nigeria. Missionary activities in the colony led to the widespread of Christianity across the respective protectorates constituting Nigeria.

Missionary activities of the colonialists were accompanied with social developments such as education which attracted natives to embrace the doctrines and values of Christianity. Having accepted a new religion which professed beliefs contrary to African traditional religion, these ethnic nationalities adopted Christianity as a platform for cultural and political identity, advancing increased ties between these disparate ethnicities (Mc Loughin & Bouchat, 2013). Notwithstanding the promise of a civilized society engendering a society built on the equality of all humans according to the doctrinal teachings of Christianity and the dereliction of 'barbaric' practices associated with African traditional religion such as social discrimination, the consolidation of colonial rule and Christianity brought about a change in attitudes, social interactions of the colonialists contrary to the gospel brought to the natives. Christianity and its associated beliefs which were alien to the people stimulated the calls for Africans to establish churches which represented the fundamental practices of the African society, independent of colonial or western influence. Africans were discriminated against on account of their previous societal practices. Baptism for instance which was fundamental for indoctrination in the Christian faith was denied to polygamists (Ajayi in Falola&Aderinto). Also, Africans who had attained a level of education, and status constituting early African missionaries were viewed and considered subservient to their colonial counterparts. This spurred the identification of the need by these early native African nationalists for an African church reflecting Africa ideals and traditional systems, led to the breakaway of several churches from the grip of colonial missions (Ajayi,1961). One prominent splinter church: United Native African Church in its resolution dated 14th August, 1891 posits:

That this meeting in humble dependence upon Almighty God is of opinion that Africa is to be evangelized, and that the foreign agencies at work at the

present moment, taking into consideration climatic, and other influences, cannot grasp in situation... Resolved that a purely Native African Church be founded, for the evangelization and amelioration of our race, to be governed by Africans (Coleman, 1958)

These churches were not solely religious institutions, but also served the purpose of platforms for the advancement of Afrocentric ideals, instilling a sense of nationalism on their adherents. Early African-Christian religious leaders were not only religious leaders, but also concurrently political leaders. J.G. Cambell who was the organizer of West African Episcopal Church, was prominent in Lagos politics and went further to assume leadership of the National Congress of British West Africa at the end of the first world war. Mojola Agbebi who was an African pastor of the Niger Delta Mission, attended the first Universal Race Congress held in London in 1911, where he presented a paper(Coleman,1958). Anti-western religious sentiments which pervaded these African societies formed the embryo of subsequent nationalism which is to spread around Nigeria, though this was notably obvious in the Southern part of the country unlike their northern contemporaries where religious inroads were restricted on the basis of stability in the region. Moreover, the conspiratorial role of these colonial missions by abetting colonial policies such as forced labor in African societies, a rejuvenation of pre-colonial economy of slavery also contributed towards the clamor for an Africanized mission. Native Africans were disillusioned with the role these missions played in enslaving Africans in Africa, advancing colonial exploitative policies.

Education which was the brainchild of European imperialism enamored Nigerians seeking inclusion in the colonial economy. Increasing quest of Nigerians to acquire education which was a window for accessing better opportunities in the colonial economy attracted

Nigerians. Widespread need for personnel's who could communicate in colonial language in English - the introduced lingua franca in Nigeria at the inception of colonialism - accelerated the rise in educated Nigerians. These western-educated individuals, having acquired western education in countries outside British, most in American institutions where liberalism thrived, were influenced greatly by the ideals of self-determination existing in these countries. Armed with education and new interaction/ contacts forged between native Africans and Africans in the diasporas, protestations by these educated elites for inclusion in colonial government spurred the demand for colonial inclusion in domestic affairs of the country. Moreover, discriminatory and racist practices in colonial civil service by the British against Africans were other associated colonial practices which these African educated elites were disenchanted with. Though Africans were governed through the British formulated indirect rule system modeled after the traditional system of northern Nigeria, these educated elites advocated for the replacement of these traditional rulers in government by the educated elements citing their non-representation of the people by these colonial 'stooges'. The success of these nationalists subsequently led to constitutional developments in Nigeria. Greater push for nationalism by educated elements in the society was mainly witnessed by the 1930s at the end of the Second World War.

Rise of newspapers, journals and other publications was a corollary effect of the introduction of western education in the Nigerian society. Increased literacy by Nigerians came with an increased appetite for information. Establishment of newspapers was a platform to ventilate the newly acquired nationalistic ideals and also counter colonial policies which were considered discriminatory to natives. A prominent agent for public consciousness of nationalist ideals was the Lagos Weekly Record, which was founded by

John Payne Jackson in 1891. Holding sway till 1931, Lagos Weekly Record played an active role in Lagos politics which was not only a melting point of educated elites in Nigeria but also administered as a colony. Pointing out the unyielding stance of this newspaper outfit A.B. Laotan observed:

the Record was so powerful that at one time, on account of its uncompromising attitude in the national interest, all foreign advertisements were withdrawn, but it stood its ground unflinchingly ...(It) was by far and away the best newspaper in West Africa (in Coleman, 1958)

Other newspapers which stamped its presence in the Nigerian nationalist struggle were the Lagos Standard established in 1903, the Nigerian Chronicle founded in 1908 and the Nigeria Times which made its debut in 1914. An observable trait of these newspapers was attempt by their proprietors to clad it 'Nigeria' pointing out their Pan-Nigerian identity. Establishment of *Tika Tore* printing works in Lagos, a novel countrywide network of small presses printing highly critical pamphlets further disseminated nationalist consciousness in locations where newspapers could not penetrate, mainly in the hinterlands. Increased access to written works of nationalists proposing the extrication of colonialism culminating to the enthronement of African-rule gained currency. The hallmark of newspaper adoption as a medium to convey nationalism were however witnessed in Nigerian from the 1930s termed era of revolutionary press by some scholars (Bourne, 2015), nationalist organizations and political parties owned and utilized newspapers as medium for propagating their ideals. Struggle for the heart of Lagos, which was a contentious issue amongst nationalists precipitated by limited franchise extended to other parts of the country, colonial placement of Lagos as the hallmark of political, economic and societal development precipitated the ascendancy of several newspapers owned along political

party lines (Adebanwi, 2004). Irrespective of the clash of conflict between newspaper publications, propagating the ideals of their proprietors, these medium of enlightenment broadened and deepened political discourse amongst the Lagos populace. Nnamdi Azikiwe on his return to Nigeria established the West African Pilot which alongside other newspaper outfits such as Daily Comet owned by Duse Mohammed Alli Effendi remonstrated anti-Nigerian colonial policies which attracted the big stick of the government, cracking down on them for these publications described by Governor Richards as “free to do the devil’s work” (Bourne, 2015). Azikiwes’ newspapers were consequently grounded by the colonial authorities on the allegations of misrepresenting facts. Claiming threat to his life by the colonial authorities, he retreated to Onitsha, his hometown; this was to pave way for his popularity amongst Nigerians who saw him as a messianic figure being persecuted by colonial authorities for his zest towards the attainment of an independent Nigeria.

Political developments outside the shores of Africa by Africans who came in contact with African-Diaspora community invigorated a sense of African nationalism which spread across colonial states. Amongst these early African nationalists were Edward Wilmot Blyden, John Payne Jackson, James A.B. Horton, Marcus Garvey etc. Racial consciousness by these individuals instigated an African renaissance placing cultural affinity and the need to come together against the enemies of African independence – colonialism. Predominantly, nationalism and cultural pride in Africa were instilled on Africans through Pan-African conferences - which had in attendance African educated elites and students - , symposiums, and the spread of nationalist organizations around these colonies. Interest in Africa within and outside Africa was piqued through historical books authored by educated Africans recanting tribal history through which Africans could invigorate their



pride in their culture and identity. W.E.B. Du Bois convening the first Pan-African congress in Paris in 1918-1919, African was represented by twelve delegates (Coleman, 1958). Subsequent conferences held in 1923 in Lisbon and 1927 in New York witnessed more African representations, with the proceedings of these conferences made available in public colonial African states through newspapers. A predominant African who was vociferous in the struggle against African political and economic subjugation is Marcus Garvey whose nationalism was built on the tripartite ideas of racial solidarity, integration and exclusionism of Africans. Through the formation of his Universal Negro Improvement Association in Jamaica with affiliated organizations in African colonial states, Garvey was set to unify Blacks into one with the aim of founding an independent African union, devoid of any form of political or economic control. In one of his speeches, Garvey opined:

Wake up Africa! Let us work towards the one glorious end of a free, redeemed and mighty nation ... Nationhood is the only means by which modern civilization can completely protect itself ... Prejudice of the white race against the Black race is not so much because of color as of condition; because as a race to them we have accomplished nothing; we have built no nation, no government; because we are dependent for our economic and political existence ... every race must find a home; hence the great cry of Palestine for the Jews – Ireland for the Irish – Indian for the Indians and ... “Africa for the Africans”(Garvey in Coleman, 1958)

Although a united African state was a tall dream, which eluded Garvey and other Africans in the Diasporas, the effect of their activities was a catalyst for political, social consciousness, as well as instilled a sense of racial pride which culminated to continual overt struggle against colonial suzerainty. In Nigeria, Garvey’s Universal Negro

Improvement Association was to be founded in 1920, headed by Patriach J. G. Cambell. Other members were Reverend W.B. Euba, Reverend S.M. Abiodun and Ernest Ikoli who was to play a fundamental role in Nigerian nationalism, heading one of the earliest widespread nationalist movements in Nigeria.

World War II witnessed close interaction between Africans and European colonialists. Unlike World War I which saw less participation of Africans in the theatre of war, WWII saw African participation as infantrymen, artisans and other areas of necessities. European economy ravaged by the strife and financial commitments dedicated to the war efforts, gave impetus for widespread socio-economic and political developments in African colonial states. At the end of the war, individuals who saw action developed a sense of resentment for Europeans after discovering the equal status between Africans and Europeans; advancing resentment against colonialism and the quest for self-rule/ inclusion in governance. Pre-war colonial economy encouraged intensive cash crop cultivation. At the intensity of the war, a depleted economy and need for subsidized spending, exports of commodities from colonial states were drastically reduced meanwhile imports into Nigeria of goods bought within the British empire was intensified, enthroneing an imbalance in trade relations. Except in the Eastern region where palm oil - irrespective of the withdrawal of Germany (Ekundare, 1973), a major buyer of this commodity - was still in demand, other regions of Nigeria were battered by the effect of the war, leading to a plunge in disposable income and less purchasing powers of Africans who were mostly involved in the colonial economy neglecting other sectors of the economy, as well as the rising cost of elite luxury goods. Control boards were introduced to fix and control the prices of Nigerian exports. Drastic reduction of local labour, with most able-bodied personnel's serving in the war deepened the scarcity of food produce and the availability of food produce at exorbitant

cut-throat prices. At the aftermath of the war, though a few elites emerged, the prevailing economic condition of these colonial states was parlous. At the end of the war, British ex-servicemen who left the country to serve in the war were reinstated in their positions, while Africans who were more qualified for these positions were dethroned. African ex-servicemen who saw action in the war, exposed to the benefits of an independent state in which they fought, clamored for the independence of African states from colonial governments. The diametric situation between independent states and African states under the domineering clout of colonialism accelerated the calls for African independence.

Furthermore, the rise in trade union activities in colonial states, a reaction to economic policies initiated by the British colonialists accompanied by discriminatory practices against Africans serving in colonial institutions, invigorated the calls for an independent state which it was thought, would place Africans in control of their destiny, denigrating the growing ascendancy of colonial exploitation. At the end of the Second World War, in 1946, there were 121 registered trade unions in Nigeria, representing a total membership of 52,000. By 1947, 692 cooperative societies were existent in the country. These trade unions at the inception were promoted by the British colonial authorities as they guaranteed a coordinated agricultural economy facilitating better yields for British industrial interest. With a plunging economy during the course of the Second World War and introduction of economic measures by British colonialists to the detriment of African colonial states affecting the income of local producers, strike action was undertaken by 17 unions, comprising of 3,000 members, which lasted 44 days grounding economic activities in the colonies of Nigeria (Bourne, 2015). The British colonial masters became wary of the enormous powers which these coordinated economic groups wielded, seeking for measures to curtail their activities. Most prominently, nationalists were involved in these

strike actions recorded across Nigeria, emboldening their stance on the resistance of colonial rule.

Victory of the allied forces of Soviet Union and the United which were not involved in the imperial struggle for Africa nor maintained colonies in other parts of the world gave a major boost to the nationalist struggle. Moreover, the end of the war ushered in the League of Nations which advocated for the right to self-determination by countries. Though subsequently explicitly stating a caveat with respect to African colonies, it is quite instructive that the new world order which placed the Americans and Russians as world powers, following the battered state of colonial powers which hitherto were world powers, subtly indoctrinated on nationalists the conquest of liberation/ self-determination over colonialism. This gave impetus for the struggle for political independence widely observed in most parts of the world. Independence of India in 1947 further gave confidence to these nationalists in African colonies, to aspire for political independence. African nationalists were also emboldened to seek alignments with notable politicians in mother colonial states sympathetic to their cause.

Conclusively, with the expansion of colonial economy came the surge in rural-urban migration for better economic opportunities. Big cities which developed at the unification of Nigeria, witnessed the influx of individuals from the hinterlands, which led to the development of coordinated tribal group/ unions. These unions were instrumental towards aiding individuals from their respective ethnic groups to assimilate and adapt to the new environment which they found themselves in. These ethnic unions apart from fostering relationships between kits and kins, were mediums for development between the rural dwellers and urban settlers. These unions formed one of the earliest signs of nationalism though along ethnic/ tribal lines. As they advanced collective causes, standing

up for their members in times of needs. Most prominently, these ethnic unions sponsored their members to seek western education adding to the increasing number of western educated Africans. Subsequently, these educated members were to assume leadership positions in the unions, promoting the welfare of her members.

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## POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT/STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Political developments in Nigeria which snowballed into full weight of nationalism can be traced to the growth of Pan-Africanism across the world calling for a change in the political situation of African colonial states. One of the earliest glimpses of nationalist struggle was an attempt by Dr. Akinwade Savage, a returnee medical doctor to form an organization to advance nationalist interest in 1913, which was not supported, ostensibly due to the few number of educated African elites. By the 1920's, educational sojourns by Africans from the respective colonial states to the abroad brought them in contact with other Africans with similar experiences of colonialism and racial discrimination. A common historical experience and repulsion for existing system, proved fertile for the dissemination and adoption of a Pan-African orientation governing their relations. In 1920, one of the earliest nationalist movements, the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA); an aggregation of nationalists drawn from British West African colonies was founded by Casely Hayford in Accra. Adopting publication campaigns, petitions to legislative councils, delegations to metropolitan capitals, the NCBWA demanded for more inclusion of educated elites in governance, an inclusive educational system for Africans, eradication of racial discrimination and a host of other demands. The hallmark of NCBWA existence was the presentation of its memorandum to the mother country – Britain and its effort to garner support from international organizations and individuals sympathetic to colonialism

(Coleman, 1958). While they were successful at some of their demands, their existence was short-lived. The ephemeral existence of the NCBWA can be attributed to the financial difficulties – its members were drawn from mostly students - , tension within the delegation and rejection of some of her representatives by their countrymen. Although, the NCBWA was widely acknowledged in the Sierra Leone and Ghana, her Nigerian arm domiciled in Lagos was plagued with internal struggle leading to its demise. Quite instructively, the NCBWA seek primarily the participation of educated Africans in colonial administration, as well as, repudiation of traditional institutions considered protégés of colonialism which were unresponsive to the plight and yearnings of the people (ed. Uwechue, 1991). The march towards independence was not considered as British assent to their wishes were of utmost imperative to these nationalists than independence of these colonies. One factor which can be adduced to the death of this novel nationalist movement was irrespective of their sharing similar colonial experience, colonial development was unequal, effectuating a misdirection of efforts.

As an aftermath of nationalist struggles by African natives, British colonialists introduced the first Nigerian constitution, the Cliffords constitution which made provision for the introduction of election of representatives (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Constitutional development led to the formation of the first Nigerian political party in Nigeria by Herbert Macaulay, who hitherto his incursion into the foray of politics, was a civil servant with the colonial authorities. His foray into nationalism was fueled by the discriminations, exploitations by colonialists of Africans. Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP) although was the first political party in Nigeria had its aim as “achieving self-government within the British Empire” (ed. Uwechue, 1991) with its epicenter being Lagos. Most of its nationalist activities were limited to the Lagos struggles without attempts at expanding to

other areas covering the Nigerian landmass which were administered independently by the colonial authorities. Although, Nigerian in nomenclature, the geographical limitation of the political party can be attested to be one of its major problems leading to its imminent demise. Recording huge following in Lagos colony, Herbert Macaulay drew his followers from individuals who sought for a platform to express their disdain for colonialism. Existence of the NNDP was short-lived as Macaulay lost his charismatic charm, attaining notoriety for intolerance of criticisms from followers accompanied by an authoritarian stance, ultimately the rise of the Lagos Youth Movement which was non-diplomatic with its demands led to the sojourn of NNDP's grip of Lagos politics into oblivion. Defeat by LYM, ultimately brought to an end the participation of NNDP as a political phenomenal in colonial Nigeria.

Intrusion of Lagos political arena by LYM (Lagos Youth Movement) formed in March 29, 1934 by Dr. J.C. Vaughan, Ernest Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya and a host of other educated elites, whose main goal at inception was improving higher education access and its standard with that of the metropolis, altered the phase of nationalism struggles, expanding its frontiers across other parts of what is presently the Nigerian state. Agitating against the evils associated with colonialism, the LYM, made inroads into other parts of Nigeria effectually leading to its change of name to the NYM (Nigeria Youth Movement) in 1936 to illustrate its Pan-Nigerian position. Announcing its arrival and virility as an emerging political contender, the LYM coasted to power in the 1938 election defeating Macaulay's NNDP to the three elected seats in Lagos. Its political Charter which was "complete autonomy within the British Empire... striving towards a position of equal partnership with other member states of the British Commonwealth of Nations" (Awolowo, 1960) was

reflected in the struggles which it was involved in. Awo further espoused this position by stating:

There was, therefore, widespread resentment in political circles in Lagos, and in some circles in Southern Nigeria. It was in order to canalize this resentment, and to present a united front to the Nigerian government in representing the feelings of the people that the Lagos Movement was founded...

Unrelenting in its quest for decolonized Nigeria, with little of the pangs of colonization exerted on Nigerians, NYM vigorously chased equal economic opportunities for Nigerians, better pay packages and promotion of Africans in the civil service, separation of the judiciary from the executive, introduction of universal adult suffrage, mass education. Ultimately the NYM was cut-out from inception to unify every parts of the country. Reflecting its aim, the NYM extended to other parts of the country including northern Nigeria, which has prior to this era isolated itself from national political developments nursing fears of gradual penetration by the southerners which could consequently lead to erosion of Northern traditional elite grip of power. By 1938, it had membership strength of about 10,000 members across 20 provinces. In order to attain its aim of economic liberation from the foothold of colonial officials, trade union activities were supported by the party which led to the intensity of trade unionism around Nigeria. Furthermore, the introduction of the Richards constitution in 1946 at the aftermath of the Second World War by colonial officials was a landmark achievement, this constitution ironically unified Nigeria, albeit orchestrating the death of the NYM and the bifurcation of nationalism along ethnic lines.



Unlike the Clifford constitution which made less provision for the majority participation of Nigerians in her affairs, Richards constitution created a fecund ground for the inclusion of Nigerians in her affairs. Regional houses of assembly were created alongside a central legislature, a novelty in Nigeria political development unifying all regions under a unitary legislative structure. Against the background of a more inclusive Nigerian government, exercise of political franchise was restricted to Lagos and Calabar. The unification of the southern and northern region in a single central legislature initiated political strife along the lines of ethnicity into national politics. Creation of separated regions led to the annihilation of Nigeria's frontline political party, NYM. Plagued with the problems of maintaining the loyalty of its members under a unified Nigerian umbrella, secession for a vacant position in the Lagos Council; NYM was divided along ethnic lines which exacerbated consequently to the eventual desertion of the party by some of its Trojan horses notably Nnamdi Azikiwe and Oba Samuel Akinsanya, accompanied by their ethnic affiliated supporters. Bourne (2015) observed, "The division of the south into two – the west, and the east led to friction between the southern leaders and subsequent breakup of NYM in 1941." The intensive rise in ethnic nationalism invigorated the formation of ethnic unions which were headed by these early nationalists deemphasizing affiliation to a national cause while advancing ethno-centric political aims. Across the three regions, ethnic groups were formed for the advancement of the rights of their members. In the southeast, the Igbo Federal Union was constituted in 1943, subsequently incorporating all existing local unions in 1948, its name was changed to Igbo state Union which Azikiwe assumed its leadership from 1948-1952. In the southwest, Awolowo was instrumental towards the founding of the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* (descendants of Oduduwa) in 1945; while the north formed the *Jami'yar Mutanen Arewa* (Union of the People of the north) in May 1948. The formation of NCNC (National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons) by Azikiwe,

whose membership was drawn across labour unions, literary groups, tribal organizations, having no provision for individual members heralded the extinction of the NYM from Nigeria political space; as NCNC was viewed by many as a Yoruba-dominated political party which is not progressive.

With widespread agitations by educated elite against the Richard constitution citing imposition of a constitution on them without consultation, accompanied by post World War II developments, the British colonial office replaced him with John MacPherson as governor general in 1948. The new governor of Nigeria embarked on widespread consultation with Nigerian elites prior to the introduction of the MacPherson constitution. The Ibadan constitutional conference of 1950 recorded the northern delegation threatening secession if their demand of half the seats in the central House of Representatives were not given to the north (Tamuno, 1970). The British fearing impending secession of the north, their contemporary in the south with intent to intensify the nationalist struggle against British domination of administration albeit fears of northern domination in the central legislature, accented to the proposal from the northern political elites. This grave anomaly hinged on the perceived feeling of propagating a one united Nigeria, consequently laid the foundation for the structural defect of the Nigerian state with its concomitant effect still felt in the Nigerian state presently. MacPherson constitution which became operational in 1951 introduced widespread changes in the Nigerian state. A council of minister made up of 12 Nigerian ministers, representing each region was introduced. The central legislature was expanded with half of the representatives allotted to the north, while the east and west divided the other half. Regional assemblies which served as electoral colleges to the central legislative council were expanded though distinct, in the north and west bi-cameral legislature was practice

while unicameral legislature was extended in the east. The hallmark of the Macpherson constitution was the introduction of general elections which was a novelty in Nigeria's socio-political space. Introduction of general elections sprang the development of political parties, some hitherto cultural organization which metamorphosed to political platforms jostling for control over the regional assemblies. The NPC (Northern People's Congress) a recreation of the *Jami'yar Mutanen Arewa* was birthed in 1949 with the motto "**ONE NORTH, ONE PEOPLE**" which signified its geographical and ethnic orientation, was poised to mainly promote northern unity and autonomy against impending southern domination. In 1950, disenchanted by the pace of political participation and the somewhat taciturn position of the north, orchestrated by the leadership of the Ahmadu Bello-led NPC, Aminu Kano organized some northerners leading to the birth of the Northern Elements Progressive Union. Drawing inspiration from the progressive stance of Nnamdi Azikiwe, the NEPU advocated for northern participation and alignment with the southerners to advocate for independence, marking the birth of an opposition to the monopoly of NPC controlled north. Eventual coalition of the NEPU with the NCNC gave impetus for an overt participation of the NPC in Nigeria political sphere, afraid of losing its influence to the NEPU/NCNC coalition in the north. The Action Group inaugurated in 1951 by Awolowo had as its integral aim "to bring and organize within its folds all nationalists in the Western Region, so that they may work together as a united group, and submit itself to party loyalty and discipline" (Awolowo, 1960). Irrespective of its motto: "**FREEDOM FOR ALL, LIFE MORE ABUNDANT**", its nationalism was guided primarily by the interest of the western region, placing a national interest secondary which is not to be pursued assiduously. According to Tamuno (1970), the prevailing socio-political developments, "threatened nationalist aspirations, in that the former common enemy posed as a friend even before independence and national unity were fully within grasp".

From 1943, nationalists' agitations were tilting towards the independence of Nigeria. In a memo presented to the colonial office, delegates had advanced the initiation of processes for independence in the four colonies either immediately or at the end of the war, leading to full independence in 15 years. This position was refuted by Malam Iman, a northern who was the editor of a Hausa newspaper *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabe*, fearing northern domination by the Lagos elites. Aftermath of the 1951 general elections reflected voting along ethno-political lines, the NCNC stamped her dominance in the east; NPC pilloried the NEPU by winning all seats in the north; in the west, AG strolled to a pyrrhic victory winning 49 of the 80 seats. A decade after the first demand for independence, AG following decision reached in its annual conference in 1952, moved a motion for the attainment of an independent Nigerian state. This action of the AG threw Nigeria into turbulence, with the north and south (east/west) pitching tent against each other. While the south forming an alliance between the NCNC and AG, advocated for self-government in 1956, the north expressed restraint with the Sarduna proposing independence "as soon as practicable". A nation united on a single front, advancing the calls for participation of her citizens in her affairs, was plunged into crisis along ethno-political lines. Following the independence stance of the southerners, a constitutional crisis emerged. Ministers from AG resigned their portfolios in an attempt to vote when the motion is raised in the house. Azikiwe's NCNC was divided, there was huge criticism of the northern position of independence which snowballed into a riot in the northern region. The northerners followed this development with the passage of an eight-point programme reinforcing the sovereignty of the three regions. Acceptance of regionalism by the north, effectuated the crisis on the status of Lagos, which was subsequently resolved in the 1958 constitutional conference as the capital of the central government. Following widespread crisis, a constitutional conference was convened in London, 1953 and Lagos in 1954 to review the constitution and resolve

the issue of self-government which led to the adoption of a new constitution, a prelude to independence (ed. Uwechue, 1991).

The introduction of the 1954 Oliver Lyttleton constitution established Nigeria as a federal state constituted of three regions and a Federal Territory, Lagos administered by the central government. Meanwhile, in accordance with the agreement of the 1953/4 constitutional conference, another constitutional conference was convened in 1957, where the eastern and western region demanded for internal self-government, which was granted to them. Azikiwe assumed the premiership of the eastern region while Awolowo became premier of the western region. This accent to the demands of self-government was concurrently backed up the joint demand of independence in 1959 by AG and NCNC. Presupposing an uprising against colonialism by the nationalists in the aftermath of Ghana's independence in 1957, the colonial authorities were willing to grant Nigeria independence in accordance with the yearning of nationalists. This was accelerated by several factors. Postulating on the need to protect British goodwill and longstanding relationship which would eventually metamorphose to neo-colonialism, Sir Ralph Grey opined to Sir John Macpherson that:

“the real power to determine the pace of events has in fact passed from us to the local people and that attempt made to persuade them to a slower pace would be misunderstood and merely result in a loss of goodwill” (Grey in Lawal, 2010).

British reluctance was also accelerated by the unwillingness of the British to enlarge the commonwealth of nations, thus impeding the development of an Afro-Asian Bloc, which was experiencing an increase following the independence of former African and Asian

British colonies in the 1950s. Further aggravated by the socio-political instability in Nigeria by minority groups, a causative of British division of the country along three pre-dominant ethnic groupings, the imperative for a conscientious transition process; the British in the London constitutional conference of 1958, abetted by the northern elites' acceptance of self-government in 1959 acceded to Nigeria's independence on October 1, 1960. As a precursor to self-governance, a federal election was conducted across the country in December 1959. NPC having won all 148 seats representing the north, formed a coalition government with the NCNC/NEPU alliance who won 89 seats; while AG and its allies – the COR State Movement and the UMBC winning 75 seats officially formed the opposition party (ed. Uwechue, 1991). Alh. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa remained Prime Minister, while NnamdiAzikiwe assumed the position of president of the senate till the exit of Sir James Robertson as governor-general; Chief Obafemi Awolowo assumed the leader of the opposition, initiating the dismissal of the British, and the birth of a treacherous nation on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1960.

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## CONCLUSION

The journey of Nigeria along the path of nationalism has its inception from the struggle against colonial incursion. While this is dubitable, since these struggles had the coloration of ethnic strife against the deposition of local constituted authorities, one truism is that these struggles were against alien rule, which the people resented on the possible effect of affecting extant traditional socio-political institutions. Consolidation of colonialism through the efforts of missionaries, colonial traders aided by African returnees, brought drastic changes to the society. Faced with the harsh reality of scorching socio-economic

conditions due to measures of colonialism to effectively exploit Africa for her economic interests, brought about a clash of interests between the colonialists and African natives.

At its infancy, manifested through struggles by Africans who had embraced Christianity to incorporate African values into Christian religion as well as a host of other discriminatory practices pitched Africans at odds against colonial authorities. Rise in educated elites in Africa seeking education overtures outside the mother colony, picking up the consciousness of Pan-Africanism, accompanied by the burgeoning urban cities intensified by the provision of social amenities, set the pace for the coming together of these hitherto disconnected groups. Parlous economic condition set the ground for rise in trade union and diverse ethnic association activities seeking enhanced welfare of their members spearheaded by newly educated nationalists.

Post-world war II political developments sparked the development of political participation by Africans translating to development of constitutions and the formation of political parties, although almost all lacking the element of national orientation and consciousness, degenerating to alignment along ethnic lines. These political parties at their incipient stage pledged for more participation of Nigerians in her affairs within the mother colony. With the signing of the Atlantic Charter in 1945, the concept of self-determination gained currency around the world. Nigerian nationalism in concordance with the political rhythm of the world, blossomed with its nationalist leaders demanding for independence. As synonymous with a country constituted of multifarious ethnic nationalities, struggle for independence unified the country after its internal squabbles, a unity which was short-lived as few years into independence, the once acclaimed prospective giant was at war against one another. A country presaged as an emerging giant not only in Africa but also in the world, exuding glimpses of greatness at independence, unfortunately deviated lending

credence to the fact that the nationalists succeeded in creating a country without making a unified nation of its divergent populace. Nationhood, an integral element for association between distinct populations is far beyond the country, raising concerns and predictions from several political pundits and quarters on the longevity of the state, which traces its history to its coalition in 1914 without the participation of its inhabitants.



## CHAPTER 6

### 1960-1966: BURNING WITH AMBITION

The issue of Nigeria's independence became heightened towards the end of the 1950s and was the dominant issue at the 1957 Constitutional Conference held in London and the 1958 Conference held in Lagos. Most of the political figures in Nigeria politics and delegates from the regional governments attended the Conferences. The issue of regional government was deliberated upon at the 1957 conference and it was resolved that the Western and the Eastern Regions should be granted the status of self-government on 8th August, 1957 while the Northern Region was to attain that status of self-government in 1959. Very importantly however, the Nigerian political leaders unanimously for the first time agreed that Nigeria's independence should be October, 1960 (Ikelegbe, 2004). The conference set up Sir Henry Willinck Commission to look into the fears of the minority ethnic groups dominated by the majority ethnic groups in the regions. Although, the British government was initially opposed to the idea, they later came out with a declaration that "even if additional states were to be created, not more than one state would be created in each region".<sup>1</sup> The commission, which arrived in Nigeria on November 23, 1957, began public sittings in each region till 12 April, 1958 when it submitted its reports. The terms of reference of the Sir Henry Willinck's Commission to address the fears of minorities in Nigeria were:

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<sup>1</sup> Cited from Elaigwu, J. I. (2005). *The Politics of Federalism in Nigeria*. Pg 37

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1. to ascertain the facts about the fears of minorities in any part of Nigeria and to propose means of allaying those fears whether well or ill founded;
2. to advise what safeguards should be included for this purpose in the constitution of Nigeria;
3. if, but only if, no other solution seems to the commission to meet the case, then as a last resort, to make detailed recommendations for the creation of one or more new states, and in that case:
  - a. to specify the precise area to be included in such state or states;
  - b. to recommend the governmental and administrative structure most appropriate for it;
  - c. to assess whether any state recommended would be viable from an economic and administrative point of view and what the effect of its creation would be on the region or regions from which it would be created and, on the federation, (cited in Elaigwu, 2005:37).<sup>2</sup>

Nigeria became an independent nation on October 1, 1960 by an act of the British Parliament. The 1960 Independence Constitution of Nigeria conferred full independence on the entire federation and remained in force until October 1, 1963 when the country became a republic. What followed was Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's speech that was delivered at Tafawa Balewa Square in Lagos at the Independence Ceremony:

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in Elaigwu, J. I. 2005. *The Politics of Federalism in Nigeria*. Pg. 37

“Today is Independence Day. The first of October 1960 is a date to which for two years every Nigerian has been eagerly looking forward. At last, our great day has arrived, and Nigeria is now indeed an independent sovereign nation.

Words cannot adequately express my joy and pride at being the Nigerian citizen privileged to accept from Her Royal Highness these Constitutional Instruments which are the symbols of Nigeria’s Independence. It is a unique privilege which I shall remember forever, and it gives me strength and courage as I dedicate my life to the service of our country.

This is a wonderful day, and it is all the more wonderful because we have awaited it with increasing impatience, compelled to watch one country after another overtaking us on the road when we had so nearly reached our goal. But now we have acquired our rightful status, and I feel sure that history will show that the building of our nation proceeded at the wisest pace: it has been thorough, and Nigeria now stands well- built upon firm foundations.

Today’s ceremony marks the culmination of a process which began fifteen years ago and has now reached a happy and successful conclusion. It is with justifiable pride that we claim the achievement of our Independence to be unparalleled in the annals of history. Each step of our constitutional advance has been purposefully and peacefully planned with full and open consultation, not only between representatives of all the various interests in Nigeria but in harmonious cooperation with the administering power which has today relinquished its authority.

At the time when our constitutional development entered upon its final phase, the emphasis was largely upon self-government. We, the elected representatives of the people

of Nigeria, concentrated on proving that we were fully capable of managing our own affairs both internally and as a nation. However, we were not to be allowed the selfish luxury of focusing our interest on our own homes. In these days of rapid communications, we cannot live in isolation, apart from the rest of the world, even if we wished to do so. All too soon it has become evident that for us Independence implies a great deal more than self-government. This great country, which has now emerged without bitterness or bloodshed, finds that she must at once be ready to deal with grave international issues.

This fact has of recent months been unhappily emphasized by the startling events which have occurred in this continent. I shall not labor the point but it would be unrealistic not to draw attention first to the awe-inspiring task confronting us at the very start of our nationhood. When this day in October 1960 was chosen for our Independence it seemed that we were destined to move with quiet dignity to place on the world stage. Recent events have changed the scene beyond recognition, so that we find ourselves today being tested to the utmost. We are called upon immediately to show that our claims to responsible government are well-founded, and having been accepted as an independent state we must at once play an active part in maintaining the peace of the world and in preserving civilization. I promise you; we shall not fail for want of determination.

And we come to this task better-equipped than many. For this, I pay tribute to the manner in which successive British Governments have gradually transferred the burden of responsibility to our shoulders. The assistance and unfailing encouragement which we have received from each Secretary of State for the Colonies and their intense personal interest in our development has immeasurably lightened that burden.

All our friends in the Colonial Office must today be proud of their handiwork and in the knowledge that they have helped to lay the foundations of a lasting friendship between our two nations. I have indeed every confidence that, based on the happy experience of a successful partnership, our future relations with the United Kingdom will be more cordial than ever, bound together, as we shall be in the Commonwealth, by a common allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, whom today we proudly acclaim as Queen of Nigeria and Head of the Commonwealth.

Time will not permit the individual mention of all those friends, many of them Nigerians, whose selfless labors have contributed to our Independence. Some have not lived to see the fulfilment of their hopes—on them be peace—but nevertheless they are remembered here, and the names of buildings and streets and roads and bridges throughout the country recall to our minds their achievements, some of them on a national scale. Others confined, perhaps, to a small area in one Division, are humbler but of equal value in the sum-total.

Today, we have with us representatives of those who have made Nigeria: Representatives of the Regional Governments, of former Central Governments, of the Missionary Societies, and of the Banking and Commercial enterprises, and members, both past and present, of the Public Service. We welcome you, and we rejoice that you have been able to come and share in our celebrations. We wish that it could have been possible for all of those whom you represent to be here today: Many, I know, will be disappointed to be absent, but if they are listening to me now, I say to them: ‘Thank you on behalf of my Thank you for your devoted service which helped build up Nigeria into a nation. Today we are reaping the harvest which you sowed, and the quality of the harvest is equaled only by our gratitude to you. May God bless you all.

This is an occasion when our hearts are filled with conflicting emotions: we are, indeed, proud to have achieved our independence, and proud that our efforts should have contributed to this happy event. But do not mistake our pride for arrogance. It is tempered by feelings of sincere gratitude to all who have shared in the task of developing Nigeria politically, socially and economically. We are grateful to the British officers whom we have known, first as masters, and then as leaders, and finally as partners, but always as friends. And there have been countless missionaries who have labored unceasingly in the cause of education and to whom we owe many of our medical services. We are grateful also to those who have brought modern methods of banking and of commerce, and new industries. I wish to pay tribute to all of these people and to declare our everlasting admiration of their devotion to duty. And, finally, I must express our gratitude to Her Royal Highness the Princess Alexandra of Kent for personally bringing to us these symbols of our freedom, and especially for delivering the gracious message from Her Majesty the Queen. And so, with the words ‘God Save Our Queen’, I open a new chapter in the history of Nigeria, and of the Commonwealth, and indeed of the world.”<sup>3</sup>

At Independence of 1960, there existed federal constitution with a parliamentary democratic system modeled after the British Westminster system that emphasized majority rule. Nigeria, unlike most other African states adopted the multiparty system at independence; although it was regionally based (Metz, 1991). The independence constitution of the federation and its regions were established by Section 2 of the Nigeria (Constitution) Order-in-Council, 1960, made by the British government in the following

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<sup>3</sup> Cited in BlackPast, B. (2009) (1960) *Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, “Independence Day”*. Retrieved from <https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/1960-sir-abubakar-tafawa-balewa-independence-day/>

order: The Constitution of the Federation Republic of Nigeria, the Constitution of the Northern Region, the Constitution of Western Region and the Constitution of Eastern Region. In case of conflict between the regional constitutions and the Federal constitution however, Section 1 of the Constitution of the Federation of Nigeria 1960 provided that the Federal Constitution shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency and the other law shall be void (Nnamdi, 1995; McCormick, 2004).

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#### THE PROVISION OF 1960 AND 1963 CONSTITUTIONS

The 1960 independence and 1963 Republican Constitutions essentially had the same features with minor differences (Osaghae, 2002). Some of the main features of these constitutions will now be discussed.

First, the two constitutions maintained the characteristic features of a Westminster model type of parliamentary government both at the central and regional levels. A dual executive existed with the head of state as a titular head while the head of government exercised executive powers. Section 79 of the Constitutions stipulated that the Head of State was a constitutional monarch; the Queen of Great Britain represented by a Governor-General. Section 81(4) of the Constitutions empowered the Governor-General to appoint as Prime Minister any member of the House of Representatives who appeared to him to command the support of the majority of the members of the House. Also, the other Federal Ministers were appointed by the Governor-General but on the advice of the Prime Minister (Adigwe, 1985). At the regional level, the head of state was the Governor and head of government was the Premier. By the 1963 Republican Constitution, however, the Head of State became a constitutional President in the person of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe (Ikelegbe, 1988; Osaghae, 2002). The appointment of the President under the 1963 Republican

constitution was clearly stated: “Under Section 37 of the 1963 Federal Constitution, a person elected as the President was required to take and subscribe to the oath of allegiance and such an oath for the due performance of those functions as may be prescribed by Parliament before he could start to perform the functions of the President.” These oaths were to be administered by the Chief Justice of the Federal Republic or by any person for the time being appointed to exercise the functions of the Chief Justice (Adigwe, 1985).

Furthermore, Section 37 of the 1963 Republican Constitution stipulated that the President was to hold office for a five-year period beginning on the day of his election or on the next day following the date on which the office next became vacant where the elected person or another person held office as President on the day of his election. And once the President assumed office, any other public office held by him was to become vacant and during the tenure of his office, he was disqualified from holding any other public office. Also, the office of the President was to become vacant either upon the expiration of five years after his appointment, or if the incumbent died or resigned his office or was removed from office (Adigwe, 1985).

In addition, Section 37 of the 1963 Constitution mandated the President of the Senate to perform the functions of the President of the federation during any of the following periods:

- a. any period when the office of the President was vacant;
- b. any period when the President was absent from Nigeria; the President could not be absent from Nigeria except with the concurrence of the Council of Ministers;



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- c. any period when the President was in the opinion of the Prime Minister, unable to perform the functions of his office by reason of illness; and
- d. any period when the President was prohibited by Section 38(8) of the Constitution from exercising the functions of his office.

But if during any other period the President of the Senate was, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, unable to perform the functions of the office of the President so conferred on him, those functions were to be performed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Further, if during any period the Speaker was, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, unable to perform the functions so conferred upon him; those functions were to be performed by a person appointed by the Federal Council of Ministers by an order published in the gazette of the federation (Adigwe, 1985).

Second, Section 81 of the Constitutions stipulated that the Federal Executive Council was to be headed by the Prime Minister who should advise the Governor-General in matters of appointment or dismissal of Cabinet Ministers. The Federal Executive was responsible for the exercise of such powers like the prerogative of mercy, signing of international treaties, and even termination of the life of the parliament. Members of the Federal Executive Council were also members of the national parliament. No Minister of Cabinet rank could criticize the government in public due to the principle of collective responsibility. Once a vote of no confidence is passed by the parliament on the Prime Minister, the government stands dissolved. Similarly, the Regional Executive Council consisted of the Premier and some other Ministers appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Premier. The ministers were collectively responsible to the regional Legislature. These same provisions also applied under the 1963 Republican Constitution (Adigwe, 1985; Ikelegbe, 1988; Osaghae, 2002).

Third, the federal parliament was bicameral and consisted of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate - the upper house was made up of 44 members chosen by the regional legislatures while the House of Representatives - the lower house, was made up of 312 elected members. The Senate was composed on the basis of equal representation from the regions. As observed by Osaghae (2002), the Senate had a balancing function to counterbalance the gross inequalities in representation of the House of Representatives. Each regional legislature consisted of a House of Assembly, the lower house and a House of Chiefs, which was the upper house. While members of the House of Assembly were elected directly by the electorate, the House of Chiefs was made up of traditional rulers (Ikelegbe, 1988; Osaghae, 2002).

Fourth, the 1960 and 1963 constitutions were federal constitutions which divided powers between the Central and the autonomous Regional Governments. Each of the governments had its own constitution, public service, judiciary and marketing boards. Thus, there existed the Constitution of the Federation, the Constitution of the Northern Region, the Constitution of Western Region and the Constitution of Eastern Region. Section 105 of the Constitution empowered the Parliament to make provision for Police forces forming part of the armed forces of the federation or for the protection of harbors, waterways, railways and airfields (Adigwe, 1985). The Federal Government had power over matters on the exclusive legislative lists, while it jointly exercised power with the regional governments over matters contained in the concurrent legislative lists. Residual powers were reserved for the regional governments, which in essence made the regional governments very powerful. Section 64(4) of the Constitution stipulated that in the case of conflict between the regional constitutions and the Federal constitution, however, the Federal constitution prevailed to the extent of the inconsistency and the other law would

be void. In general, the regional constitutions followed the federal model, both structurally and functionally. The most striking departure was, however, in the Northern Region where special provisions brought the regional constitution into consonance with Islamic law and custom. The similarities between the federal and regional constitutions were deceptive in the sense that differences in religious and cultural practices pervaded the conduct of public affairs at the regional levels of the Nigerian federation (Otoghile, 1995)

Fifth, the establishment of a Judicial Service Commission was provided for. The commission was to be responsible for the appointment, discipline and promotion of judges so as to guarantee the independence of the judiciary from political interference. The salaries and allowances of the judicial officers were charged on the Consolidated Fund. The Federal Supreme Court was vested with the power of judicial review to declare the action of either the Federal or Regional Governments illegal, null and void if such violated the constitution. Under the 1960 Constitution, the Privy Council in Great Britain was the highest court for Nigeria. The Supreme Court in Nigeria was still not the final Court of Appeal and as such, cases that required appeal went to the Privy Council in London for final decision. However, with the emergence of the 1963 Republican constitution, the Supreme Court became the highest court in Nigeria (Otoghile, 1995; McCormick, 2004).

Sixth, the procedures for the amendment of the constitutions were made cumbersome in order to protect the federal union as stipulated in Sections 4 and 5 of the Federal Constitution (Adigwe, 1985). By this provision, motion for amendment of the constitution was to receive a two-third majority votes in the federal parliament in concurrence with two-thirds of the regions. The difficult process of amending the constitution was perhaps, hinged on the federal framework of the constitution. The two-thirds support of the national parliament and that of the regions required for any

amendment in the constitution meant that no part of the country whether in terms of ethnic, religion, individual or interest groups would be able to alter any part of the constitution for parochial or selfish motive (Otoghile, 1995).

Seventh, provisions were made for the definition of the citizenship of Nigeria as stipulated in Section 7 (Adigwe, 1985). By these provisions, Nigerian citizenship was defined by birth and naturalization. Following this, the fundamental rights of Nigerian citizens were explicitly entrenched as a measure to allay the fears of the minority groups and also to guarantee the liberties of the Nigerian citizens. In the administration of justice, particularly in times of dispute among the component units of the federation and in order to ensure fair play and equity, the Supreme Court acting as the highest court of the land had power to settle disputes. Thus, the Supreme Court became the final court where appeals could be heard and justice executed for series of criminal and civil matters. Provisions were made for the appointment of the Chief Justice of the Federation and other judges with their tenure of office entrenched in the constitution (Ikelegbe, 2004).

Eighth, Section 65 of the Federal Constitution gave the Prime Minister emergency powers. By this provision, the Prime Minister could declare a state of emergency, with the approval of the Federal Parliament, on any part of the country for the purpose of maintaining peace, order and good government. The emergency powers could be exercised when the federation was at war, or where there was a total breakdown of law and order in any part of the country (Ikelegbe, 2004). In February 1961, a plebiscite was conducted to determine the disposition of the Southern Cameroons and Northern Cameroons, which were administered by Britain as United Nations Trust Territories. By an overwhelming majority, voters in the Southern Cameroons opted to join formerly French-administered Cameroon over integration with Nigeria as a separate federated region. In

the Northern Cameroon, however, the largely Muslim electorates chose to merge with Nigeria's Northern Region (Adigwe, 1985).

The 1963 Republican Constitution replaced the 1960 Independence Constitution owing to the desire to erase the last traces of colonialism in Nigeria. Consequential upon this therefore, the Federal Parliament enacted the Constitution of the Federation Act 1963, which repealed and replaced the Nigeria Independence Act 1960 and the Order-in-council and delegated the same authority to the legislatures of each of region to enact its own constitution law to repeal and replace the independence act and the order-in-council (Eteng, 1997). The result of this was that while the 1960 Constitution was contained in a single document under the same legislative authority - the British Parliament, the 1963 Constitution was contained in different documents enacted under different legislative authorities (the federal constitution being enacted by the federal parliament and the various regional constitutions were enacted by their respective regional legislatures except the Constitution of Mid-Western Region of Nigeria that was enacted by the Federal Parliament in 1964) (Eteng, 1997).

It was unfortunate that the 1963 Constitution did not last long as various turbulent crises and political maneuvering that characterized the period led to the incursion of the military into politics in Nigeria, which eventually brought about the failure and the collapse of the First Republic on January 1, 1966.

## POLITICAL AMBITIONS IN THE FIRST REPUBLIC

The politics and power play in Nigeria's First Republic can be better understood by putting the political events of the period in various perspectives as stated below:

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## FORMATION OF REGIONAL AND ETHNICALLY BASED POLITICAL PARTIES

The period between 1960 when Nigeria became independent and 1966 when the military took over the government is often referred to as the First Republic. During this period, Nigeria operated a parliamentary democracy as earlier stated modeled along British system, although regionally based, multiparty system. While Nigeria as a country operated a multiparty structure at this point in time, all the regions operated mainly ethnically based one-party system that could not control power beyond their various regions (Osaghae, 2002). The Northern Region, for instance, was dominated by the NPC; the NCNC controlled the Eastern Region; and the AG controlled the Western Region. This development encouraged regionalism and had detrimental consequences of political instability on the Nigerian State (Asia, 2001; Gberevbie, 2009).

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## NPC/NCNC POLITICAL MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

At the federal level, the government that emerged was a coalition of the NPC and NCNC despite their conflicting differences. According to Akinsanya (2005), "in many respects, an NPC/NCNC federal coalition government was an anomaly. It involved the cooperation of two political parties whose public images could not be more distinct or diametrically opposed." This was particularly so because "while the NPC was traditionalist, aristocratic, gradualist and regionalist, the NCNC was nationalist, radical, egalitarian and populist." Furthermore, "while the NPC was pro-Western and anti-Israeli in orientation, the NCNC was Pan-Africanist and it espoused neutrality and nonalignment in the 'East-West' struggle (Cold War)" (Akinsanya, 2005). Asia (2001) pointed that "the uneasy coalition notwithstanding, the NPC/NCNC coalition firmly established itself as the ruling coalition party."

The differences in the parties notwithstanding, the coalition between NPC/NCNC was made possible due to the fact that some NPC and NCNC leaders had been closely associated in earlier governments at the center between 1951 and 1959. Also, the goodwill that accrued to the coalition, largely, because of the qualities of Dr Azikiwe and Sir Tafawa Balewa, which endeared them to their colleagues in the administration made the coalition to become a possibility (Akinsanya, 2005). Asia (2001) argued that as a party in opposition, the AG had a difficult time experiencing constant harassment such as intimidation of its members by the ruling party and its supporters.

Furthermore, the attitudes of these parties toward accommodating minority aspirations varied widely. While the NCNC espoused self-determination for ethnic minorities but only in accordance with its advocacy of a unitary state, the Action Group, although supported such movements, including the restoration of the northern Yoruba area (Ilorin, Igbomina and Kabba) to the Western Region, but as part of a multi-state, federal Nigeria. The NPC, on the other hand, persistently opposed the balkanization of the Northern Region and was able to win over some disaffected minorities in the Middle Belt (Metz, 1991). Several proposals were introduced for the creation of more states as a means of restructuring the regions along ethnic lines to satisfy the clamor of the minorities, especially those from the Northern Region. Only the Mid-Western Region achieved formal approval in 1963 because it served to further the hegemonic interests of the NPC/NCNC coalition government to the detriment of the AG despite its opposition to its creation from the Western Region (Osaghae, 2002).

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POLITICAL INTOLERANCE

The early political life of the Nigerian federation began to exhibit a culture of political intolerance both at the regional and at the federal level. For instance, there were trumped-up charges against Chief Obafemi Awolowo and some of his supporters including Chief Anthony Enahoro of smuggling arms into the country with the intent to topple the government of the day and for giving military training to 200 activists in Ghana. They were put on trial for treasonable felony, convicted and jailed for 10 years (Asia, 2001). In addition, Chief Awolowo was accused of criminal misuse of public funds that ran into several million pounds from public development corporations to the AG through a private investment corporation when he was the Premier of the Western Region in the 1950s (Asia, 2001). In the same vein, Dr Chike Obi of the Dynamic Party (DP) and Joseph Taka of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) who were opposed to the ruling coalition government were also put on trial and convicted of sedition and treason respectively. Following these trials and convictions, the opposition party members from the West, Mid-west and the Middle Belt regarded these actions as political vendetta and expressed doubt about the credibility of political and judicial systems of the country (Asia, 2001).

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#### A.G, THE WESTERN REGION CRISES AND COLLAPSE OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC

It is on record that between 1962 and 1966, the Western Nigeria remained the cockpit of Nigerian politics. The leadership of AG could not agree on common issues regarding the administration of the Western Region and as well, the national government. Chief Awolowo favored the adoption of social democracy as party policy, following the lead of Kwame Nkrumah's regime in Ghana and wanted to enlarge the sphere of influence of the party to make it interregional by drawing support across the country. Chief Samuel Akintola, the regional Premier on the other hand, supported an all-party federal coalition



and wanted AG to align itself closely to the ruling party instead of being an opposition party to the government so that the party leaders could have access to power and as well benefit from the national spoils usually reserved for ruling parties (Osaghae, 2002).

Furthermore, while Chief Awolowo as the AG leader felt he should be consulted on policy changes and major appointments in the region, and indeed exercised general supervision over all the activities of the AG. Chief Akintola, however, did not like these limitations. All the mechanisms employed by the elders of the party to reconcile the two personalities did not yield any fruitful results, which eventually contributed to the crises in the Western Region and subsequent collapse of the Nigerian First Republic (Akinsanya 2005; Ojo, 2012).

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## MINORITY PROBLEMS AND CREATION OF NEW STATES

Although, the British colonial government recognized the need for federalism for Nigeria, it did not properly work out the power struggle between them contenders for federal power since one region was in a position to lord it over the other two regions combined in terms of size and population. At independence, the preponderant size of the Northern Region made it possible for the north to dominate the federation. Having more than half of the country's population, the region through the NPC controlled majority of the seats in the House of Representatives. With this structure, the Northern Region could hold the Nigerian federation to ransom in the sense that any bill that was opposed by the NPC in parliament faced the possibility of rejection. Furthermore, the arbitrary ethnic grouping engendered much bitterness due to actual domination of the minority by the majority ethnic groups in the various regions. This led to the demands for creation of more states and/or regional boundary adjustments (Metz, 2001; Osaghae, 2002).

Several minority political movements such as the Mid-West-State Movement, Middle-Belt Zone League and the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers Movement were thus formed to press for separate states (Elaigwu, 2005). Contrarily, the three major political parties seemed not to sincerely support the carving out of the minority ethnic groups in their various regions. NPC with a policy of "one North, one people, one destiny" wanted the Northern Region to be left intact so as to maintain its hegemony over the other two regions of the East and West combined together. The NCNC in the Eastern Region on the other hand, supported the creation of additional states as long as states were to be created in other regions and based on four principles of: self-determination (majority support for separate state); relative ethnic homogeneity; geographical contiguity of such new state; and viability - that each state, as nearly as possible, should be self-sustained economic and administrative unit (Elaigwu, 2005).

On its part, the AG in the Western Region supported the creation of minority states but with an adjustment that brought to question the viability of the proposed Mid-West State. For instance, the AG suggested that the Tho-speaking peoples of Asaba and Agbor should be added to the Eastern Region; the Ijaw west of the Niger should join their kinsmen in the East and the two minorities with Yoruba dialect (Akoko-Edo of Afemmai and the Itsekiri of Warri) should remain in the Western Region, the Ilorin and Kabba Yoruba of the North should be merged with Yoruba West, Ishan and Afemmai divisions should be excluded from the proposed Mid-West State because of their opposition to the MidWestern State idea. If these suggestions were to be accepted, the implication was that the creation of Mid-West State would not have taken place due to the problem of viability in terms of population and economic strength (Elaigwu, 2005).

Section 3 of the Federal Constitution mandated the creation of states in the Nigerian Federation (Adigwe, 1985). Consequent upon the minorities' agitation, a bill for the creation of three more states (Middle Belt, Calaba-Ogoja Rivers and Mid-West) was introduced in the Federal Parliament. Only the Midwestern Region received the support of both the Northern and Eastern Regional legislatures. The Western legislature, although objected to it when Chief Awolowo was in charge of AG, but the creation of the region was formally approved in 1963, when he was already serving a ten-year jail term and because, the NPC/NCNC coalition government considered its creation to be favorable to their hegemonic interests. Thus, the creation of the Mid-Western Region out of the former Western Region in 1963 finally completed the devastating blow on the Action Group as a dominant party in the Western Region (Osaghae, 2002).

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## THE 1962 CENSUS CRISES

The issues of size and distribution of population remained volatile in the politics of Nigeria's First Republic. This was because population distribution served as a barometer to measure the political strength of the regions and as major factor for allocating revenue, for distributing social amenities, resources, scholarships and quotas in recruitment into the armed forces among the regions. Furthermore, seats in the House of Representatives were allocated to the regions on the basis of population. For instance, the 312 seats in the House of Representatives were allocated to the regions according to the size of their population based on the 1952-3 census figure. The Northern Region had 174 seats, the Eastern Region

had 73 while the Western Region had 62 and Lagos, 3 seats (Oyediran, 1979). Thus, the Parliamentary democratic system in Nigeria simply assured the domination of the Federal Government by the region with the most population. Since party politics ran along ethnic/regional lines, the North with more than half of the country's population was bound to win all the elections conducted on the basis of one man one vote. The 1962 census presented the best opportunity for the NCNC and the Southern political leaders to redress the lopsided Nigeria's federal structure and the defective Northern domination. The competing regional governments, therefore, approached the exercise from this perspective (Oyediran, 1979).

The results of the census showed a high count for both the East and the West. The North on the other hand felt undercounted and perhaps cheated in the game and therefore protested. As a result, "the census figures were never published and the whole census had to be cancelled on account of harsh criticism" (Adigwe, 1985). The Prime Minister ordered a fresh count in 1963. The 1963 census figures released on 25th February 1964 put the country's population at 55,653,821 made-up of: Northern Region 29,777,986; Eastern Region 12,388,646; Western Region 10,278,500, Mid-Western Region 2,533,337; and Lagos 675,352 (Adigwe, 1985; Osaghae, 2002). The results apparently dashed the hopes of most southern politicians that a new census would end the age-long North's numerical predominance, and indirectly, the Northern political control of the Nigerian Federation (Dudley, 1982). The NCNC's Eastern Regional government rejected the results of the census while the Western Regional government accepted it due to Chief Akintola's political romance with the NPC. The cacophony wreaked havoc on alliance between the NPC and the NCNC. The NCNC leaders accused the Northern Region's government of fraud and contested the result in the law court. Tafawa Balewa, the country's Prime Minister and

Ahmadu Bello, the Northern Regional Premier and leader of the party respectively denied the claim.

However, the Prime Minister declared the census results valid and final. This crisis paved the way for new political alignment and realignment to the detriment of AG and NCNC (Asia, 2001).

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## THE 1964 FEDERAL ELECTION

The 1964 federal parliamentary election was contested by the two major political parties that formed alliances with smaller parties - NNA and UPGA. These two broad coalitions polarized the country's politics into a zero-sum competition between two opposing alliances. The electoral process witnessed great violence, harassment, kidnappings, intimidation and killing of political opponents by the ruling regional parties, allegations and counter allegations by one alliance on the other of plots to rig the election (Metz, 1991). The elections had to be suspended for several weeks and when the elections finally held, each of the regional parties openly harassed, intimidated its opponents in the campaigns. The army had to be engaged to supervise the elections when it became clear that the neutrality of the Federal Electoral Commission could not be guaranteed. There were accusations and counter-accusations of political harassment in the North during the electioneering campaigns (Dudley, 1982).

The electoral procedure was so flagrantly abused that at the close of nominations some 88 out of a total of 178 NNA candidates in the North had their candidature unopposed. The UPGA therefore resolved to boycott the election to protest the unlawful arrest, persecution, kidnapping and in some cases, killing of its members. Its members in

the Federal Electoral Commission resigned. Nevertheless, the elections still held under a very tense and violent atmosphere. The results of the election showed the NNA sweeping the polls with most of the party's candidates declared unopposed. Under the conditions that were not free and fair to opponents of the regional parties, the NCNC was returned to power in the East and Mid-West, while the NPC had firm control of the North. NPC was also in a position to form the government at the federal level on its own, so Tafawa Balewa then called on the President - Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe to be reappointed as the Prime Minister of the new government. Dr. Nnamdi then "refused, thereby creating a constitutional stalemate that set the country on the brink of collapse. After negotiations, the President-Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, invited Tafawa Balewa to reconstitute a new government to the detriment of UPGA members (Ikelegbe, 2004).

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#### THE 1965 WESTERN ELECTION CRISIS

The UPGA, after the devastating defeat it suffered in the 1964 federal parliamentary election, looked forward to the Western Region legislative election of 1965 as a hope of victory over the NNA. The region therefore became the "theater of war" between UPGA and NNA. The irregularities and manipulations that marred the 1964 election were only repeated in the election. Thuggery, violence, victimization of political opponents and widespread electoral fraud was alleged, and NNA won the elections. Following the announcement of the results, riots, arson and killings erupted as heartlands of the AG discovered that the election had only returned NNDP in the alliance of NNA to power. Not even the deployment of the army could placate the breakdown of law and order as burning, looting and killing went on unabated in the Western Region, the home-base of AG/UPGA. When it was so clear that the government could not curtail the political

upheavals, the army struck on the 15<sup>th</sup> January, 1966. The Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, Premier of the Northern and Western Regions - Sir Ahmadu Bello and Chief Akintola respectively were killed and that marked the collapse of the First Republic (King, 1988).

## AMBITIONS TOWARDS NIGERIAN ECONOMY IN THE FIRST REPUBLIC

The Nigerian government in the First Republic had as its main economic objective, the growth and development of the country. The economic policy of the government was geared towards this purpose. Since the economy of the country was dominated by foreign multinationals and trading companies, government efforts were geared towards import substitution and industrialization. The economy of the country, nevertheless, continued to witness foreign, particularly British dominance (Osaghae, 2002; McCormick, 2004). Despite foreign control of the economy through extractive role, the state played substantial role in the economic growth and development of the country. The regional governments were for the economic development of their regions. The agricultural potentials of these regions such as the production of cash crops were explored, and through the Produce Marketing Boards established under colonial government, the surplus from agrarian production were exported for huge profits channeled for developmental purpose.

The period was characterized by the emergence of leaders who were known and respected by their people like Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the West, Sir Ahmadu Bello of the North and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe of the East who tenaciously and prudently managed the available internally generated revenue to develop their regions (Ikelegbe, 1988; Asia, 2001). The regional leaders also went into industrial development from the proceeds of their internally generated revenue by setting up regional development agencies. The North had Nigerian Development Corporations that floated Banks of the North and Northern

Flour Mills, while the West had Oodua Investment Corporation. Money generated by each region was used for education, provision of health facilities, water and other infrastructures, although a significant portion of the earnings disappeared to private pockets. In 1962, the allegation of corruption against Chief Obafemi Awolowo and the Action Group necessitated the setting up of a commission of inquiry by the Federal Government with Justice Coker as the Chairman to ascertain the true position of things as it affected corruption in the government of the Western Region. The Commission found that:

“Action Group received NGN 4.4 million in cash for National Investment and Properties Corporation in addition to payment of its NGN 1.3 million overdraft with the National bank and that the party benefited from NIPC investment in corporations that published pro-Action Group newspapers. On Awolowo, the commission reported: 'His scheme was to build around him with money, an empire financially formidable both in Nigeria and abroad, an empire in which dominance would be maintained by him, by the power of the money which he had given out’<sup>4</sup>

In the same vein, it was discovered that the main source of funds for the NCNC was loans from the African Continental Bank (ACB), "a bank whose principal shareholder was Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe (and Zik Enterprises Ltd, a company largely owned by Nnamdi Azikiwe) but whose assets were later taken over by the Eastern Regional Government when the ACB was almost on the point of liquidation" (Dudley, 82:46). Despite the foregoing, political power in the First Republic thus, created economic opportunity, and played a role in developing patterns of social stratification making politicians sole beneficiaries of the

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<sup>4</sup> Cited in Oyediran, O. 1979. *Background to Military Rule*. Pg. 15



economic wealth of their regions (Jackson, 1972). Although, the bulk of Regional governments revenue came from cash crops such as cocoa for the Western Region, rubber and palm oil for the Eastern Region, and groundnut for the Northern Region; but substantial amount of revenue also accrued to the regions from the federation account.

The revenue sharing formula of the Federal Government between 1958 and 1966, when the military took over political power was based on Raisman Commission of 1958 and Binns Commission of 1964 (Offiong, 1993). The Raisman Commission of 1958 revenue sharing formula was as follows: North 40 percent, West 31 percent, East 24 percent and Southern Cameroon 5 percent, while the Binns Commission of 1964 revenue sharing formula was as follows: North 42 percent, East 30 percent, West 20 percent and Mid-West 8 percent. This was in addition to the already existed principle of derivation, needs and national interests (Ejimofofor, 1987; Offiong, 1995:346). Undoubtedly at the time, the Western Region was the nation's most affluent and well-developed region. The revenue generated from cocoa allowed the Western Region and its political elites to continue the substantial development in the areas of roads, education, health, and general infrastructure. The emergence of military leadership however, truncated federalism and led to the imposition of unitary system of government. Agriculture that used to be the main revenue source of the regions was consistently neglected while it had full control over exploration and exploitation of crude oil for its revenue (Asia, 2001).

## FOREIGN POLICY IN THE FIRST REPUBLIC

Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, held way as Prime Minister and Affairs advocate of Nigeria from 1960 until 1961 when Hon. Jaja Wachuku became, the first sustained Minister of foreign Affairs and commonwealth Relation (later called External Affairs) from 1961 to

1965” the historical antecedent of identified foreign policy owe much to the pioneering effort of prime Minister Sir Balewa which identified African as thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy. This policy marked by a three concentric cycle has Nigeria policy preference for “good-neighborliness” Sir Balewa's regime which marked the foundation of Nigeria foreign policy and as actor in the international system is premised on the country's presence in notable international organization such as United Nations (UN) Organization of African Unity (OAU), and Commonwealth of nations Sir Balewa's pursuit conservation foreign policy was dictate by some factors, which imposed server limits on possible radical posturing of Nigeria's political and economic alignment . (Ibrahim 1986)

A first glimpse of the shape which Nigeria's foreign policy would take was provided by Sir Balewa, on the occasion of the country's admittance as a member of the UN's. In his acceptance speech, Sir Balewa declared:

“It is the desire of Nigeria to remain friendly terms with all the nation and to participate activity in the work of the United Nations Organizations. Nigeria, by virtue of being the most populous country in West African has absolutely no territorial or expansionist ambitions. We are committed to uphold the principles upon which the UN's is founded. Nigeria hopes to work with other principles country for the progress of Africa and to also assist in bringing all African countries to a state of independence.”<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, on 1 October, 1960, Sir Balewa pronounced the following as the core principal of Nigeria's foreign policy:

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<sup>5</sup> Cited from Ibrahim, G. (1986). Pg 80

(1) Non-Alignment with any of the then existing ideological and military power blocs, especially North Atlantic Treaty organization (NATO) and the Warsaw pact; (2) respect for the legal equality, political impendence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all state; (3) respect for the doctrine of non-interference in the domestic affair of other states; (4) seeking membership of both continental and global multilateral organizations based on their functional importance to Nigeria; and (5) the recognition of Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria external relations.

These principles were later to be adopted into section 19 of the country's 1960 independence constitution and have been reviewed and sustained over time in the 1999 constitution.

The sir Balewa Regime of 1960-1966 laid the foundation for making of Africa the centerpiece of Nigerian foreign policy. The first of the litany of Nigerians assertion of leadership role in Africa and pro-Africa foreign policy was exemplified in the Congo a few months after Nigerians independence in 1960. Nigeria actively supported for the UN peacekeeping operation financially, materially and provided troops to quell the disturbance in the Katanga province of the Congo. The troops stayed for four years there from 1960-1964 to ensure that countries like Yugoslavia, Indonesia, UAR, Ghana, Guinea, Morocco and Mail withdrew their troops. Nigeria was one of the three countries that responded positively to the call by the then Secretary General of the United Nations Dag Hammerskjold, for the increase of troops to fill the vacuum created by the withdrawal of the countries named above. (Adeniji 2004)

Another foreign policy thrust of Sir Balewa's administration was its membership of and commitment of regional and continental organizations. This buttresses the reason why

Nigeria at African Unity since 1963 and Lake Chad Basin supported liberation movements across the continent by contributing substantially to the fund of the OAU liberation movements across the continent by contributing substantially to the fund of the OAU liberation committee. In another vein, the Balewa's administration spearheaded the expulsion of South Africa from the common-wealth in 1961 and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) refusal to extend invitation to South Africa to attend the 1964 Olympic Games held in Tokyo, Japan. The suspensions were intended to increase pressure on the apartheid regime to make reforms in its segregationist policies. He again offered a nonmilitary assistance through administrative and medical staff training for the Provisional Angolan Independent Government of Holden Robert. The Sir Balewa government as a demonstration of its commitment to the defense of Africa's interest when in protest she broke diplomatic relations with France in January 1961 for carrying out an atomic bomb test in the Sahara Desert despite opposition of African states to the test. Arguably, Sir Balewa's foreign policy thrust, had lots of conflicting component elements within the period. For instance, Sir Balewa's foreign policy thrust, had lots of conflicting component elements within the period. For instance, Sir Balewa is accused of failing to attend the maiden conference of the Non-aligned Movement in Belgrade; evasive over the establishment of formal diplomatic ties with the Sino-Soviet bloc until December 1961; acceptance of the Anglo-Nigeria Defence Pact until he was forced to abrogate it by students and the opposition; refusing to train armed militia for Angolan national fighters waging a war against Portuguese colonialists despite Nigeria's avowed resolve to rid the continent of colonialism .

Furthermore, despite professing his interest in the well-being and freedom of Africa and Africans, Sir Balewa's role in the Congo was criticized on grounds that he ignored

the basic problem of neo-colonialism in the Congo only to support the UN in maintaining the colonial status quo for the sake of “law and order”. Another test was on Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia). Sir Balewa took a conservative stance in the harsh apartheid rule and unilateral declaration of independence of Ian Smith. Generally, the Sir Balewa policy concern was primarily on decolonization of Africa and this brought him to terms with several liberation struggles; one of the focal roles of Nigeria being the support for any movement towards the total liberation of the continent. Sir Balewa is also criticized for negating his commitment to consider Africa wellbeing paramount because Nigeria failed to honor the OAU decision that member-states should break diplomatic relations with Britain for tacitly supporting Smith. In a matter that required revolutionary approach Sir Balewa was rather cautious preferring to sea OAU and Britain down and settle the rift amicably. The fact remains, however, that during the early years of independence, Nigeria was courted by both the US (representing the capitalist world) and the former Soviet Union (representing the communist world) for purely ideological reasons. Thus, the US and Britain were determined to ensure that Nigeria remained in the so-called “free world” as a showpiece of Western-style democracy, while the then USSR was keen on building a socialist society in Nigeria. That was why Nigeria was considered strategically important so much so that the US government set up a considered strategically important so much so that the US government set up a communication satellite tracking station in Kano in 1960, and the former Soviet Union tried to undermine US presence in Nigeria by subtly directing Nigeria's attention to the evils implicit in allowing western capitalists to control the economy. But these did not away Nigeria's position too far away from her pro-West stance. (Steve 2003).

## THE COLLAPSE OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC

At independence, Nigeria was indeed regarded as a beacon of hope for a liberal democratic nation-state. This democratic hope, however, could not guarantee the survival of the republic. Several explanations have been made with regards to the collapse of the First Republic.

First, the deficient fundamental socio-political and economic institutional foundation bequeathed by the British colonial government. This wobbly foundation included among others, a lopsided federal structure, ethnic consciousness and rivalries, regionally based political parties and a subverted indigenous ethos of government and culture (Akinboye and Anifowose, 1999). Following this argument, the fractionalizations, confrontations between political actors that led to the collapse of the republic are viewed as inevitable factors of the Westminster-style parliamentary democracy bequeathed to Nigeria but which the inexperienced leadership could not handle. This led to large social cleavages and made it difficult to create a unified government. The colonialists had the opportunity between 1914 and 1960 to change all that for good, but failed to utilize it to build a strong structure that would have guaranteed enduring nationhood and democratic governance for the country (Akinboye and Anifowose, 1999; Osaghae, 2002).

Second was the lack of common political culture amongst Nigerians that could have facilitated the enhancement and sustainability of democratic governance in the country. The new elites, who took over power from the colonialists, lacked political tolerance and, failed to play the political game according to established rules, instead saw the independence as opportunity to further their selfish and parochial interests through the politics of ethnic identity as laid down by the colonial imperialist (Akinsanya, 2005).

Third was the uneven rate of development among the various groups and regions. The disparities in economic development between the south and the north magnified Nigeria's ethnic and religious tensions and resulted to struggle for state power by the various regions that insinuated group, ethnic, and regional conflicts in Nigeria even up till now (Metz, 1991). Furthermore, regionalization of politics and in particular, of party formation made the stability of the republic dependent on a fragile balance whereby each party controlled its regional base. This stability and the fragile balance on which the federation rested were altered when the Federal Government invoked its emergency powers in 1962 and removed the AG from power in the Western Region. These underpinning factors were the mutually reinforcing cause of all the political crises, regional conflicts and instability of the First Republic and which eventually contributed to its collapse on 15th January, 1966 through a military coup (Akinsanya, 2005).

## CHAPTER 7

### MILITARY IN POLITICS: BARRACKS, BARRELS, AND POWER (1966-1999)

Nigeria came to political independence with myriad of nationhood challenges and thorny political problems that threatened its foundation and corporate existence. It will be recalled that Nigeria prior to 1914 amalgamation had over four hundred ethnic groups or tribes (Kirk-Greene 1960). Most of these have their own distinct languages, religions, traditions, and institutions. These were indeed in the Nigerian context where there were really different nationalities, which united and established a political union in the form of federation, as a result of historical circumstances (Nwankwo & Ifejika, 1969). With this kind of background, the nationalists got the political independence for Nigeria. This political backdrop created misgivings, mistrust and pitted the major ethnic groups against themselves. There was no national cohesion among the doyen of Nigerian nationalists who took over from the departing colonial overlords became disillusioned about governance and nation building. This also stemmed from the fact that the early nationalists expressed lack of faith about the unity of Nigeria. This is made manifest in the assertion below: since the amalgamation of the southern and northern provinces in 1914, Nigeria has existed as one country only on paper. It was still far from united (Nwankwo & Ifejika, 1969). This tribal sentiment expressed the view of many nationalists about Nigeria, giving credence that Nigeria is disparate home of many nationalities.

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#### SYNOPSIS ON MILLITARY FORCES IN NIGERIA

Nigeria has been governed for a longer period by the military junta than by civilian rule after her independence in 1960. Starting from January 1966 to October 1979 and



December 1983 to May 1999, the military has ruled the country for about 30 years. It is also interesting to note that the first colonial Governor-General, Lord Lugard was also a British soldier; he was the person that amalgamated the Lagos Colony, the Northern Protectorate and the Southern Protectorate together to become what his wife named Nigeria in 1900.

The history of the Nigerian Armed Forces can be traced to 1863 when the Governor-General of Lagos, Lt Glover of the Royal Navy, organized 18 Northern Nigerians into the so called "Glover's Hausa". This became known as the Hausa Constabulary in 1887 (Arnold-Baker, 2001). Their functions included: (a) protecting the lives and properties of the British residents in and around Lagos, (b) protecting the British traders, and (c) protecting the British trade routes around Lagos. The Hausa Constabulary and the Royal Niger Constabulary (the troop of the Royal Niger Company raised in 1886), formed the West African Field Force. The first Battalion was formed on the 26 August, 1896, while the second Battalion was formed in 1898, with the third Battalion being added in 1898 (Ukpabi, 1987). The West African Field Force and the Northern Nigeria Regiment were amalgamated in May 1900, under the command of Lord Lugard. In 1914, the Southern Nigeria Regiment and the Northern Nigeria Regiment were amalgamated to form the Nigeria Regiment of the West African Frontier Force. In 1956, during the visit of Queen Elizabeth II, the remaining troops from the North and South Regiments, not forming part of the West African Frontier Force, were renamed Queen's Own Nigerian Regiment (QONR). Later the same year Britain granted military autonomy to her dependencies and QONR was renamed Nigerian Military Force (NMF). During independence in 1960, the name changed again to become the Royal Nigerian Army. As soon as Nigeria became a Republic the name was changed again to the Nigerian Army and with the other two forces,

it was designated the Nigerian Armed Forces, the name which remains up till today (Welch, 1995). Despite the country becoming a Republic, the Nigerian Armed Forces were structured according to the British military system and to implement British oriented doctrines; their training programs from the simple to the complex, both in content and methodology, were done in Britain and in British fashion. The size of the Armed Forces were small but disciplined and used mainly for ceremonial duties until January 1966 when they became involved in the Nigerian politics (Janowitz, 1971).

The coups and counter coups that started in 1966 ended in the Nigerian civil war in 1967. The civil war could be said to be what brought Nigerian military out of its shells as the army grew from a mere infantry force of about 6000 to one of over 250,000, equipped with heavy

weapons and supported by air and naval power. It was this same war that eventually eroded the military's trust of civilian leadership. The Nigerian military was trained in the "British notion of military professionalism that stressed civilian control of the military" (Butts & Metz, 1996).

The military system in Nigeria comprises Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy and the Nigerian Air Force; currently, the population of the Nigerian Armed Forces is about 76,000.

#### EVENTS LEADING FROM INDEPENDENCE UP TO 1966

At political independence in 1960, the political elite who constituted the phantom bourgeoisie inherited a nation from a poor foundation difficult for nation building to take place. The general election that brought the First Republic leaders was not entirely credible, free from ethnic bias, jaundice and sentiment. Formations of political parties were done on ethnic bases without paying particular attention to the need of the fragile

nation like Nigeria at that material time. The Northern People's Congress (NPC) was Hausa – Fulani dominated, the Action Group (AG) was a Yoruba dominated party, and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) was Igbo dominated.

Following the fall out in the Western region-based Action Group (AG) political party and the inconsistent census, the Nigeria first republic virtually collapsed. By 1964, political competition had become very severe, and two major alliance of all the political parties contested the federal elections of that year. Electoral fraud was so rampant and so prevalent that the elections were meaningless and the results of the elections ending in a stalemate (Arikpo, 1967). As Arikpo reported, the events of the 1964 federal elections serious as they were, paled beside those which followed during the Western Region election a year later in 1965 during in which the electorate literally poured gasoline on opponents and set them on fire. The electorate literally took the laws into its hands and the Police seemed powerless. Following the events above, Nigerians believed that the military was the only institution in the country that could stop the political chaos and restore political order and stability, as well as public confidence (Ojibo, 1980).

This background of ethnic politics made good governance and nation building very problematic, and Nigeria stagnated and plummeted from one political crisis to other within the six years of the nation's political independence. Nigeria's independent government at the Federal and the State levels experienced a short "honeymoon". Within two years, conflicts had torn apart the ruling coalition in the Western Region. The next year suspicion about the national census destroyed the little trust there was among the regions. Finally, in 1965 law and order broke down in the Western Region over election-related fraud and

violence, and the military ended the First Republic in a January 1966 coup (Mundt et al, 2010).

The comprehension of military administration depends on the execution of the different military organizations Nigeria has experienced. Military suggests “pros in the utilization of ammo with the end goal of fighting”.<sup>6</sup> This, however, clarifies why the different military administrations were authoritarian and brutal in nature. They are prepared personnel for war and they can’t comprehend the democratic methods for administration. The sequential record of their association in Nigerian legislative issues is sufficient to give a reasonable picture of what military govern stand for. It is where uniform men that are prepared to secure the state choose to pull back themselves from their pledge of office keeping in mind the end goal to harvest the plentiful economic enrichment of the state. (Ake 1996) The military administration is an administration driven by military pioneers. It is by and large viewed as an abnormality of administration and a nullification of political advancement. The military administration is an administration over-whelmed by military pioneers. (Eminue 2006) This is in accordance with R.R. Joseph’s claim in his book on “The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic”<sup>7</sup>, that it is the point at which the military grow their sleeping quarters’ limits to the administration limits. Also, another author, Elaigwu<sup>8</sup> also contended that the military has turned into a

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<sup>6</sup> Extracted from Uzodinma AO. *From Military Rule to Civil Rule: A Political Economy of Gerontocratic Metamorphosis in Nigeria*. International Affairs and Global Strategy, 2015, pp: 45-53

<sup>7</sup> *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd. 1991.

<sup>8</sup> Wrote a book titled *The Military and State Building: Federal-State Relations in Nigeria's Military Federalism (1996-1976)*.

political power challenger in Nigeria's condition, which must be "de-politicized". This is to state that the military is a politicized organization, revealing more in administration than their traditional part in Nigeria.

The military intervention in politics in 1966 was necessitated by these crisis and inability of the civil authority to tackle the problems of nation building. The military staged in and took the bull by the horn to address the nation building challenges facing Nigeria, owing to its capacity and professional inclination. The military is an organized institution as a body of armed men and women practicing the legitimate profession of arms under the authority of civilian leaders and the control of duly appointed commanders (Hutchful & Bathily, 1998). Given its antecedents in the western European nations, the modern Nigerian military is supposed to be a highly professional organ of the state, disciplined and organized enough to be entrusted with the monopoly and legitimate use of force. As an institution of the state, it is characterized and distinguished by a command structure, rigid hierarchy of authority, specialized training and skills in the use of the sophisticated means of coercion and a high degree of *esprit de corp*. It is supposed to carry out constitutionally responsibilities, which usually include defending the territorial integrity of a nation against external aggression and assisting the police in the maintenance of internal security, such as insurrection (Jega, 2007). In the descriptive analysis above, the military is aptly and graphically qualified to take up governance challenges, where there is lacuna in the service of civil authority as it was the case in 1966, when the military ousted the corrupt, inefficient and failed government of the First Republic.

The Nigerian military rose to these challenges of nation building, tactically determined to bring about political change and development in emergent polity. At the time of military intervention in 1966, Nigeria was already manifesting certain indexes of

failed States such as: lack of the authority to make collective decision or capacity to deliver public services, political and economic stagnation, civil disobedience, uneven development and inequality, armed conflict, electoral instability, agitation for autonomy and slow and steady deterioration of institution and criminalization (Ifesinachi, 2011). There were the questions of Nigerian federalism, nature and character of the constitution operable and applicable to the Nigerian situation, national question and all above the core issue of citizenship. The patriotic Nigerian military attempted and made frantic efforts while in governance to address the above nation building challenges and putting the country on the path of political development akin to that of the advanced democracies among the comity of nations. The discourse takes on the polemic that the military institution has made diametric and meaningful contributions to nation building and political development, while the civilian governments continue to build on their legacies after military rule in the post independent Nigeria.

#### THE FIRST OF MANY COUPS AND MILLITARY REGIME IN 1966

As corrective regimes, military governments are similar, but in approach, they differ significantly. (Methz 1991) Specifically, some are compassionate, others are draconic and some fall in-between. Intermittently, and for twenty-eight years, the military called the shots in Nigeria's political history; hence as a result, professionalism was relegated, coups gained currency, careers and lives were wasted. Significantly, they became part of the problem; in 1966, some army majors and other officers killed some civilian politicians and some senior military officers in a coup de tat.

The military coup d'état of 1966 and eventual ascension to power by Major General Aguiyi Ironsi marked the end of Nigeria's first civilian democratic government. This was a

welcome development to many Nigerians as it puts to an end to the civilian rule of the country, characterized by political tensions and instability. General Ironsi's challenge was whether or not he could sustain the confidence the nation reposed in the Army take-over (Ojibo, 1980). New political arrangements and programs were announced by the new head of State, which included a new constitution and handover to the civilian government. General Ironsi promulgated Decree No 34, abolishing the federal structure of Nigeria and replacing same with the new unitary structure. Part of the promise made by his government was to hand over power to the democratically elected civilian government as the military had no desire to prolong its interim administration longer than is necessary for the orderly transition of the country to the type of government desired by the people (Banjo, 1980).

Balogun O. in his book "Nigeria in Crisis" analyzed the first coup, Sir Abubakar Tafawa-Balewa, the first Prime Minister of Nigeria; Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto who also happens to be the Premier of Northern Nigeria; Chief Festus Okotie Eboh, the Federal Minister of Finance, and Chief Samuel Akintola, the Premier of Western Region, were brutally killed. (Balogun 1973) In addition, Brigadier, Zakari Maimalari, Colonel Kur Mohammed and Abogo Lagema lost their lives. Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu led the coup, and in his address to the Nation, he stated why they struck. According to him, they intervened to wipe out corruption, nepotism and to elevate Nigeria. Although the first Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and other top officials were killed, the coup failed.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Written by Ademoyega: "Why we Struck", The story of the first Nigerian coup, 1981, pp: 102-112.

In Lagos, General Aguiyi Ironsi, the then highest-ranking military officer, quelled the revolt with the help of some other military officers. With the loyal officers and Men of the Nigeria Army, General Ironsi routed the culprits involved in the coup, and in Kaduna, Nzeogwu was on one limb. With little or no logistics, a fresh supply was blocked, as both Kano and Lagos, where the coup had failed refused his orders. After several emissaries and assurances, Nzeogwu laid down his arms, went to Lagos and was arrested and detained. It could be said that the inability of the remaining Ministers to agree on who would act (take-over) in the absence of Prime Minister compelled the acting president, Nwafor Orizon, to hand over power to the military headed at that time by General Ironsi. For some times, Ironsi and Nzeogwu were governing separately Southern and Northern Nigeria respectively. In fact, Nzeogwu had already arranged attacks on the south to crush Ironsi regime before he was persuaded by Alexander Madiebo to settle with Lagos on the conditions that nothing would be done to those who participated in the coup, and that the aims of the coup would be upheld.<sup>10</sup>

It is to be noted that the coup plotters claimed they wanted a better and united Nigeria which offered equal opportunity to its citizen without geographical or tribal consideration. However, the pattern of execution and composition of the coup convincingly betrayed the alleged aims of the coup. As Muhammadu and Haruna stated, ‘even though the coup had been planned with the best of intentions, its outcome looked patently to be other ethnic groups particularly in the North like an Ibo conspiracy (Muhammadu T & Haruna M, 1981). For instance, all the key planners of the coup except

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<sup>10</sup> Extracts from *The Impact of Military Rule on Nigeria’s Nation Building, 1966- 1979* by Abdulrahman Ajibola 2014.



one were Igbos. Again, while most of the people that were killed during the coup were of Northern extraction, none of the Igbo leaders was touched by the killing. In fact, Nnamdi Azikwe had to travel to London, at this strategic period, under disguise that he was not well and needed medical attention/care (Adebola A.S, 2009). This was highly suspicious and questionable.

This perception was however validated by the Ironsi policies. For instance, Ironsi refused to bring the leaders of the coup to trial; he changed from federalism to Unitarianism etc. It has to be remembered that one of the conditions on which Nzeogwu settled with Ironsi was that nothing would be done to those that participated in the coup. Nevertheless, the consequence of Ironsi's policies was to increase the fear of the Northerners of the plot by the Igbos to dominate them (and the entire country). This is because the new unitary constitution with its provision of unitary Civil Service could be said to be seen as giving the Igbo special advantage. Since they had a huge number of educated elites, when compared with the North, Northerners could not compete on equal basis for post in the Civil Service and thus would cease to be masters in their own home. Hence Ironsi regime that firstly enjoyed the goodwill suddenly turned to be suspicious by the Northerners. It was reported that the first sign of trouble for Ironsi regime started from Ahmadu Bello University where it was alleged that a group of expatriate and Nigerian lecturers were instigating Northern students against the Southerners (Michael Crowder, 1980). This went a long way in preparing the minds not only of Northern students but also of political and military leaders including the Governor, Hassan Katsina. Consequently, there was a counter-coup in July 1966 which consumed Gen. Ironsi together with his host, Adekunle Fajuyi the Governor of Western region.

## SECOND MILITARY REGIME (1966-1975)

Lt-Colonel. Yakubu Gowon, the highest-ranking Northerner, succeeded Ironsi. He ruled for nine years, through the civil war and the oil boom, terminating in 1975. (Araba 1990) Young and inexperienced, Gowon relied on the civil servants, and they became very powerful. Permanent secretaries dictated the tune while ministers and political appointees watched. Awash with petrodollars, Nigeria went on a spending binge beyond her shores. In 1974, Gowon in a national broadcast rescinded his promise to hand-over to the civilians in 1976. This angered some politicians and military officers, and later in July 1975, Gowon was toppled in a bloodless coup.

## GENERAL YAKUBU GOWON'S ADMINISTRATIVE RULE (1966-1975)

General Yakubu Gowon came into power through the 29 July, 1966 counter-coup in Nigeria. On his ascension to power, Gen. Gowon appointed top politicians, technocrats, military officers and public office holders as federal commissioners. The managerial style of Gen. Gowon's federal commissioners could be described as a rational administrative managerial style. The rational administrative managerial style means Gen. Gowon and the federal commissioners appointed by him were guided by rational thinking in their decision-making, policy making, socioeconomic strategy formulation and policy execution. The rational administrative managerial federal commissioners of Gen. Gowon included Chief Obafemi Awolowo (Federal Commissioner for Finance), Chief Anthony Enahoro (Federal Commissioner for Information), Alhaji Aminu Kano (Federal Commissioner for Health), Alhaji Lateef Olufemi Okunnu, (Federal Commissioner for Works and Housing), T. S. Takar, Ali Munkunu, Wenike Briggs, Dr. R. B. Dikko and many others.

The military officers included Air Commodore Dan Suleiman (Federal Commissioner for Special Duties), Maj-Gen. Henry Olufemi Adefowope (Federal Commissioner for Labor), Lt. Col. A. A. Ali (Federal Commissioner for Education) and others. The rational administrative managerial elite comprised small top military officers, which correspond with Jacobs & Jaques's<sup>11</sup> senior military personnel and Wong, Bliesey & McGurk's<sup>12</sup> system level leaders; including high ranking politicians in the aborted First Republic and some technocrats. The rational administrative managerial elite were characterized by a logical, structured and sequenced approach to decision making; they were concerned with enhancing the welfare of the people, planning the social system, formulating socio-economic policies and building enduring infrastructures in society, in an ordered, planned and systematic way. They operated a mixture of bourgeois and feudal moral standards, and attempted some form of distributed powers to contending regions of the country through their appointed representatives. They made socio-economic policies that protected the civil society from an encroaching military institution, and built the virtues of vigorous and focused military government. They provided social services and defended expressive "lifestyle" of freedoms.

Through the instrumentality of the rational administrative managerial elite, Gen. Yakubu Gowon enacted the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion decrees 1972, which was further reviewed by Obasanjo's government in 1977. They facilitated the first indigenous attempt by Nigerians to participate in the corporate management of their economy. The

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<sup>11</sup> Jacobs, T. O., & Jaques, E. (1990). *Military Executive Leadership*.

<sup>12</sup> Wong, L., Bliese, P., & McGurk, D. (2003). *Military Leadership: A Context Specific Review*. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14(6), 657-692.

policy encouraged indigenization of top management echelons of some corporations by divesting foreign majority ownership that dominated the Nigerian economy since 1880s when the early corporations such as the National African Company and later Royal Niger Company came into the country, to indigenous majority ownership in the 1970s. More importantly, the policy reduced foreign ownership of shares in major industries across various sectors of the economy. Consequently, a handful of privileged top military leaders and civil servants, including some business people and a few professionals, who benefited from the social policies of the earlier leaders of the nation such as Awolowo, Azikiwe, Balewa and Bello in the first republic, purchased some shares relinquished by foreign investors and became considerably wealthy.

It is important to provide a prelude to this development. In the pre-independence and post-independence era, the Nigerian economy was dominated and controlled by foreign nationals. The European investors, predominantly the British entrepreneurs and skilled personnel, constituted the top echelons of the management of top-rate corporations in the country. During this time, the Lebanese acted as middle-men (Falola, 1990; Olutayo, 1999) and they engaged in distributive and export trade and other services. A few members of the privileged Nigerian elite, the commissioned agents of foreign industrialists and trading houses, were operating at the base of the economic ladder where they were performing peripheral economic services. This group of Nigerians was not happy with their peripheral functions in the economy after independence, and had been at loggerhead with the British and some European investors that dominated the economy, right from the colonial period up to the 1970s. Whenever Nigerian traders established a profitable new line of business, the European companies would move quickly to drive them out of business (Forrest, 1995). The 1972, 1978 and 1982 indigenization legislations were

promulgated due to pressures mounted by the indigenous business class on the military leadership. However, there was a meeting of interest between the Nigerian business class and the military leadership as evidence suggests that both benefited immensely from the largesse that resulted from the policies.

The leadership style which the rational administrative managerial elite adopted in managing every facet of the Nigerian social, political and economic systems provides opportunity to theories on their pragmatic management tradition. While providing robust policy initiatives, the rational administrative managerial elite assisted Gowon in managing the civil war economy under the guardianship of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the Federal Commissioner for Finance. Shortly after the war, Gowon's rational administrative managerial elite pursued the infrastructural development of the nation. In 1972, Gowon introduced an indigenization decree called the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Act, which brought some measure of indigenous control over many sectors of the Nigerian economy. With high in-flux of oil revenue, Gen. Gowon's administration pursued the post-war Second National Development Plan vigorously. He expanded the education sector; he constructed new schools, created six new federal universities in April 1975, introduced free, compulsory primary education, instituted a National Youth Service Corps program, established new oil refineries, constructed new airports, seaports, expressways, supported industries to produce at optimum capacities, and inaugurated a housing program.

Additionally, Gowon's rational administrative managerial elite introduced the reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction programs after the civil war in 1973; the war economy was managed professionally by the Federal Commission for Finance, Obafemi Awolowo, whose frugality and parsimony ensured that Nigeria did not incur external debt during the war between 1966 and 1973. The post-war reconciliation,

rehabilitation and reconstruction programs were meant to reconcile the Biafrans and their Nigerians counterparts, and rehabilitate the displaced people of the Eastern Nigeria and reconstruct many of their facilities and infrastructures damaged during the war. The post-war economic programs accelerated the economic and social development throughout the nation; for example, the war led to the Four-year (1970-1974) post-war reconstruction and development plans such as the Second National Development Plan; East-Central State Program of Post-war Reconstruction; Mid-Western State Development Plan; Rivers State Development Plan; and the South-Eastern State Development Plan (Awotona, 1992).

In spite of Gowon's monumental contributions to the nation's development, his administration faltered. For example, Gowon adopted military approach in handling of the university lecturers' strike and the university students' protests that led to the death of Kunle Adepeju at the University of Ibadan in 1971; this made many Nigerians to lose interest in his government. In addition, the cancellation of the controversial national census with its huge expenses, rising corruption among the state governors, federal commissioners (ministers) and top public officers in the state and federal ministries, and his renege on handling over power to civilians in 1976 and others, eroded public confidence in Gowon's leadership.<sup>13</sup>

## POST CIVIL WAR AND THE SEARCH FOR NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA (1970-1975)

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<sup>13</sup> Extracted from *Military Intervention in the Nigerian Politics and Its Impact on the Development of Managerial Elite* by Olusoji James George, Olusanmi C. Amujo, Nelarine Cornelius in 2012

It could be stated that the military government under Gowon did not really settle down until the end of the civil war in January 1970. In fact, any assessment of Gowon regime till this period could only be done majorly within the context of civil war. While it could be understood that the federal government under Gowon believed it fought civil war in order to keep Nigeria as one. This could be said to be an effort towards Nigeria's nation building. What would have happened if the federal government did not stop the secessionist Biafra? The answer is very simple; that might be the end of Nigeria as a nation. Therefore, the military regime under Gowon should be acknowledged for keeping Nigeria one. Although the federal government won the war, Gowon declared 'no victor no vanquished' at the end of the war. This was apparently to pacify the Igbo.

For the building of nation to happen, there was the need for restoration of peace, order and stability. As Kagame has noted, 'for the country coming out of a conflict, the first priority should be one of stabilization and security, which requires strong internal political leadership, systems and institutions. This first nation building policy of Gowon was the three R's theory of Reconciliation, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation. At the end of the war, a general amnesty was offered to those who had fought against the Nigerian army. (Michael, 1980) It was said that the re-integration of the secessionist areas took place more easily than expected by outside observers. The bridges, markets, cement factories and other properties that were destroyed during the civil war received quick 'reconstruction' attention of the federal government. (Otoghagua, 2011)

In furtherance of the project of national integration and by extension nation building, the National Youth Corp Service was established in 1973. As earlier stated, national service was one of the nation's building mechanisms Sanghamitra B and Elliott Green disclosed that

many African countries in the post-independent years adopted. (2010) The establishment of NYSC was a landmark in the history of Nigeria's nation building, given its objectives. (Ibid) NYSC scheme requires all university graduates to participate in a year compulsory service to the nation in communities other than theirs. The most important objective of the establishment of NYSC was to make 'Nigerian Youth develop common ties among themselves and therefore promote national unity'. There have been cases of inter-ethnic marriage among Nigerian youth of diverse background. This was a good effort towards building a united nationhood.

In 1973, the Naira and Kobo were introduced. (CRN India) The introduction of naira and kobo was also another milestone in the country's nation building project. The pound which the countries was hitherto using was a colonial legacy. Sanghamitra B and Elliott Green have quoted Helleiner to have argued that national currency can attribute to nation building in a variety of ways, both through imagery present on notes and coins and through the stable management of a currency that can help to provide for a stable government.(Sanghmitra et al 2010 ) While majority of Franco-phone African countries retained the CFA franc after independence, majority of Anglophone African countries like Ghana Zambia , Malawi, Sierra Leone and Angola replaced pound with national currencies that reflect the indigenous names.

Since nation building entails building virile and viable polity, Military government under Gowon also launched nine-point agenda. This agenda/program according to Arnold was to include: the reorganization of the armed forces; the implementation of the second National Development Plan; the eradication of corruption., the creation of more states; the preparation and adoption of a new constitution; the new national census; the



organization of genuinely national political parties; and organization of elections... at both state and federal levels. (Arnold Guy, 1977)

While in the foreign affairs, Gowon was very active in the post-war periods. Nigeria under Gowon played leading role in asserting independence of Africa against European, especially French, influence in West Africa; in establishing the ECOWAS of which Nigeria was the “grand financier” (Otogaghua E, 2011). All this was to give Nigeria a new and progressive international image following the trauma of the civil war. All these could rightly be said to be efforts geared towards nation-building project. It is significant to state that the post war years saw the emergence of Nigeria as major producer of oil. (Michael, 1980) It could therefore be stated that the country was greatly helped by the new-found wealth that came from oil. With this, Gowon was able to pursue aggressive economic programs. It is however unfortunate that since the oil boom in the country in the 70s, the wealth from oil boom has not made significant impact in the lives of Nigerians. The money from oil was perhaps so enormous that Gowon was recorded to have said that ‘money is not the problem of Nigeria but how to spend it.’ Despite this disappointment, oil boom could be said to have contributed immensely to the reconstruction and rehabilitation program of the post-civil war era.

Despite the prospect of Nigeria’s nation building after the civil war, there were some challenges. The first challenge was the over stay of the military rule. It was in 1974 that Gowon stated that his promise to return the country to civilian rule in 1976 was unrealistic and it would amount to a betrayal of trust to adhere rigidly to that target date. Arnold Guy (1977) noted that it is important to state that ‘military in politics is an aberration.’ Therefore, military government should be a corrective regime and therefore transitional. (Nwankwo, 1979) It becomes a threat when it refuses to be transitional. This danger

became apparent when Gowon reneged on his promise to return the country to civilian rule in 1976.

Another case in point was Gowon's indecision and inaction over the cases of his Governors and his Commissioner for communication, Joseph Tarka. The first noticeable abuse of office by Governors was in River State where a journalist, Mr. Amachree, was arrested, bodily assaulted and unlawfully detained and as well had his head shaved off with broken bottle, apparently on the order of Governor who was said not to be amused by a news item the journalist sent to his employer, *The Observer* (Nwankwo A.A, 1979). Mr. Amechree however sued the Government through Lawyer Gani Fawehinmi (Ibid). Another case was that of Mr. Aper Aku who swore affidavits, accusing Governor of Plateau State, Gomwalk, of corruption and abuse of office (Ibid). Then come to the case of Mr. Joseph Tarka, Commissioner for Communication, who had come under several accusations including one that was supported with tapes and documents (Ibid).

It is however unfortunate that, appeals to the federal government were met with inactions. Not only that federal government under Gowon did not intervene, 'Gowon himself publicly exonerated Governor Gomwalk of all charges of corruption. It is however important to consider the influence of the State Governors who made up 70% in the Supreme Military Council. It is therefore understandable that it would be difficult to remove the Governors given their influence in the Supreme Military Council. However, the case of Joseph Tarka, an ordinary Commissioner who was not replaced, gave credence to the impression of Gowon's weakness.

Amidst this public disenchantment with General Gowon, his nine-point agenda was examined. It has been estimated that only 50% of this agenda had been accomplished as corruption got worse; creation of more states was ignored, as was the preparation of new

constitution; while the organization of national parties and elections were set aside (Arnold Guy, 1979). It has to be stated too that the wealth that came from oil was mismanaged. Over dependence on oil revenues resulted in the neglect of agriculture as Nigeria's economy shifted to mono-cultural economy. This military regime should have used the oil-wealth to develop agriculture in order to serve as complement to oil economy. This failure was acknowledged by Gowon himself so much that he in a broadcast in 1974 he announced that 'it was impracticable for the military to handover government in 1976'.

It is at this point important to state that military in politics is an aberration. Therefore, military government should be a corrective regime and therefore transitional. This will definitely increase their credibility in nation building. It however becomes a threat when it refuses to be transitional. Therefore, when Gowon failed to be committed to the handover date which he had earlier promised, the danger and threat of the military rule became apparent. It was amidst these that Gowon's regime was overthrown in a 'palace coup' on July 29th, 1975, exactly nine years after he came to power.<sup>14</sup>

### THIRD AND FOURTH MILITARY REGIME (1975-1979)

Brigadier Murtala Ramat Mohammed emerged as the Head of state with Obasanjo as the Chief of Army Staff on 29 July, 1975. Laced with revolutionary rhetoric, he flushed out deadwood and bad eggs and in the exercise; all sections of the country were affected. It could be suggested that this was the first coup to have been motivated by national consciousness in advancement of the country's nation building project. Therefore, the

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<sup>14</sup> Extracted from *Military Intervention in the Nigerian Politics and Its Impact on the Development of Managerial Elite* by Olusoji James George, Olusanmi C. Amujo, Nelarine Cornelius in 2012

coup was highly welcome by the nation. With dispatch, Murtala drew up his transition, itemized his priorities and promised a hand over date of 1st October 1979.

The new regime quickly settled for business. Heads of Armed services and the Governors in the twelve states were removed. Given the reasons previous regime was toppled, Muritala/Obasanjo regime set a target date, 1979, for the transition to civilian rule. Dedicated and committed to this, General Murtala Muhammed launched a five-stage program. According to Otoghagua, this five-stage program included:

...appointment of Constitution Drafting Committee to work on preliminary draft;

Creation of new states; election into a constituent Assembly on Oct 1977,

Reunification of the Draft constitution by the constituent Assembly by Oct, 1978,

and lifting of the 1966 ban on politics and political parties, and conduct of states and federal general elections before October 1979 (Otoghagua, E, 2011).

General Murtala Mohammed recommended executive presidential system of government as against the parliamentary system adopted in the first republic. The regime also created seven more states to make nineteen states. On the international arena, the regime was open in its condemnation of apartheid policy in South Africa. The regime also backed the M.P.L.A. government of Angola as it helped to swing the majority of the O.A.U member-states behind it. No doubt, these were apparently good steps towards Nigeria's nation building. Given this manifest determination by the Murtala regime in undertaking reforms both at home and in foreign policy, it got unprecedented popularity especially among the intellectuals who were critical of the previous regime.

However, it was amidst its popularity and dynamism that the regime of Murtala Muhammed was brought to an end through an abortive coup. Unlike the July coup that was expected and welcome, the coup led by Lt. Col. Dimka Bukar Sukar., Head of Army's Physical Training Corps, failed in its attempts to wipe out Murtala regime, though it succeeded in assassinating Murtala himself (Arnold, 1979). The coup was badly motivated and planned; it was, however, an unpopular one. People were said to be disappointed by the coup as they felt that the regime it wanted to terminate was the only regime since independence which reflected hopes for the Nigeria's future (Otoghagua, E 2011). Widespread hostility toward the leaders of the abortive coup confirmed the popularity and dynamism of Murtala regime. Following the death of General Murtala, Lt. General Obasanjo as the next in line of succession was appointed by the Supreme Military Council to take up the mantle of leadership. Generally, he stuck to Murtala's transition and kept his vision drive. On October 1, 1979, power was handed over to an elected president, Alhaji Shehu Aliyu Usman Shagari. In a broadcast to the nation, Obasanjo said that there would be no change in the policies of the Federal Military Government (Sakariyau R., 2012). In other words, he would be implementing the program already designed by his late predecessor. Within months of his appointment, Obasanjo tried and executed those involved in the abortive February coup.

#### GENERAL OLUSEGUN OBASANJO'S GOVERNMENT IN NATION'S BUILDING (1976-1979)

When Gen. Murtala Ramat Mohammed was assassinated in an abortive military coup on 13 February, 1976 his Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo was nominated to replace him. Gen. Obasanjo's administration adopted a participatory

development

approach to the nation's socio-economic development. The participatory development managerial style means Gen. Obasanjo and his federal commissioners were guided by the desire to deepen the participation of top Nigerian military officers and top private business executives in the management of the economy, decision-making, policy making, and policy execution. Some of the members of Gen. Obasanjo's participatory development managerial elite included top military officers such as Major-Gen. Henry Adefowope, Federal Commissioner for Labor; Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, Federal Commissioner for Petroleum; Major-Gen. Shuwa, Federal Commissioner for Trade; Gen. Mohammed Magoro, Federal Commissioner of Transport; Gen. Theophilus Danjuma, Chief of Army Staff; Gen. Joseph Garba, Federal Commissioner for External Affairs; Air Vice Marshal Mouktar Mohammed, Federal Commissioner of Housing and Urban Development; Lt. Col. A. A. Ali, Federal Commissioner for Education. Also, Chief Ajose Adeogun, served as the Federal Commissioner for Special Duties and others.

The participatory development elite designed the socioeconomic programs and engaged critical segments of the elite population in the development agenda of the government. During Obasanjo's administration, the participatory development elite constituted a small minority of top military brass described by Wong, Bliesey, and McGurk<sup>15</sup> as system level leaders that often operate in the general environment, which consists of socio-economic, educational, legal, political and cultural aspects of a society. Additionally, the civilian segment of participatory

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<sup>15</sup> Wong, L., Bliese, P., & McGurk, D. (2003). Military Leadership: A Context Specific Review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14(6), 657-692.

development elite included economic and state policy-planning elite that held the power to influence the direction of the nation's economic development. Participatory development involves a deliberate planning, control and direction of the economy by an amalgam of central military and civilian authority for the purpose of achieving the socio-economic objectives in society. Gen. Obasanjo's participatory development elite approached the management of Nigeria's economy through the implementation of the Third National Development Plan. It must be emphasized that the enactment of the Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree in 1977 (indigenization policy) by Obasanjo was a premeditated legal instrument to deepen the participation of Nigerians, especially the top military brass, top public technocrats and their trustees in private business sector, in the investment and running of the economy, including the corporate governance direction of the nation's business.

The participatory development elite systematically used the Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree in 1977 to penetrate boardrooms of many corporate organizations hitherto controlled by some foreign interests. The primary objectives of the participatory development elite in enacting this policy were to create opportunities for Nigerian indigenous businesspeople, maximize retention of profits in Nigeria, and raise the level of capital and goods production in the country. The economic elite working in tandem with the top military and political elite used the policy as a strategic intervention in the corporate sector to prevent foreign monopoly of the commanding heights of the nation's economy. It limits the participation of foreigners in some productive sectors of the corporate economy, thereby opening opportunities for Nigerians to participate in the ownership and control of some choice organizations in the banking and manufacturing industries.

Besides the corporate sector of the economy, the participatory development elite, composed of indigenous businesspeople and the senior military system level leaders, expanded agriculture to boost food production by creating the River Basin Development Authority Scheme, the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme, and the Operation Feed the Nation. They established petrochemical industries, promulgated the Land Use Decree in 1978, founded some Commodity Boards and nationalized British Petroleum, among others. Gen. Obasanjo's administration invested in iron ore and steel by establishing Aladja and Ajaokuta steel complexes; he built oil refineries at Warri and constructed the Murtala Mohammed International Airport in Lagos in April 1979. Obasanjo's participatory development elite expanded and invested in the education sector by introducing Universal Free Primary Education, created the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board in 1978 to conduct admissions into the universities, and established some universities of agriculture and research institutes.

Also, Obasanjo's political and economic elite promulgated a new national policy on education called the "6-3-3-4" system of education, designed to stimulate rapid scientific, technical and vocational education, and promoted a self-employment culture. They led a campaign against corruption by creating the Corrupt Practices Bureau, the Assets Investigation Panel, and the Public Complaints Commission, to deal with corrupt malpractices in public and private sectors. The participatory development elite pursued local government reform by creating the Local Government system as the "third tier" of government. They established the Federal Electoral Commission in October 1976 to conduct general elections and the Constitution Drafting Committee that crafted the 1979 Constitution.



On 1 October, 1979, Gen. Obasanjo successfully handed over power to a democratic government led by President Shehu Shagari amidst controversies such as allegations of electoral rigging, National Party of Nigeria (NPN) of the former President Shehu Shagari to manipulate the election results, among others. The perceived rigging of the election results led the aggrieved political party leaders such as Obafemi Awolowo of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe of the Nigerian People's Party (NPP), Aminu Kano of People's Redemption Party (PRP) and Ibrahim Wasiri of the Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP), to engage in judicial struggle against Alhaji Shehu Shagari's National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in order to invalidate his victory in the Supreme Court. However, the bane of his socio-economic programs was poor implementation, over reliance on the petroleum economy, neglect of the traditional agricultural exports, high importation of food, the promotion of import-substitution, the auto assembling plants and the use of experts in the economy. Also, there was the rising menace of corruption in high places, which made his anticorruption campaign a mere window dressing. Additionally, Gen Obasanjo's insensitivity and misreading of the academia led him to increase students feeding fees, which sparked violent riots across some universities in 1978. In response, some anti-riot military personnel were drafted to quell the riots; in the mayhem Akintunde Ojo was shot dead at the University of Lagos and about nine other students killed in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This led to the popular "Ali Must Go", a call for the resignation of Col. Ahmadu Ali, then federal commissioner for education; this event eroded the credibility of Gen. Obasanjo's government.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Extracted from *Military Intervention in the Nigerian Politics and Its Impact on the Development of Managerial Elite* by Olusoji James George, Olusanmi C. Amujo, Nelarine Cornelius in 2012

## THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER MILITARY TRANSITIONING (1983-1993)

For about five years, there was a lull and as the Military retreated to the barracks, politicians had a field day. Tainted by corruption, and political thuggery, politicians provided the excuse and the Military grabbed the chance and bounced back. By December 31, 1983, the second Republic fell, (Awofeso, 2002) as a coup staged by some senior officers was relatively peaceful, and successful. Heralding the charges, Brigadier Sani Abacha reeled off a litany of woes. In his inaugural address to the country, General Muhammadu Buhari, the new military ruler, justified the intervention of the military as necessary because, 'the last general elections were anything but free and fair.' Citing evidence of widespread political thuggery and discontent, he declared that 'the intervention of the armed forces was to arrest the imminent catastrophe which would have been the inevitable result of the course being charted by the politicians'.<sup>17</sup> According to him, unemployment was high, infrastructure had collapsed, hospitals became "mere consulting clinic". In spite of this, he lamented, politicians lavish in squander-Mania and to hold the drift, they sacked the inept government of Shagari. (Falola 1985).

The Buhari administration was overthrown by another general on 27 August 1985, even before it had the opportunity to announce a program of transition to civil rule. It is note-worthy, however, that three weeks before it was overthrown, the Buhari regime announced a six-member judicial inquiry into the defunct FEDECO headed by a Justice of the Nigerian Supreme Court.<sup>18</sup> The commission was given a thirteen-point terms of

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<sup>17</sup> Muhammadu Buhari, *Moment of Truth: Collected speeches*. (Lagos: Federal Government Printer, 1984): 8, 20-21.

<sup>18</sup> The commission was headed by Justice B.O. Babalakin.

reference which required it to, among other things ‘determine the causes of the failings, abuses and shortcomings which characterized the electoral processes... and to identify the persons responsible for them.’<sup>19</sup>

In an early morning broadcast announcing the sacking of the Buhari regime on 27 August 1985, Brigadier Joshua Dogonyaro alleged that ‘the government had started to drift’ and that ‘the initial objectives and programs of action which were meant to be implemented since the ascension to power of the Buhari administration... have been betrayed and discarded.’(Olatunji et al 1993) Later, on the same day, Major-General Ibrahim Babangida, until then the Chief of Army Staff under the Buhari regime, announced himself as the first military ‘President’ of Nigeria.<sup>20</sup>

In his Independence Day anniversary broadcast to the country on 1 October 1985, General Babangida indicated that he would release a political program in 1986. In the first substantial indication of the political program of the regime in December 1985, General Babangida promised that:

... there is no doubt that this country will go back to civilian rule. What we are trying to do is to make sure, first of all, that we create an atmosphere which will make such a transition quite easy. We will also create an atmosphere that makes these programs attainable within

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<sup>19</sup> Views of the Federal Military Government on the Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Affairs of the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) 1979-1983, in the National Electoral Commission (NEC), *Transition to Civil Rule, Laws and Materials on the Electoral Process*. (Lagos: Federal Government Printer, 1990): 314, hereafter called the Views on the Report of the Babalakin Commission.

<sup>20</sup> General Babangida was the first and, so far, the only military ruler in the history of Nigeria to rule under the designation of ‘president’. All of Nigeria’s other military rulers have been known as ‘head of state’.

*Inexistent Country*

an environment that is quite stable and geared up. In the past, we did not address our minds to this ...<sup>21</sup>

The regime inaugurated a committee of eight federal permanent secretaries (known as the Committee of Eight) on 15 November 1985 to 'study the issue of providing a political program for the country and make appropriate recommendations. In particular, the terms of reference of this Committee required it to:

1. identify the factors that have militated against the development of a stable political culture recommend guidelines for a future system of government
2. draw up a program for return to civilian rule or any system of government agreed by the people
3. make recommendations on modalities for implementing the program

Shortly afterwards, on 13 January 1986, before the Committee of Eight had concluded its work, the regime inaugurated a 17-member Political Bureau with five terms of reference to:

1. review Nigeria's political history and identify the basic problems which have led to our failure in the past
2. identify a basic philosophy of government which will determine goals and serve as a guide to the activities of government
3. collect relevant information and data for the government as well as identify other political problems that may arise from the debate

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with TIME magazine to mark 100 days in office.

4. gather, collate and evaluate the contributions of Nigerians to the search for a viable political future and provide guidelines for the attainment of consensus objectives
5. deliberate on other political problems that may be referred to it from time to time.<sup>22</sup>

The Committee of Eight submitted its report in March 1986, and identified several priority issues for the regime to address. These included economic stabilization and growth, restructuring the economy for growth, the establishment of new states, religious issues, penal reform and the judicial process, education, the national census, police and national security, the public service and language. The committee rejected the presidential system of government, suggesting instead 'a modified parliamentary system of government based on the principle of power sharing' between the army and elected civilians in which 'sensitive' portfolios such as defense, internal affairs and information, would be reserved for the military. (Olagunju et al 1993) The work of this committee has never been published.

The implementation of the transition program of General Babangida relied heavily on the force of military decrees. In contrast to the transition program of 1976-1979 which was regulated by two basic laws, General Babangida promulgated.<sup>23</sup> decrees containing a total of 1,174 sections to govern the transition program between 1986-1992. (Sagay 1993) As a result, the process of implementing these laws (and their amendments) was often confusing. The survey below only covers some of the significant transition decrees.

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<sup>22</sup> Awa U. Kalu, *The democratization of Nigeria...*,

<sup>23</sup> FROM THE NEWSWATCH (Proscription from Circulation Decree) 1987.

General Babangida's political program was promulgated in Decree no. 19 of 1987. This decree originally outlined a program of transition, scheduled to begin in the third quarter of 1987, with the establishment of a Directorate of Social Mobilization, a National Electoral Commission (NEC) and a Constitution Drafting Committee (later established as the Constitution Review Committee, CRC) in the third quarter of 1987. In addition, the program listed in six schedules, an itemized timetable of 19 other activities and measures to be implemented during the transition period. These included local government elections on a zero-party basis in the last quarter of 1987, the termination of the structural adjustment program (SAP) and the consolidation of its gains in 1988, the lifting of the ban on politics and the registration of two political parties in 1989, the inauguration of elected state governments in 1990, the conduction of a national census in 1991 and the inauguration of a new president in 1992.

The decree also established a five-member tribunal to try persons who by their actions or omissions undermined the program.<sup>24</sup> There was a right of appeal from the tribunal to a Special Appeal Tribunal<sup>25</sup> whose decision was, in turn, subject to ratification by the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC). By virtue of Section 16(1) of the decree:

... the validity of any decision, sentence, judgement, confirmation, direction, notice or order given or made, as the case may be, or any other thing whatsoever done under this decree shall not be inquired into in any court of law...

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<sup>24</sup> Section 9(1). The Transition to Civil Rule Tribunal, as it came to be known, was constituted with five persons, including a serving or retired judicial officer of any of the superior courts of record as Chairman and 'four other members of whom one shall be a serving member of the Armed Forces'

<sup>25</sup> Section 14 of the decree

This clause was described by the Court of Appeal in the case of the National Electoral Commission v. Nzeribe as ‘the most far reaching to be found in any decree since the inception of military rule in this country.’ This decree was subsequently amended at least seven times and the terminal date of the transition changed four times, eventually to 27 August 1993. By Decree no. 23 of 30 September 1987, the regime set up a 9-member National Electoral Commission (NEC) to replace the defunct FEDECO,<sup>26</sup> to be headed by a chairman who ‘shall not be less than fifty years old’. The decree originally empowered NEC to, inter alia, ‘register two political parties and determine their eligibility to sponsor candidates for any of the elections’ to be organized during the transition.

In another notable departure from the standards set by the Murtala Mohammed/Obasanjo regime, the decree failed to assure the independence of the NEC, providing instead for the military government to:

... give the commission such directives as appear to it to be just and proper for the effective discharge of the functions of the commission ...<sup>27</sup>

The NEC decree suffered two significant amendments: The National Electoral Commission (Amendment) Decree,<sup>68</sup> deprived the NEC of the power to register political parties and transferred this power to the Armed Forces Ruling Council. The decree also reduced the minimum age of the chairman of NEC to 45 years.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See National Electoral Commission Decree no. 23 of 1987.

<sup>27</sup> Section 5(1)

In December 1987, the regime successfully organized the local government elections on a zero-party basis. These elections were organized under the Local Government Elections Decree<sup>70</sup> which was later repealed by the Local Government Elections (Basic Constitutional and Transitional) Provisions Decree<sup>28</sup> which dissolved pre-existing local governments and provided for the organization of fresh local elections, this time on a party basis. This decree empowered the president to remove any elected local government official or dissolve any local government council 'if he is satisfied that the affairs of the local government are not being managed in the best interest of the community or in a way to strengthen the unity of the people of Nigeria or for any other good cause.' It was subsequently amended four times after the local elections on party basis took place on 8 December 1990.<sup>29</sup>

In pursuit of its stated objective of making a clean break with the political past, the regime prohibited certain categories of former political office holders from contesting for elective office during the transition program through the Participation in Politics and Elections (Prohibition) Decree of 1987<sup>30</sup> which was subsequently amended at least four times. Among those excluded from the politics of the transition period by the decree were persons who held political offices at the federal or state levels in the civilian governments between 1960 and 1966, and 1979 and 1983, as well as former or serving state military governors or administrators, service chiefs in the armed forces and the police, including

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<sup>28</sup> Decree No. 15 of 17 May 1989. Also later amended by the Local Government (Basic Constitutional and Transitional Provisions) (Amendment) Decree no. 28 of 1989.

<sup>29</sup> By Decree nos. 14, 20, 23 and 63 of 1991.

<sup>30</sup> Decree no. 25 of 1987.



former military heads of state and the serving president. Also banned were persons who either collectively or individually, have been liable or indicted and found guilty of acts of unjust enrichment, corruption, fraud, embezzlement of public funds, election malpractices or contributed in one way or the other to the economic adversity of the nation and such persons who exercised corrupt influence on public office holders'. The decree further banned persons in both the private and the public sectors who were dismissed from office or employment between 1 October 1960 and the end of the transition period. It equally applied to<sup>31</sup> persons 'whose political activities during the transition period are necessary to be curtailed for the purpose of ensuring a clean break with the past'. Justifying these measures in October 1988, General Babangida claimed that:

...we have not chosen and have not sought to choose those who will succeed us. We have only decided on those who will not. We also have no vested interest in who succeeds our successors ... We are also resolved that we will not be succeeded by extremists ... We do not believe that anything but the good of this country will come out of the decision to exclude them.<sup>32</sup>

The minimum age for participation in transition politics was put at 18.80 The regime also constituted a Constitution Review Committee in 1987, and in April 1988, set up a Constituent Assembly to deliberate upon the work of the CRC. The CA completed its work in May 1989.<sup>81</sup> Like similar bodies which were set up under the Obasanjo regime,

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<sup>31</sup> Participation in Politics and Elections (Miscellaneous Provisions) Decree no. 48 of 1991.

<sup>32</sup> See, Chukwuemeka Gahia, HUMAN RIGHTS IN RETREAT: A REPORT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF THE MILITARY REGIME OF GENERAL IBRAHIM BABANGIDA. (Lagos: Civil Liberties Organization, 1990): 66-70.

the final decision on the contents of the constitution lay with the Armed Forces Ruling Council.

In December 1989, after it had refused to recognize any of the six political associations recommended to it for registration by NEC, the regime promulgated decrees to set up and regulate the operations of the two political parties, the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the latter being 'a little to the left' and the former 'a little to the right' of the ideological spectrum.

The original political program announced by the regime in Decree no. 19 of 1987 was silent on the issue of creation of states on which both the Political Bureau and the Committee of Eight had reported favorably. In particular, the report of the Politburo stated that:

New states require time and organization to enable them participate meaningfully in the other transition processes leading to the withdrawal of the military from governance ... It is estimated that the above process should require a minimum of three years. Accordingly, it is recommended that the proposed new states be created by the middle of 1987.<sup>33</sup>

In August 1987, the regime announced the creation of two new states, a step that it legalized shortly afterwards in September of the same year.<sup>85</sup> Subsequently, in August 1991, a few months before the elections into the state and federal legislative, as well as state executive offices, the regime created nine new states and 47 local governments bringing the number of states and local government areas in the country to 30 and 593

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<sup>33</sup> Civil Liberties Organization (CLO). *An endangered transition. CAMPAIGN FOR DEMOCRACY BULLETIN* (no. 2, September 1991): 5

respectively. The state and federal legislative elections duly took place in December 1991 and the newly elected officials were inaugurated on 2 January 1992.<sup>34</sup> This set the stage for the last phase of the transition program which was to be regulated by the Presidential Election (Basic Constitutional and Transitional Provisions Decree<sup>35</sup> of 1993). For the selection of their presidential candidates, this decree required the parties to organize party primaries from the ward to the national level. Both parties made two initial attempts to choose their presidential candidates but, on each occasion, the primaries were cancelled after widespread allegations of irregularities. After the second attempt, the regime rejected the outcome of the primaries and also dissolved all party structures around the country, appointing caretaker committees to run the parties instead. It also disqualified all aspirants who had participated in the previous primaries from contesting any further elections during the transition program.<sup>36</sup> The presidential elections took place on 12 June 1993. However, while the results were being collated and announced by NEC, the regime stopped NEC from continuing the collation or announcing any winner. Then on 23 June 1993, Babangida annulled the elections. On the same day, he issued four decrees, one of which repealed the Presidential Elections (Basic Constitutional and Transitional Provisions) Decree and effectively terminated the transition process.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> National Assembly (Basic Constitutional and Transitional Provisions) Decree no. 53 of 1992.

<sup>35</sup> No. 13 of 26 February 1993.

<sup>36</sup> Transition to Civil Rule (Disqualification and Prohibition of Certain Presidential Aspirants) Decree no. 54 of 1993. Following the annulment of the presidential election, this decree was repealed on 26 June 1993 by the Transition to Civil Rule (Disqualification and Prohibition of Certain Presidential Aspirants) (Repeal) Decree no. 42.

<sup>37</sup> B.O. Nwabueze, *NIGERIA 93: THE POLITICAL CRISIS AND SOLUTIONS*. (Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 1994): 38-54.

The annulment of the elections plunged the country into a political crisis. *In the case of Attorney-General of Anambra State & 13 Others v. Attorney-General of the Federation & 16 Others*,<sup>133</sup> 14 states of the federation-initiated proceedings before the Supreme Court of Nigeria, seeking to nullify the annulment and compel the regime to complete the transition by declaring the final results of the presidential elections. In its decision delivered on 13 September 1993, the Supreme Court declined jurisdiction to hear the suit holding that by virtue of the monolithic command structure of the military, the states could not sue the federal government under a military regime!

Meanwhile, General Babangida announced on 18 August 1993 that he would be 'stepping aside' on 26 August, on which date, an Interim National Government (ING) was to be constituted. On 26 August 1993, General Babangida purportedly issued four decrees including the Decree no. 59<sup>38</sup> which formally terminated his regime and Decree no. 61<sup>39</sup> formally constituting the Interim National Government (ING). This was the background to the case of *Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola & Another v. National Electoral Commission & Another* in which the winner of the presidential elections of 1993 challenged the legality of the ING. In its decision given on 10 November 1993, the High Court of Lagos held that having terminated his regime through Decree no. 59, 'President Babangida lacked legislative competence when he signed' Decree no. 61 constituting the ING which was, therefore, illegal and void. Seven days later, on 17 November 1993, the head of the ING, Chief Ernest Shonekan allegedly resigned, enabling General Sani Abacha, then the Defense Minister and

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<sup>38</sup> Constitution (Suspension and Modification) (Repeal) Decree no. 59 of 1993.

<sup>39</sup> Interim Government (Basic Constitutional Provisions) Decree no 61 of 1993.

Vice-Chairman of the Interim National Government, to sack the ING and become Nigeria's seventh military ruler. (Olarenwaju 1992)

## THE LAST MILITARY REGIM (1993-1998)

On 17 November 1993, General Sani Abacha, Minister of Defence and Chief of Army Staff since 1985, took power through a coup. Systematic violations of human rights, complacency towards drug trafficking and systematic corruption at all levels, isolated Nigeria from the international community. Nigeria was notably excluded from the Commonwealth on 8 November 1995, following the hanging of eight opposition members, among whom the activist Ken Saro-Wiva. Nigeria had long been plagued by corruption, but under General Sani Abacha, corrupt practices became blatant and systematic. Funds were removed in cash from the Central Bank, sometimes by the truckload, and taken out of the country by members of the Abacha family and their associates. Inflated public contracts were also awarded to members of the Abacha family and/or their associates. Although many were aware at the time of the exceptional level of corruption of the Abacha regime,<sup>40</sup> the full extent of the practice and the modus operandi of those crimes were only revealed to the general public after the end of the dictatorship and the investigations that followed.

Abacha, his cronies and his family ran an extensive corruption business that has all the looks of the Italian La Costra Mafia. His cravings for political power was matched only by a greed that often bordered on the bizarre and macabre. Under Abacha in order to perpetuate corruption, state apparatus was relegated into the background and they lost autonomy. Key ministries like petroleum, sold minerals, fiancé, works and housing,

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<sup>40</sup> Corruption Flourished in Abacha's Regime, Washington Post, 9 June 1998 reported by James Rupert

transport, industries and parastatals operated under the nose of the Abacha presidency. Ministers were utterly powerless if they did not join the fraud roller coaster'. By this time Abacha's three eldest children were already into the family business, in what seemed like a chapter straight out of Indonesia's Suharto's corruption guide book. As President of Indonesia, Suharto helped his family build an extensive business empire based on government contracts and patronage. As Head of Nigeria's Military junta, while it lasted those who wanted a taste of Nigeria's rich pudding only had to tap on Abacha to succeed.

Abacha's late son Ibrahim provided contracts for many. Until he died in a plane crash in 1996, Ibrahim was evidently Abacha's business arrowhead handling discussion with the many contractors that bombarded Aso Rock. He also had another role: the channeling of family investments. When Ibrahim died, these roles devolved on Mohammed (currently facing murder charges) and so some extent, Zainab the third child and first daughter. The children had no clear-cut corporate roles. What mattered was making in cash at whatever cost to both treasury and country. And the deal looked pretty easy. They faced stealing, it was subcontracting, over invoicing, importation and beer faced stealing. It was fraud incorporated. Through a well-engineered scheme Abacha successfully crippled the Nigerian economy in order to make for his family and cronies.

By the time the late dictator died the "Times" of London reported that he and his family were worth some 3.5 billion pounds sterling or \$5.6 billion<sup>41</sup>. This is just about a little less than the total value of Nigeria external reserve put at \$7 billion last year but which

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<sup>41</sup> Tell magazine, May 17 1990 (p.21)

sources say had been dipped into to make for a shortfall in oil revenue expectations due to reduced oil price. Sources hint that the Abacha family may indeed be worth about \$8 billion or more. At this Abacha, in under 5 years as Nigeria's maximum ruler, bested the worst of Africa's tribe of thieving dictators Mobutu Sere Seko who ate the height of his 3 decades' rule, had the unique record of having lent part of his loot back to his country. Mobutu was worth a mere \$ 3.5 billion according to a French magazine "*Levenement du Jeudi*".<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Extracted from the journal; Corruption and Military Rule in Nigeria

## CHAPTER 8

### THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR AND PERMANENT CONSEQUENCES

In 1967, Nigeria was embroiled in a civil war as a result of some irreconcilable differences between some political actors. This war is the aftermath of the sum total of Nigeria's political history and not an isolated event or single crisis that constituted it. The war was between the Federal Government of Nigeria led by Major Yakubu Gowon and those of the Eastern Region known as the Biafrans led by Lt. Col. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. The war lasted for 30 months; it started from the 6th of July, 1967 and ended on the 12th of July, 1970 when the Biafran soldiers surrendered unconditionally. This war was very devastating, many social amenities and infrastructural facilities were destroyed, and the loss of human lives was very high on the side of the Biafrans who's Eastern Region was the major war zone. Besides, the Nigerians that took part in this war, there were other foreign countries within and outside Africa that either participated covertly or overtly in supporting the belligerents.<sup>43</sup>

### EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIA WAR

Prior to 1914, there was no definite geographical or political entity called Nigeria. The popular belief had been that Flora Shaw, the colonial correspondent of the Time of London and who later married Lord Lugard suggested to her husband in 1898 that the many British protectorates on the Niger be known collectively as Nigeria. Obi (1976) has however argued that the name had been used by William Cole as early as 1859 to describe

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<sup>43</sup> Extracted from "The Nigerian Civil War: A Historical Interpretation" by Onuoha Chidiebere (2016)



the people and territory on the Niger. William Cole himself was a member of the 1859-1860 expedition on the Niger led by Dr. W.B.Baikie.

Although the Nigerian nation formally came into existence on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1914, the entire territory which came to be known as Nigeria consist of over 250 ethnic groups, prominent of which were the “Igbos”, “Hausas”, “Yorubas”, “Fulanis”, “Kanuris”, “Igallas”, “Tivs”, “Edos”, “Ijaws” and so on, each with its ethnic ties. The Igbos constitute the dominant ethnic group in the Southern-Eastern Nigeria. Today, the Igbos locates mainly in Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo States, reasonable percentage of Igbo people also live in delta and rivers states. The Igbo people have two main traditions of origin while one claims that that the Igbos were created where we now find them, the other traces the original homeland to the people of Israel.

The Eri tradition of Igbo origin claims that Chukwu, the Igbo high God, created the first Igbo man along Anambra river basin at Aguleri, from there, waves of Igbo people migrated to settle in different parts of Southern-Eastern Nigeria and beyond. Another origin of the Igbo people tried to link the Igbo people with the people of Israel. Reverend G.T. Basden of the Anglican Church who propounded this theory claims that the word Igbo is a corruption of the word Hebrew. He claimed that the Igbos is one of the lost tribes of Israel. According to him, Igbo and Hebrew customs share a lot of similarities. Major occupation includes farming for example: Cultivation of yams, cocoyam, cassava, palm oil and kernel, rice, vegetables. It also included arts and crafts for example, Basket making, mat making, carving, blacksmithing and trading. Many gods were worshipped among the people before the Christian era.

Today, most Igbo people have become Christians. A small percentage still worships other gods. Islam has no hold in Igbo land (Ibezim, 1994). In the light of this, one could understand that our problem started immediately after the amalgamation of northern and southern protectorates of 1914. This is because the country is made up of different peoples and tribes who have strong intra-ethnic loyalties, tribal sentiments, different cultural background and languages thus resulting to hatred which gave rise to compound counter coups in this country after its six years of independence which eventually culminated into a bloody civil war from 1967-1970. It was a full-scale war wanton destruction of life and property. Some of its outcomes were general while others were particular.

The remote cause of the war lay in the amalgamation of the 1914, the three regional structures of 1946 Richards constitution for Nigeria which granted greater autonomy to regions. After independence in 1960, Nigeria had been widely considered one of sub-Saharan Africa's most promising postcolonial states. The potential for development seemed boundless in the democracy of roughly 45 million people, where large amounts of high-quality oil reserves had been discovered shortly before the end of colonial rule.(Crowder 2009) Two British legacies, however, combined to impair the evolution of a stable political system and social relations; colonial rule divided the population along ethnic lines, but incorporated the groups thus defined in a centrally governed federal state.<sup>44</sup> The territorial and ethnic borders that marked Nigerian colonial society were still in place when the country achieved independence. Established as a

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<sup>44</sup> On the colonial construction of ethnicity in Nigeria, adapted from Philip S. Zachernuk, 'Of origins and colonial order: southern Nigerian historians and the "hamitic hypothesis", c. 1870-1970', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 35, 1994, pp. 427-455.

federal state, postcolonial Nigeria was split into three main regions, each dominated by one or two ethnic groups: Hausa-Fulani in the north, Yoruba in the west, and Igbos in the east. Hundreds of other ethnic minorities of different size made up the rest of the population. In 1963, the federation was separated into four states when the multi-ethnic Midwestern State was carved out of parts of the Western Region. Partly parallel with these political borders, what many perceived as a religious divide cut through the territory: the south was predominantly Christian, whereas the north was widely Islamic dominated.<sup>45</sup>

The optimism of decolonization had begun to crumble by the mid-1960s. Paradoxically, the growing participatory options for the population weakened the postcolonial democracy. At the regional level, a system of patronage was created along ethnic lines. At the national level, the three 'mega-tribes' competed for state resources that had become increasingly lucrative thanks to the revenues from oil and other commodities. (Peel 1989) A deepening rift severed the north and the southern regions. The Eastern Region, geographically in the country's southeast, was increasingly isolated in particular. In all region's politicians feared the possible domination of their counterparts from other parts of the country. Federal and national elections developed into fiercely fought battles for power; ballot rigging and other forms of manipulation were omnipresent. (Crowder 2009)

The immediate causes could be found in the same counter coup that brought in then Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon in 1966. When general Ironsi was killed and Lt. Col. Gowon who was not the most senior army officer took over instead of Brigadier Ogundipe who

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<sup>45</sup> James S. Coleman, *Nigeria: background to nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963 [1958])

was next in command to Ironsi, Lt. Col. Ojukwu viewed it as a slight and as a result, Ojukwu was not ready to take orders from Gowon whom he saw as a military mate and therefore did not recognize his leadership. Ojukwu equally saw Gowon as a symbol of Northern domination which was considered as a threat to the very existence of the Igbos. Ojukwu felt that the solution to this problem was not to remove Gowon from the position but the best alternative would be to break up from the country.

According to Ekpu (1990), he said that while politics is the beginning of war, war is often the conclusion of politics. The Biafran war was as it were, the conclusion of a bitter political muscle-flexing between the federal government led by the Sandhurst-trained young head of state, Yakubu Gowon and the Eastern Nigeria government led by Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, the Oxford educated bearded historian soldier of aristocratic background. Throughout the period in 1966, Northern Speeches and writing revealed a steadily growing hatred of the easterners in their midst. This growing hatred and dislike later developed into many massacres of easterners' residents in the northern part of Nigeria in September 1966. The increasing massacres and insecurity of the lives of Igbos brought further influx of Igbo refugees into eastern Nigeria in pathetic and shocking conditions. Uncountable large number of Igbos corpses was brought back, others lucky enough were merely amputated or disabled. Women were raped and some pregnant ones had to be disemboweled. Eastern soldiers in Lagos and elsewhere flew home either naked or in underpants. However, Ojukwu tried some conciliatory processes. He attempted many peace conferences in order to find solution to the problems. He even attended the "Aburi conference" which the non-implementation of its accord gave rise to the war. Let us take a look at the Conference and its aftermath.

## THE ABURI MEETING AND ITS AFTERMATH

The killing of September/October 1966 of Ibos in the North made further meetings of the Ad Hoc Constitutional Committee impossible. Nigeria's official version from Lagos stated that the killings were in retaliation for Ibos attacks on Northerners in the East, but a detailed investigation of this claim has produced no evidence or substance in its support which shows it to be ill-founded (First 1980). The killings of Easterners which figures were given as 30,000 and 50,000 respectively at various times by the Eastern Military Government and later the Republic of Biafra were also put at 7,000 by the British Government in 1969 in its publication outlining the Federal Nigeria cause (Cronje 1972). Ademoyega<sup>46</sup> noted that this one singular act, the "...September-October massacre staged throughout the Northern Region and directed in the main against the Ibos, made the Civil War inevitable".

The foregoing made the relations between the Eastern Region and the Federal Government under the dominance of the Northern Regional Military Officers deteriorated rapidly, however, a last-minute attempt to salvage the situation resulted in a meeting of Nigeria's military rulers in Aburi, Ghana at the beginning of January 1967. The fixing of the Supreme Military Council's meeting in Aburi was due largely to the fears by Ojukwu, the Military Governor of Eastern Region that he would be in danger elsewhere in Nigeria

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<sup>46</sup> Ademoyega, A. *Why We Struck: The Story of the First Nigerian Coup* (Ibadan: Evans Brothers Nigeria Publishers Ltd. 1981). Page 131

(Nafziger 1983)<sup>47</sup>. However, the outcome of Aburi seemed to place Lagos on the defensive. Hence Stremlau<sup>48</sup> (1977) stated thus:

“Anyone who had read (either the Federal or Eastern text of) the highly controversial Aburi transcript cannot deny that Gowon was immediately put on the defensive by his adversary from the East who, through careful preparation and quick wit, extracted a series of apparent concessions that could be construed as leaving Nigeria without a central government.”

In Aburi, Eastern Regional Government’s proposals were all nearly accepted by Gowon and others all of which seemed reasonable enough on their face value. For the East, a cooling off period to allow tempers and indeed tensions to calm down was essential. A defacto separation of the army was agreed as it was felt that Eastern troops could no longer live in the same barracks with their Northern counterparts. Ojukwu also refused to accept Gowon as the Supreme Commander, as successor to Ironsi as such the Aburi Accord accepted his down-grading to Commander-in-Chief and Head of the Federal Military Government. Furthermore, apart from controlling their internal affairs, the concurrence of each region was now required for any major decision affecting the country as a whole. This, in effect, gave each region the power of veto over a host of crucial subjects ranging from the declaring of war on an outside power and the signing of treaties to the appointment of senior military and police officers, federal civil servants and ambassadors. The complex detailed and difficult task of squaring the Aburi in accordance with the pre-

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<sup>47</sup> Page 44

<sup>48</sup> Page 46

January 1966 constitution, which was to remain in force, was left to the law officers and civil servants to work out. Meanwhile, to placate the West, it was agreed that massive recruitment of Yorubas into the military should begin and the Ibo civil servants who had fled to the East would continue to be paid from federal funds until March 31, the end of the financial year. Aburi amounted to a defacto confederation, though no one on the federal side at the negotiation table appeared to realize it at the time (Jorre 1977).<sup>49</sup>

Ojukwu was at his best at Aburi as he was able to wrung from Gowon and his Northern controlled Federal Military Government much opportunity which gave him ample room to maneuver in the future. He could either move back towards the federation or away from it and would still be within the letter, if not the spirit, of the agreement. For Gowon, Aburi was a complete negation of the strong policy lines he had discerned in his speech on 30 November, 1966. The Aburi Accord never mentioned the creation of states which Gowon's 30 November speech envisaged and confederation which was one of the high marks in that speech was overwhelmingly renounced on the first day of the meeting on January 4, 1967. Ojukwu's success at Aburi was a pointer to the fact that Gowon had underestimated both the mood and strength of the secessionist forces in the East and the determination of the pro-federalist forces (Jorre 1977)<sup>50</sup> The proceedings of Aburi were published by both Lagos and Enugu which differed in no essential aspects. However, the agreement was not implemented. The Federal Decree which was supposed to embody the Aburi decision contained provision for declaring a state of emergency in any region with the consent of Lagos and the three other regions whereas it had been agreed in Aburi that

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<sup>49</sup> Pages 94-5

<sup>50</sup> Pages 95-6

decisions affecting the country as a whole would require the concurrence of all military governors as such Enugu refused to recognize the decree. Tensions rose sharply again between Lagos and Enugu over the non-implementation of the Aburi Accord by Gowon's Northern Controlled Federal Military Government.

Ojukwu refused to attend any further meetings of the Supreme Military Council outside the borders of the East as long as Northern troops remained in control of Lagos and Western Region: their presence, he maintained constituted a threat to the lives of Easterners. In this matter, Ojukwu had support of Colonel Adebayo, Western Nigeria's Military Governor and Chief Awolowo, the Yoruba leader, who complained that the presence of the Northern "army of occupation" had virtually turned Lagos and the West into a protectorate (Cronje 1972)<sup>51</sup>. However, these discordant notes from the West would soon be drowned in self-interests or the "instrumentalities of survival' by both the Governor and Chief Awolowo himself and the Western Regional landed/comprador bourgeoisie. Events moved in quick succession as such Ojukwu declared in February 1967 that further acts of the Federal Government would be regarded as illegal by the East, since he contended that the East was ignored and by-passed in the agreements at Aburi. The East which had previously held Northern produce sent to Port Harcourt for export and railway rolling stock, on April 1, 1967 seized a portion of the federal revenues collected within the region, citing alleged delays in payment of their share of the pool and of salaries to Eastern refugees in federal employment. The Gowon Government retaliated by suspending certain services and imposing increased restrictions on converting

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<sup>51</sup> Page 19



international currency in the Eastern Region. Events further escalated pushing Nigeria rapidly down the precipice to the brinks of total collapse (Nafziger 1983).<sup>52</sup>

## THE MOVE TOWARDS SECESSION AND ITS DECLARATION

Prior to the meeting of the Eastern Region's Consultative Assembly on May 26, 1967 were the seizure by the Enugu Government of an Aircraft of the Nigerian Airways, purchase of 6-million-pound sterling, taking over of all federal statutory bodies. It also authorized its marketing board to enter into direct contacts with foreign buyers, abolishing appeals to the Federal Supreme Court and calling all Easterners serving in federal police and navy to return which led to additional economic sanctions, including a limited embargo against the East (Nafziger 1983)<sup>53</sup>. On May 26, 1967, the Eastern Region's Consultative Assembly began a meeting that gave the military governor the mandate for secession late on 27th May. Anticipating the mandate, Gowon proclaimed earlier that same day a state of emergency and equally decreed the creation of twelve states from the previous four regions and federal territory (Greene 1971)<sup>54</sup>, (Nafziger 1983)<sup>55</sup>. In the creation of the new states, five major principles were expressed namely:<sup>56</sup>

1. No one should be in a position to dominate or control the central government

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<sup>52</sup> Pages 44-5

<sup>53</sup> Page 45

<sup>54</sup> Page 414

<sup>55</sup> Page 45

<sup>56</sup> Brad Simpson, 'The Biafran secession and the limits of self-determination

*Inexistent Country*

2. Each state should form one compact geographical area
3. Administrative convenience should take into account the history and wishes of the people.
4. Each state should be in a position to discharge effectively the functions allocated to the regional governments.
5. The new states should be created simultaneously.

The creation of the new states was considered by the East to have violated the Aburi Accord for greater regional autonomy. Thus, the Eastern leaders moved on May 30, 1967 to protect their regional hegemony by declaring the East the independent Republic of Biafra (Ademoyega 1981).

The declaration of secession thus threatened the interests of the dominant comprador classes made up of the politicians, the ethnic/community leaders, high ranking military leaders already half decimated, senior civil servants and the minority communities whose interest coincided with a strong central government. The Western Region, contrary to its indications early in May by its Consultative Assembly and its leading spokesman, Chief Awolowo (freed from prison in 1966) remained in the federation, where the region's economic interests lay. Although Ibos held fewer posts in the federal civil service than Yorubas, the Ibos provided strong competition for certain positions and here was a chance for Westerners to make gains at the Centre by supporting the federal cause against Eastern secession (Dudley 1973). The appointment of Awolowo to be the top civilian in the government, Deputy Chairman of the newly created Federal Executive Council, and as the Finance Commissioner and the Biafra attack on Lagos were some of the important factors

in the West's decision to opt for the federal side (Dudley 1979)<sup>57</sup>. and here was a chance for Westerners to make gains at the Centre by supporting the federal cause against Eastern secession (Nafziger 1983<sup>58</sup>; Dudley 1973). The appointment of Awolowo to be the top civilian in the government, Deputy Chairman of the newly created Federal Executive Council, and as the Finance Commissioner and the Biafra attack on Lagos were some of the important factors in the West's decision to opt for the federal side (Nafziger 1983).

In Momoh (ed.) (2000)<sup>59</sup> on "The Nigerian Civil War", it was attributed to Major General J.J. Oluleye (rtd) that one of the reasons for the retention of Northern troops in the West despite initial protest was Colonel R.A. Adebayo's fear of some officers of Western or Yoruba origin at Ibadan at the time. The Military Governor of the then Western state was afraid of such elements as possible threat or his overthrow. Another of such according to the same source was the growing realization that the country should not be left to disintegrate: hence the deliberate refusal to take concrete action to move Northern troops from the West. The turncoat federalists who were openly in favor of secession had suddenly changed. The British High Commissioner to Nigeria at the time was said to have prevailed on Gowon to ensure that Nigeria did not break up (Momoh ed. 2000)<sup>60</sup>. Colonel R.A. Adebayo like Awolowo and the Western ruling comprador class seemed to be pleased

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<sup>57</sup> Pages 106-9

<sup>58</sup> Page 45

<sup>59</sup> Page 46

<sup>60</sup> Page 46

with the development for his personal interest and that of the West Regional dominant rentier/landed class hence the status was accepted and maintained.

The tensions deepened and many Igbo people in the north began to flee and returned to the east where their ethnicity was predominant as they believed that their safety in the north of Nigeria could no longer be guaranteed. They were forced to leave their homes and their jobs as a result of the violence they were experiencing. The Igbo people were aggrieved as they were denied their basic human needs of equality, citizenship, autonomy and freedom<sup>61</sup> as no one was held responsible for the pogroms in the North where over 30,000 Igbo people including military officers that were based in the north were systematically and ethnically cleansed.<sup>62</sup> In addition, the government did not put in any efforts to address the violence against the Igbo people and the difficulties which the Eastern Region was facing regarding settling those seeking refuge. This further resulted in anger and tension between the federal government and the Eastern Region and subsequent calls in the East for independence.

The Eastern Region under the leadership of Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu who was the then military governor of the region began threatening secession. Efforts were made to restore unity in the country as the people from the eastern region made real attempts to make the Federation of Nigeria a workable political community and it was only when

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<sup>61</sup> S. Elizabeth Bird and Fraser Ottanelli, 'The Asaba massacre and the Nigerian civil war: reclaiming hidden history'

<sup>62</sup> Heerten, 'Spectacles of suffering', esp. chs. 3 and 5; Nicholas Ibeawuchi Omenka, 'Blaming the gods: Christian religious propaganda in the Nigeria-Biafra war', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 51, 2010, pp. 367– 389;

these attempts had been unsuccessful that the right of secession was asserted.<sup>63</sup> The act of secession on the part of the Igbo was asserted in terms of a right to self-determination. The Eastern Region consultative assembly voted to secede from Nigeria and on the 30th of May 1967 with Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu, citing a range of violent acts directed at the Igbos and electoral fraud, he proclaimed the secession of the Eastern region from Nigeria and declared the independence of the Republic of Biafra.<sup>64</sup> The Republic of Biafra took its name from the Bight of Biafra (also known as the Bight of Bonny), which is a bay of the Atlantic Ocean. The people of Biafra consisted of the Igbos (Aba, Abakaliki, Awka, Enugu-the capital, Onitsha and Owerri) and other Ethnic minorities (Calabar, Ikom, Ogoja, Ogoja, Port Harcourt, Uyo and Yenogoa). This act confirms the arguments of Allen Buchaman<sup>65</sup> as he states that the right to secede is a remedial right and a group should only be allowed to secede if it faces persistent violation of human rights or had been previously free. (Ogunsanwo (1974).

## FUELING THE CIVIL WAR

At independence in 1960, Nigeria had only the Army and Navy and the Air-force later came on stream by 1964. By October 1, 1960 the Nigerian Army had about 7,500 men

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<sup>63</sup> Stremlau, *International politics*, ch. 8.

<sup>64</sup> Stremlau, *International politics*, pp. 127–141 and 224–235.

<sup>65</sup> On the French government's role, see Jean-Pierre Bat, *Le syndrome Foccart: La politique française en Afrique, de 1959 à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard, 2012), pp. 295–303

and about 50 Nigerian officers while the British officers who controlled the Army stood at 228 as at January 1960 (Momoh (ed.) 2000<sup>66</sup>; Okodaso 1992<sup>67</sup>). From 1960 to than 5%. Most of this increase was made up of the formation of a number of small units such as two artillery batteries, additional recede squadron, a Federal Guards Company and so on (Okodaso. 1992<sup>68</sup>; Momoh (ed) 2000<sup>69</sup>). Before the Nigerian Army split into two in 1966 it had risen to about 10,000 men and officers. After the July 29, 1966 coup and the exodus of officers and soldiers of Eastern origin, particularly the Ibos to their region the size of the Nigerian Army fell to about 7,000 men (Momoh (ed.) 2000<sup>70</sup>)

The military power of both sides was limited because of a lack of funds, personnel, discipline and education. The federal army was still better equipped even though the secessionist forces comprised a large part of the former Nigerian officer corps, which had been dominated by Igbo.(Pradeep, 2013) Despite a number of spectacular offensives from both sides, for the most part the military situation was a stalemate.<sup>71</sup> The Federal Military Government's major strategic advantage was not its military force, but its diplomatic status: internationally recognized statehood. That the Federal Military Government could argue that it was a sovereign government facing an 'insurgency' was decisive. Foreign governments, in particular most of those organized in the Organization of African Unity

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<sup>66</sup> Page 53

<sup>67</sup> Page 113

<sup>68</sup> Page 115

<sup>69</sup> Page 53

<sup>70</sup> Page 45

<sup>71</sup>Stremlau, International politics, pp. 69–73.

(OAU), considered the conflict an internal matter. The regional organization principally responsible for mediation thus ensured that no step was taken that might be interpreted as recognizing the Biafran government. The latter, in turn, soon rejected any OAU intervention.<sup>72</sup>

Nigeria's secured diplomatic status was also crucial for the most significant development in the war's early stages: The Federal Military Government's decision to blockade the secessionist state. To cut off Biafra's lines of communication with the outside world, air and sea ports were blockaded, foreign currency transactions banned, incoming mail and telecommunication blocked and international business obstructed. Even with its limited resources, Nigeria was able to organize a successful blockade without gaping holes or long interruptions—mostly because other governments or companies were ready to acquiesce to Lagos' handling of the matter.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, as a recognized government, the Gowon regime did not meet any substantial difficulties in obtaining weapons on international markets. Due to their 'rebel' status, by contrast, the Biafrans were forced to use black market channels to buy arms. The secessionists' efforts were also hampered by Nigeria's overnight change of currency in early 1968 that rendered worthless millions of Nigerian pound notes in the Biafran treasury.<sup>74</sup>

The most important third party to the conflict was the UK. As the former colonial power, Whitehall had usually supplied the federal army with weaponry. Even so, Her

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<sup>72</sup> Gemuh E. Akuchu, 'The Organization of African Unity peacemaking machinery and the Nigerian-Biafran conflict' (PhD thesis, University of Denver, 1974);

<sup>73</sup> Stremlau, *International politics*, pp. 72–79.

<sup>74</sup> Stremlau, *International politics*, pp. 48–49, 219–223.

Majesty's Government (HMG) initially wavered in its decision about which side to support, leading the Federal Military Government to turn to the Soviet Union. Moscow, hoping to gain a foothold in a major West African state, began to supply the federal side with arms.<sup>75</sup> Now afraid of losing its influence, London began to dispatch arms deliveries.<sup>76</sup> Nigeria's oil—most of which lay within Biafran territory—played a significant role in the evolution of Whitehall's policy line. When war broke out in Nigeria, London was concerned about its oil supply as Arab states had limited their oil shipments to states supporting Israel after the Six Day War between Israel and Egypt. Despite initial leanings towards Biafra, most oil companies preferred to continue dealing with the federal government, and soon HMG followed suit, firmly opting for a federal solution, not least because it expected that this would keep the oil flowing out of Nigeria.(Nafziger 1983)<sup>77</sup> The British position also effectively determined the policy of the Cold War superpower across the Atlantic. To secure their transatlantic 'special relationship', the US government, in particular the state department, followed the British line, although it did not supply arms to the Federal Military Government.<sup>78</sup>

The beginning of the actual mobilization for the cause of Biafra began with the first conference of senior army officers which was presided over by Colonel Njoku in January 1967 at Enugu. The conference tried to find the best possible ways of establishing formally

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<sup>75</sup> Matusevich, *No easy row*, ch. 3; Matusevich, 'Ideology and pragmatism'.

<sup>76</sup> Young, *Labour governments*, 2: ch. 8.

<sup>77</sup> Pages 104-6

<sup>78</sup> Joseph E. Thompson, *American policy and African famine: the Nigeria-Biafra war, 1966–1970* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990).



the Eastern Nigeria Area Command as approved by Lagos and as such it recommended the formation of two new infantry battalions, the 7th and 8th Battalions commanded by Colonels Madiebo and Kalu respectively. The new battalions which were to be based at Nsukka and Port Harcourt were apportioned the task of the defense of the northern frontier for the 7th and 8th Battalion to defend the south with the 1 Battalion serving as a reserve force and also an additional task to taking care of the Niger Riverline to the West. A training depot was also established inside Enugu Prisons which was strategically located to prevent Lagos from knowing that recruitment and training of soldiers were going on. Equally, an Officer Cadet School was envisaged outside Enugu to be run in absolute secrecy (Momoh (ed) 2000)<sup>79</sup>. According to Madiebo (1980)<sup>80</sup>:

“There was no difficulty at all in finding recruits for the Biafra Army. Several hundreds of people turned out daily in front of the First Battalion barracks to be recruited. The majority of these were refugees who were very bitter over the treatment they had received from their fellow Nigerians and were anxious for vengeance. The rate of intake of these recruits was unfortunately very slow due to inadequacy of existing training facilities as well as acute shortage of weapons and essential administrative support. By the middle of April, 1967, the 7th and the 8 th Battalions had received sufficient small arms to go around as well as a few machine guns and were deployed in the field.”

In the preparation towards the war, all the human materials available could not be absorbed into the Biafran Army. This was due to acute shortages of weapons and the

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<sup>79</sup> Page 54

<sup>80</sup> Madeibo, A.A. *The Nigeria Revolution and Biafra War* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1980)

means to meet the personal emoluments, thus at the initial stage, the need for the militia presented itself at the outbreak of the war. The militia which had been developed at the outbreak of the war played a very crucial and important role in the Biafra's war efforts. These people who could not find their way into the Biafran Army were determined to be actively identified with the war efforts. It was for this reason that several organizations which later became known as militia, sprang up in the various Eastern provinces. In these organizations, local leaders and ex-servicemen trained young men and women in the use of whatever weapons were available, mainly imported and locally manufactured shotguns. They became very useful when the pressure from the Northern led Federal Forces mounted (Madiebo 1980<sup>81</sup>). The militia was disbanded after the fall of Port Harcourt as the pressures forced Biafra to adopt the guerilla warfare against Nigeria in addition to the conventional warfare. This led to the formation of the Biafran Organization of Freedom Fighters (BOFF) to enhance the war efforts of Biafra (Madiebo 1980<sup>82</sup>).

Furthermore, many pilots and technicians formerly of the Nigerian Air Force who returned to the East became the nucleus of the Biafran Air Force (BAF). Initially they had no planes to fly but later two old planes a B26 and a B25 were acquired together with three new helicopters. The planes were fitted with machine guns and locally made rockets and could deliver bombs also made locally. The Navy had some patrol boats and a ship, NNS Ibadan. In the course of the war, the Biafran Navy (BN) had more boats locally made; these were armor-plated, fitted with light guns and machine guns used effectively at a certain

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<sup>81</sup> Page 102

<sup>82</sup> Page 104

stage of the war (Madiebo 1980<sup>83</sup>). The pogroms of September-October 1966 and the preceding counter coup of July 29, 1966 carried out by the agents of the Northern comprador/landed class, the representatives of the feudal aristocracy created the basis for the rapid mobilization of Easterners for the war in all its ramifications. Hence all efforts were put to build a Biafran Armed Forces which by the outbreak of the war had achieved an almost equal strength in men as the Nigerian Army (Momoh (ed.) 2000<sup>84</sup>).

According St. Jorre (1977):

“The September massacres were crucial in the move to secession. They led directly to the point of no return and a factor which should never be lost sight of in the story of Biafra. For the Ibo masses-less so for the Eastern minorities-they had the same catalytic effect as the May riots had had on the top Ibo elite and the July coup on that elite’s “second division”. But the fact of the massacres alone probably would not have been enough to produce the kind of the sustained popular support that the government needed to carry the East out of the federation. It was only when their horrific details had been hammered home in a pervasive and gifted propaganda campaign over a prolonged period, reinforcing fears of mass killing and forging a solidarity unprecedented in their history, that the East was ready both to pull out and to fight for their newly won independence.”

The controversial Aburi Accord was reflected differently by both Lagos and Enugu in their post-Aburi press briefings. However, it was agreed at the Aburi Conference that the resolutions of the meeting should be embodied in a Decree to be issued by Lagos with

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<sup>83</sup> Page 102

<sup>84</sup> Page 55

the concurrence of the Military Governors. As we had noted earlier, Ojukwu had scored all his points at the meeting. According to Ademoyega (1981<sup>85</sup>):

“If Gowon were to be faithful to the resolutions, the Nigerian Civil War might have been averted. But as was usual with him, as soon as Gowon stepped down in Lagos, he gave his ears to the Federal civil servants and to his Northern masters, who advised him that he had conceded too much to Ojukwu. There and then he was prepared to dishonor his own word and break the terms of the Aburi agreement.”

The Decree 8 that was supposed to bring out the Aburi Accord, had mutilated the resolutions hence Ojukwu did not attend the Benin meeting of March 10, 1967 because he had earlier rejected the draft of that Decree which made mockery of the Aburi resolutions. The offending clauses of the Decree were sections 70 and 71 which empowered the Supreme Military Council to declare a state of emergency in Nigeria, if the Head of the Federal Military Government and at least three of the Governors agreed to do so. Section 71 also empowered the Head of the Federal Military Government in agreement with at least three of the Governors to legislate for any particular region whenever they deemed it fit during a state of emergency with or without the consent of the Governor of that particular region. In effect Gowon had bestowed powers on himself to deal with Ojukwu whenever he pleased, how he pleased and as long as he pleased (Ademoyega 1981<sup>86</sup>).

However, Ojukwu had threatened earlier that should the Aburi resolution be not fully implemented by March 31, marking the end of a financial year in those days he would

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<sup>85</sup> Page 133

<sup>86</sup> Page 133-4

feel free to take steps to implement those resolutions in the Eastern Region. Ojukwu had to promulgate his Revenue Collection Edict II on that day, 31 March 1967 which to all intent and purpose gave him financial freedom from Nigeria. The East had held previously Northern produce sent to Port Harcourt for export, the railway rolling stock and by April 1, 1967 a portion of the federal revenue, collected within the region, citing alleged delays in payments of their share of pool and salaries to Eastern refugees in Federal employment. Further actions were precipitated by the Eastern Regional Government which included the seizure of an aircraft of Nigeria Airways enroute from Benin which was hi-jacked and flown to Enugu: abolishing appeals to the Federal Supreme Court and calling all Easterners serving in the Federal Police and Navy to return (Ademoyega 1981).

The Gowon Government retaliated by suspending certain services and imposing increased restrictions on the converting of international currencies in the Eastern Region. Last spirited attempts to savage the situation were put in place. Such were the National Peace Committee put in place which got Ojukwu agreed to attend all future meetings but which he could not honor. Also, a Yoruba mission of Obas failed to get Ojukwu to return to the federation. In the end, Lagos decided to impose an economic blockade on the Eastern Region (Cronje 1972: Madiebo 1980<sup>87</sup>). The deteriorating situation made Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu to convene a meeting of the Eastern Advisory Committee of Chiefs and Elders at Enugu on the 26th May, 1967 to acquaint them with the latest developments and seek their view on the way forward. In an address to the Committee, Ojukwu outlined the history of the crisis, asserted that the East was fully prepared to defend itself. He further stressed "There is no power in this country or in black Africa to subdue us"-and

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<sup>87</sup> Pages 90-3

presented before the Assembly three loaded posers to select from: (a) accepting the terms of the North and Gowon and thereby submit to domination by the North, or (b) continuing the present stalemate and drift, or (c) ensuring the survival of our people by asserting our autonomy (Momoh ed. 2000<sup>88</sup>; Madiebo 1980<sup>89</sup>).

### “POLICE WAR”

A limited war which the Northern dominated Federal Forces called “Police Action” ensued from July 5, 1967 when it actually came as the Federal side called the shots. It seems that Nigeria saw the impending war as a child’s play hence the code name “Police Action” and almost belatedly started military preparations for war which were frantically carried out from June 1967 after the declaration of secession on May 30, 1967. The North blazed the trail as the entire machinery of Northern Regional Government and the Native Authorities had to be involved in mobilizing ex-service men (veterans of the Second World War) and Native Authorities’ policemen into the Army. The mobilization came late because the leadership naively” ... hoped that there would be a peaceful solution to the crisis and that violence would be avoided (Elaigwu 1985<sup>90</sup>)

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<sup>88</sup> Page 50

<sup>89</sup> Page 93

<sup>90</sup> Elaigwu, J.I Gowon (Ibadan: West Book Publishers Limited, 1985) page 114

The declaration of secession was done by Ojukwu on the 30th of May 1967. However, Gowon master stroke of states' creation had rallied the entire Nigerians, excepting, majority of the Igbos, behind Gowon and his Northern aristocracy. Ademoyega (1981)<sup>91</sup> said, "If there was a side less committed to war, it was Nigeria where formerly two of the remaining three loyal military governors were opposed to the use of force. Although there was an emergency in Nigeria and no one could really oppose the mobilization for war yet the Military Governor of Mid-West state ...Lt Col David Ejoor assiduously held his ground, refusing to let his state be used as a launching ground for Federal Military operations against Biafra. "After the declaration of secession, Gowon on 5 July declared "Police Action" to crush the Eastern rebellion under the leadership of Colonel Ojukwu. All preparations were thus geared towards the Civil War earlier tagged "Police Action." In Nigeria, the Military Government took a very naïve assessment of the war hence the Colonel Hassan Katsina was quoted to have said that the operation would be concluded within 48 hours (Momoh 2000)<sup>92</sup>.

The mobilization for the "Police Action" which later became a full-blown war was restricted initially to the north borders of Biafra as the war was considered to be mainly between the Hausa-Fulanis and the Ibos at this stage. In the Mid-West, Colonel David Ejoor had refused his state to be used as battle ground against the Ibos though he was strongly supportive of Federal Nigeria. One peculiar initiative the North took in preparation for the war ahead of the Federal Government was the conclusion by the Northern bureaucrats and leaders of thought that war was inevitable. As such a Northern based War Committee

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<sup>91</sup> Page 140

<sup>92</sup> Page 58

under the Military Governor of Northern Region, Colonel Hassan Kastina before the 12 states were created was set up. The role of the committee was to assist in mobilization and provision of logistical support for the Army. On a comparative note, Madiebo (1980<sup>93</sup>) had this to say:

“With limited resources available to it, it was obvious that the Biafran Army could not win a war against Nigeria. One was not even sure whether the Army could put up a meaningful defense. Apart from any additions it may have made since the crisis, the Nigerian Army was a formidable force in comparison with what Biafra had. Nigeria had an Army of six battalions, well equipped by modern standards. In support were two artillery units holding a total of 16x105mm Pack Howitzers in addition two reconnaissance squadrons equipped with ferret and armored vehicles, not to mention mortars of various calibers. It had a sizeable Navy and Air force that could be made combat ready at short notice. Biafra had none of these and the prospects of getting them were rather remote.”

For the Biafrans, while it did appear that much effort had been exerted to build a Biafran Armed Forces which almost equaled that of Nigeria in strength in men at the outbreak of the War, there was a lot of confusion as to the political and military direction of Biafra as well as sourcing for weapons to prosecute the impending war. This development resulted in the exclusion of the Armed Forces of Biafra in the policymaking processes towards the war because of the fear of personal security by Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. Whereas returning officers want to be involved in military planning and command, they were not encouraged to do so. This was

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<sup>93</sup> Page 188



corroborated by a letter sent to Adewale Ademoyega by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu that he and non- Eastern colleagues were sent away on an indefinite leave and were not allowed to take part in preparing for the war. He said that he was surprised to hear from Nzeogwu that the East was not really preparing for war. He stressed that the noise was much but the military preparation was negligible (Ademoyega 1981)<sup>94</sup>.

The pathetic situation of Biafra's preparation for war was demonstrated by Ademoyega after Mid-West fell to Biafra in August 9, 1967 just a month after the declaration of, war. He said after his release from prison at Warri during Biafra's invasion that:

"I spent that day with Chukwuemeka in Warri. He had instructions to send me to Benin as soon as I was released. But he was yet to gather the arms and ammunition which he was to send with me. There and then, I understood that all kinds of military stores were in short supply in Biafra; rifles, machine guns, ammunition, artillery, armored vehicles, planes and what not. I was no longer surprised because Nzeogwu had written about it much earlier. We drove to the police station and took possession of all their old mark IV bolt action, single round rifles and all the available ammunition. It all amounted to very little. Then, I remembered that I myself should be in uniform, but I had none whatsoever and my men had none to spare. I rushed to the Headquarters, got hold of Ifeajuna and collected a pair of his own uniform, his only spare." (Ademoyega 1981)<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Page 143

<sup>95</sup> Pages 145-146

The foregoing was the level of preparedness by both the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Biafran Armed Forces at the commencement of the Nigerian Civil War. Colonel Ojukwu declared secession on the 30th of May 1967 and Gowon declared the “Police Action” on July 5, 1967. The young military officers from both ends tore the veil of the seeming national unity with the coup and counter coup of 1966, the sliding into war and the mobilization for the war.

Prior to the commencement of the Civil War, 4 Battalion at Kaduna was deployed at the border of Benue Plateau state with East Central state and South-Eastern state. The operation was codenamed ‘UNICORD’ which was meant to suggest the joining back broken cord that resulted from national discord between brothers and sisters. Hence the operation was called “Police Action”. The battle plan was to approach the secessionists from the North and to secure the sea coast and the Bonny oil terminal to the South leaving the Mid-West out that had chosen to be neutral in the war. Thus, the Northern operation was to focus on rapid advance to capture Nsukka and Enugu, the secessionist capital and perhaps capture the secessionist leader thereby destroying the rebellion, while the southern operation was to seal the sea routes and to secure Bonny oil terminal, the economic livewire of the country (Momoh (ed.) 2000<sup>96</sup>).

For Biafra, the 7th Battalion was deployed at the northern axis with its headquarters at Nsukka. It’s A Company at Okuta was responsible for the defense of the 80-mile stretch between Okuta and Onitsha to the south and the B Company was to defend the 30 miles of frontier between Okuta and Obollo Afor and the C Company was to defend

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<sup>96</sup> Pages 61-2

from Obollo Afor to Obollo Eke, 40 miles to the East. In order to facilitate their task a detachment of platoon strength, from C Company was based at Eha-Amufu to take charge of the areas closely. Two companies of the 1st Battalion were to take charge of the entire Ogoja Province almost 200 miles from Nsukka the headquarters of the 7th Battalion under which command they were placed. Madiebo who was the 7th Battalion Commander and under whose command the two companies deployed to Ogoja were placed said that the effective supervision of these two companies was a near impossibility (Madiebo 1980<sup>97</sup>). Thus, the first encounter between Nigerian Northern led troops and the Biafran Forces along Adikpo- Obudu axis on June 10, 1967 left the Biafran Forces in very poor reaction and flee their trenches thereby leaving the only machine gun available to the company (Momoh (ed) 2000<sup>98</sup>).

The Biafran 8th Battalion in the south had its headquarters at Port Harcourt; with a company each deployed at Ahoada, Calabar, Oron and a platoon at Bonny. In Madiebo's view the extreme south-western coastline, covering a distance of more than 100 miles, remained undefended due to lack of troops. With more weapons available in May 1967, it was decided by the Biafran authority that two new battalions which were 9th and 14th Battalions be formed. The 1st, 7th and 14th Battalions were then grouped to form the 51 Brigade under the command of Colonel A.A Madiebo, for the defence of the northern sector. The 8th and the 9th Battalions were then grouped to form the 52 Brigade under the Command of Colonel Eze, with the task of defending the southern sector. However, a third battalion was supposed to be added to Eze's brigade to bring it to strength which

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<sup>97</sup> Page 99

<sup>98</sup> Page 62

never happened before the outbreak of the war. Under this arrangement, the remnants of the 1st Battalion at Enugu moved to Ogoja and 14th Battalion was formed at Abakaliki and the 9th Battalion was doing the same at Calabar (Madiebo 1980<sup>99</sup>).

## THE AFTERMATH

After 30 months of fighting, the Nigerian civil war ended in January 1970 after the Biafran army surrendered to the Nigerian army (Aneke 2007). In accepting the suspension of hostility, the Head of state- Gowon declared that there would be “no victor no vanquished” and granted a general amnesty for people who had fought on the Biafran side (Udogu 2005). His “no victor no vanquished” policy was designed to complete the integration of the Igbos back into Nigerian society following their defeat in the war<sup>98</sup> as most Biafrans and some federal officers believed that the defeat of Biafra would be followed by massive reprisals against, and the executions of the Igbos (Siollun 2009). On the contrary, by virtue of the policy, the Biafran soldiers were neither tried nor executed for fighting against the federal army while some of the Igbo officers who served in the Biafran army were reabsorbed with loss of seniority. (Siollun 2009)

Gowon also embarked on his 3R program of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation. The main aim of the 3Rs was to create an atmosphere conducive for resettling the displaced and those who had fled their homes; to reunite families and friends; rebuild damaged physical facilities and demobilize armed forces personnel in gainful employment in civilian life (Ojeleye 2010). In principle, the program was a laudable scheme but in practice it left much to be desired in its implementation, as he was unable

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<sup>99</sup> Pages 99-100

to successfully implement his program (Shillington 2005) and its impact was hardly felt within the Igbo community. There was little or no true reconciliation or rehabilitation that took place and the Igbos were perpetually reminded that they were a defeated people (Nwadike 2010). According to Ikemefuna<sup>100</sup>; “the federal government through her policies of selective development and appointments, began marginalizing and punishing the peoples from the eastern section either by omission or deliberate design nailing them against the cross of denigration, for their role in the war of succession”.

Firstly, before the war, many Igbo people owned properties in different parts of the country but had to abandon them when they sought safety and fled to their villages in the East. However, when they returned to their homes particularly in Port Harcourt in Rivers state after the war, they found that their properties had been claim by the people of Port Harcourt on the grounds that they had been declared as “abandoned properties” since Gowon had approved and pursued the policy of abandoned property of the Igbos therefore, the “new owners” refused to return the properties to their rightful owners<sup>101</sup>. The consequences of the abandoned property policy have remained an issue of Nigerian politics and a matter of intense emotions for the Igbo people till date<sup>106</sup>.

Secondly, during the period of the civil war, Biafra had a currency of their own but when the war ended, through a banking regulation, the federal government voided the currency and made it illegal tender (Okafor 1998). The people of Biafra were advised to

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<sup>100</sup> Extracted from Eluma, I. S (2007). *Terrorism: A Global Scourge*. United States of America; Author House. p79

<sup>101</sup> Nwadike, J. A. (2010). *A Biafran Soldier’s Survival From The Jaws Of Death*. United States of America. Xlibris Corporation p.82

bring their Biafran currency in exchange for Nigerian currency but regardless of the amount they brought, the regulation paid them just £20 (Udogu 2005). The action pauperized the Igbo middle class<sup>102</sup> as the Biafran currency had become an illegal tender and in order to survive, they had no other option but to exchange their money thereby rendering them poor as surviving on the paltry sum would have quite difficult.

Thirdly, with the 3R policy came the enactment and implementation of the Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree also referred to as the Indigenization Decree. The decree compelled some foreign business organizations to share ownership of some of their business interest with other Nigerians<sup>103</sup>. The primary objectives of the policy were to create opportunity for Nigerian indigenous businessmen; to maximize local retention of profit; and to raise the level of intermediate capital and goods production.<sup>104</sup> Many observers thought that it was politically ill conceived and economically unsalutary as all Nigerians should have been given the opportunity to participate in the rewards of the indigenization process (Nwachuku & Uzoigwe 2004). This policy came at the time when most of the Igbo people were at a disadvantage as they did not have adequate funding to invest. Till date, the Igbo people believe that the policy was formulated at the time when the Yoruba people were best placed to take advantage of the new policy and to avail themselves of the opportunity to assume prominent roles in commanding the sectors of the economy. (Ejiogu 2011) Furthermore, the 3R policy came at a time when the country

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid

<sup>103</sup> Mathews, M. P. (2002). *Nigeria: Current Issues and Historical Background*. New York; Nova Science Publishers, Inc. p73

<sup>104</sup> Ogbuagu, C. S. A. (1983) *The Nigerian Indeginization Policy: Nationalism or Pragmatism*. *African Affairs* 82(327) p241

was enjoying an “oil boom” as this was the period when oil prices spiraled and reached unprecedented heights, which brought an influx of revenue to the federal government that was bigger than expected. Although the country became wealthy as a result of the oil boom, revenues were not distributed to all parts of the country as the people of Biafra were still suffering in poverty (Okafor 1998). This is due to the fact that the federal government was able to monopolize control of the oil industry because it was located entirely in the former eastern region of Biafra or in other Christian minority areas close to the country’s southern coast (Siollun 2009). While the country was going through a rapid development and undergoing various reconstruction projects, the reconstruction in the Biafran region was far from becoming a reality. Many private and community buildings had been destroyed during the war and the government had advised the people to assess and submit their losses to the relevant official quarters, when this was done, nothing meaningful was done by the government therefore, the people had to embark on reconstructing their property by themselves. (Ejike 2010)

#### THE “NO VICTOR NO VANQUISH” POLICY: TRUTH OR ILLUSION

When Biafrans unconditionally surrendered on the January 15th, 1970 with the formal acceptance by General Gowon’s regime of the document of surrender from Lt. Col. Philip Effiong (the second in command to Ojukwu and at this time Ojukwu had gone to self-imposed exile), Gowon now said that there were no victors nor vanquished and subsequently announced the policy of reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Gowon in national news titled “Let us reconcile” reiterated his commitment for reconciliation when he said:

“...we guarantee the security of life and property of all citizens in every part of Nigeria and equality in political rights. We also guarantee the right of every Nigerian to reside and work wherever he chooses in the federation, as equal citizen in one united country...there is no question of second-class citizenship in Nigeria.”

In consideration of Gowon’s stance based on what he said, one is left with this question: where his famous no-victor no-vanquish statement and his policy of 3R a reality in practice or was he playing to the gallery? The answer to this question will be found below. The war causes a mind boggling devastation in the economy of the Eastern region, infrastructures were destroyed and humanitarian crises was so high that massive aids effort was needed and Gowon’s Regime who would not handle it alone barred foreign assistance. This was well documented by John:

All the countries like France, South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia which had supported Biafra were told to keep their aid and stay out. Relief organizations in a similar position, notably Caritas and World Council of Churches, were also barred, “let them keep their blood money”, Gowon cried. Nigeria will do this itself”. The Catholic priests and nuns...were rounded up and expelled...their removal left a crucial gap in a rapid deterioration relief situation. “

Gowon hinged his reasons of not accepting aids to the fact that these countries and international organizations contributed immensely in prolonging the war. But any genuine statesman that is eager to heal the wounds of his nation would reach out to all and sundry for assistance, knowing fully well that it lacks the resources to deal with the humanitarian cases. As a result of these bluff to foreign assistance many Igbo’s died of diseases and starvation that otherwise would had been saved if aids were available. More so, the



seriousness of the reconstruction of Igbo land was too herculean for the region to pretend it would tackle alone, indeed, there was vanquish.

Consequently, the regime promulgated the Public Officers Decree No. 46 of 1970. This decree gradually screened out senior Nigeria civil servants of Igbo extraction on the account that they participated in the war. Paul said that his decree was an instrument of vendetta by Gowon's regime which needed out civil servants without pensions. The decree also served as a medium for compensation, because the government posits that it will be unwise to edge out those that stood by it in its period of need simply to create room for the Igbo returnees, on how Gowon related with the Igbos through his appointment in his eight years administration.

Subsequently, the infamous Abandon Project policy was used to confiscate the property of the Igbos that fled to their country home during the civil war, as they return to their formal place of abode they were told that their property has been declared abandoned by the government that was at the same time executing the program of Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation, may be the Abandon Project Policy falls under Reconstruction. Both Rivers and Southern State that was carved out of formal Eastern were empowered to implement this policy. This policy betrayed Gowon's speech that guarantee the security of lives and property of Nigerians anywhere in Nigeria. Through this policy most Igbos lost their property and some as a result of it died. Ambrose decried the fate of this Igbos when he said, "I know many of them (Igbos) who helped me as a mayor to build Port Harcourt but died of broken hearts because their property was considered abandoned". Another issue noteworthy is the Banking Obligation Decree of 1970.

This banking policy of the Federal Government directed the Igbo people to submit their Biafra currency for conversion into Nigerian currency and the government regardless of the amount deposited paid twenty pounds per depositor. This policy stilled the economic reconstruction of the Igbos in the same vein, this policy stipulated that all bank deposits made in the old eastern region, excluding Calabar, between May 31, 1966, and January, 12 1970 remained void and cannot be withdrawn by the owner again and this economic emasculation on the Igbos enriched the federal government treasury to the tune of four million pounds.

Furthermore, all the military officers that took part in the 15th January coup and those that took part in the invasion of mid-west during the war were rounded up and tried. But it is unfortunate that all the northern soldiers that led the counter coup in July 29 were never called to question on the death of Major General Aguiyi Ironsi and other military officers of Igbo extraction. On October 1, 1971 General Gowon gave a score-card of his policy of 3Rs, in a national broadcast he asserts "...we have been able to achieve complete reconciliation amongst our people within a relatively short period of time; we have succeeded in rehabilitating and resettling our displaced people and we have spared no effort in reconstructing our economy..."<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Extracted from "The Nigerian Civil War: A Historical Interpretation" By Onuoha C. pages 31-2

## CHAPTER 9

### CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA'S PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Turning from one side to the other and from the front to the back, it has attained an accepted fate of normalcy to experience corruption in Nigeria. It is one of the most conspicuous problems of the country, cutting across every of its existential fiber; Ijewereme (2015) in averment says that “corruption is... a malaise that inflicts every aspect of the society”. Corruption in the Nigerian society has as well gained the notoriety of being described as ‘something everyone does’. This is provable from the everyday conversations that thrive among the younger generation who tend to see the occupation of public position as an opportunity to amass wealth for themselves and for their immediate families. In one of those conversations, a young man was reportedly said to have made a bold claim that *if he is opportune to become a state governor, his generations to come shall never know poverty*. Assertions of this kind are as well made in various tones and under various guises among people in Nigeria. This does not in any way imply that the entire populace is stained by the woeful ink of corruption; it only goes to show that corruption is a widespread practice in the country. Achebe (1980) had rightly said that *anyone who can say that corruption in Nigeria has not yet become alarming is either a fool, a crook or else does not live in this country*.

Nigeria as an independent country is not left alone in this progress-crippling practice of corruption, it is relatively present in every country of the world, proactively checked in the West but grossly unchecked in Nigeria and, Africa – that makes the difference. Consequently, Africa loses a whopping annual sum of US\$140 to corruption. (Obuah in Ijewereme, 2015). If we single out Nigeria to evaluate the effects of corruption, it is not

only painful but also troubling to discover in the words of Nuhu Ribadu (a former chairman of the EFCC) that the over US\$400 billion that had been looted from Nigeria by the leaders is “six times the total value of resources committed to rebuilding Western Europe after the Second World War” (Ademola in Ijewereme, 2015). The far-reaching effects of this are not deniable from the employment space, through the developmental condition, to the political instability, counting only a few of the problems that plague the country.

#### CORRUPTION DEFINED

Corruption as it were, cannot be assigned a definition thorough enough to capture all of its implications; the definition varies from person to person and from circumstance to circumstance. It could be likened to the philosophical definition of rightness and wrongness, occasioned to relativity and subjectivity. In other words, while an action may be termed right in the perspective of an individual and usually according to what is obtainable in the society of habitation, the same action can be abominable in another phase of the world and to other categories of people. The definition of such term as ambiguous as corruption usually depends on so many factors including ignorance – ignorance because people can be limited by the amount of knowledge they have about any issue, our extent of knowledge gives boundaries to the very way we perceive concepts. This does not suggest, however, that the pangs of corruption are not easily felt or identified (Tanzi, 1998); truth be told, it is sometimes faster to identify the effects of corruption than to truly define corruption. In many cases, people resort to the end results of an action to decipher whether or not it is corrupt.

For Azelama (2002), corruption is any action or omission enacted by a member of an organization, which is against the rules, regulations, norms, and ethics of the organization,

and the purpose is to meet the selfish end of the member at the detriment of the organization. In a similar tone, Sen (1999) perceives corruption as an anti-social behavior conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms and which undermines the authorities to improve the living condition of the people. Pulling from the definitions presented herein, we can go further to describe corruption as any action or inaction that places personal gain above public interest, inclusively referring to any sphere of the society where this takes place. It does not matter who and where it took place, corruption is identified when the interest under protection is that of an individual, and not the society or the larger population. To disprove that corruption only takes place in the public setting, Onuoha (2005) defines it as an illegal act, which involves inducement and/or undue influence of people either in the public setting or the private sphere to act contrary to the extant rules and regulations which normally guide a particular process.

This chapter is devoted to exploring the depth of corruption in Nigerian – in Nigeria’s public institutions, we try as much as possible to identify the underlying causes, the various ramifications while showing the numerous ways the country has been entangled in underdevelopment.

## PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

People everywhere select individuals to represent them in power and take control of deciding their common good, this is often termed government. The elected government is in turn charged with the responsibility of making the society better, this they do by introducing policies, building structures and tons of other activities that are geared towards bettering the lot of the electorates. Over time, the government introduces several institutions to take up the handling of a sector of the country – economy, security, etc. And

these institutions in their composition/formation constitute members of the same society who are appointed to assist the government in achieving its long term intention. Olaopa (2018) opines that:

*“The duty of governments everywhere is to create structures that address specific challenges and problems. Once created, these institutions justify their continued existence by developing consistent and effective operating system, modus operandi, expertise and competence to administer effective solutions to complex problems and challenges in a manner that would be strongly valued by internal stakeholders (policymakers, politicians, et al) and external stakeholders, and that generates trust and support”*

Invariably, no government functions as a single entity, they instead make policies and create institutions to take up necessary actions. In this way, nations grow or retard in proportion to the soundness of their policies and the transparency/strength of their institutions. The public institutions are established with the objective of giving life to government policies and reflecting the honesty of the government’s activities.

Chambers’s Twentieth Century Dictionary defines a public institution as an institution that is kept up by public funds for public use. This particular definition presents public institution to be an all-encompassing term, it includes schools, parastatals that are maintained with public funds. Nwoye (1997) asserts that the essence of public institutions is to provide goods and services to members of the public. This is exactly the reason government’s performance can be evaluated using the progress and activities of existing public institutions. Taken a little further, it will not be an overstatement to say that the failure of public institution(s) is the failure of the government of the day.

The establishment of public institutions is usually based on the need to salvage rising issues at any point in the existence of the society. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) evolved out of the need to check the uprising trend of corruption. Universities are built to improve the educational status of people in the society, the central Bank is there to regulate financial activities/flow of the country and even the postal services are empowered to render public services. These are typical instances of institutions established as an extension of the government's ruling hand.

#### A DISCOURSE ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND THE RUINS OF CORRUPTION

Beginning from the people who assume positions of leadership down to the very last of public sector/service, the walls have been cracked open and the injury has been salted overly, yielding a state of affairs that would make one begin to wonder what the future is going to be like. Nigeria has a history of politically corrupt leaders, and like we have been able to establish, political leaders (the government) set up public institutions; if the people who do the setting up are corrupt, it is quite difficult to set up a structure that is free of corruption, the popular Latin expression comes to mind: *Nemo dat quod non habet* – you cannot give what you do not have.

In Nigeria, the history is almost incomplete without mentioning how individuals used public offices to milk the nation's economy dry. Remarking on the ill-fate, Ijewereme (2015) added that corruption is responsible for the collapse of Nigeria's first and second republic and that insightfully tells the sad truth: Nigeria has a long history of corruption, it did not begin with present day office holders. Corroboratively, Familoni as cited in Olufemi asserts:

*“The 1996 study of corruption by Transparency International and Goettingen University ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation among 54*

*nations listed in the study, ...in 1998 Transparency International Corrupt Perception Index (CPI) of 85 countries, Nigeria was 81 out of 85 countries polled. And in the 2001 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), the image of Nigeria slipped further down (ranked 90 out of 91 countries polled), as the second most corrupt nation, with Bangladesh coming first..."*

It may be quite needless to review the previous republics and their obvious involvements in corruption, the truth remains however, that corruption in Nigeria is as old as the country, deep-seated in glamorous garments that sometimes qualify it to be customary. In recent times, the trend has not received any shift in neither ideology nor practice, it continues to spread on the increase with new cases arising every day.

A side of the entire story sometimes elicits mocking for the nation, and this side describes the obnoxious practice of convicting people only when they are not in the hall of fame. If one is accused of a crime or corrupt practices, his status in the society becomes a determinant factor in either jailing him or bailing him. Many of Nigeria's past governors, senators and other government officials had been sued in times past (see Appendix 1), the outcome is either an indefinite suspension of the court case or a lopsided judgment where they pay a trifling modicum of the amount they've looted. We have only recounted the presence of corruption in the leadership of the country to show without doubt that all of her aiding structures are corrupt as well, there is no two way about it.

Corruption in Nigeria albeit exists in numerous forms, the most recurring are easily associable with nepotism, electoral malpractice, favoritism, procurement price inflation, the menace of ghost-working and imbalanced government annual budget. As often as anyone could commit to memory, securing employment or being appointed into public



positions is far from honesty and transparency, sometimes it is subtly practiced, and at other times, it is boldly spelt out; individuals have experienced a rescindment of their appointment on grounds of ethnicity or cultural background – and even so, religion. At the federal level, there seems to be scale of preference that places certain people from certain region at the top of the list, thereby giving such persons’ better opportunities while people from other regions are left to murmur without help in an irredeemable lane of favoritism. While this may be seen as a general phenomenon where tribes who are not in power are prone to complaints and unnecessary talk of marginalization which are often imaginary, it is yet necessary to draw a close attention to the matter. A particular African adage peculiar to the Igbo people says that wherever a child cries and points at, such a place must either bear the presence of his mother or his father. Upon appraisal, one would readily discover that the uproar generated by each tribe at one time or the other cannot be ditched completely as unimportant or perhaps, a quest to remain relevant; there is, as it were, a fire that generates every smoke, hence you cannot beat a child and restrict him from crying at the same time.

One of the chief promises of the Buhari-led administration during the 2015 elections was a zero-tolerance for corruption, and having agreed that the problems of the country are like the branches of a tree which are ultimately nourished by a root – corruption, a large number of the population seemed to have rejected the previous government, and massively gave their support to the All Progressive Peoples Party (APC) through voting. This remains true if and only if the 2015 elections were without manipulations, it is not likely to be the case, but INEC which is the body in charge of elections have stated that the election was free and fair, we therefore have no right to say otherwise. However, the APC government on its fight against corruption might have decided to utilize a lopsided system

of combat where anyone who finds his way into the membership of the party becomes a saint and protected with an unwritten immunity. On that note, we may need to ask a question of obvious pertinence: Do we stage a combat against corruption using corrupt mechanisms?

On the side of ghost-working, it is one problem that shows itself in many ways. There is usually no correspondence between the payroll of public institutions and the number of workers, non-existing names are included, when the funds arrive, it is shared among the top officials in order of superiority (Azelama in Ijewereme, 2015). There is also the ugly case of government employees who liaise with the management of their organizations to stay off work, either for a personal business or for another job which could be paying better. The employee usually forfeits a percentage of his/her salary to the institution's management and/or supervisory body. In this way, the position is left vacant, yet it is paid for on a monthly basis.

The education system of the country has also been deeply plunged into corruption. Buying of grades with either sex or money has become commonplace, everyone is seemingly comfortable with the trend, students are happy to pass examinations without hard work, parents have subscribed to using dubious means to ensure that their children pass every test; the teachers/lecturers on the other hand cannot be spared because all of these wouldn't have been possible without their assistance. Recently, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) published the results of their one-year-long enquiry into sex for grades. These results were shocking, not just because lecturers in Nigerian universities – and other West African nations were found wanting, but also because most of the culprits were either high-ranking educators or religious leaders who had ventured into the academics.

Although it was widely applauded that the BBC took up such bold steps to salvage many young men and women from the ravaging hands of unscrupulous educators, it yet calls for a different side of examination. These cases of demanding sex for grades had been in existence for a very long time and within the knowledge of very many people – whether in the educational system or not. Why then did we wait till the investigation was taken up by a foreign media outlet? It also suggests that the Media/press in Nigeria is also tainted by corruption. However, their own corruption is also a result of the gross misconduct at the higher levels of government. There is no freedom of press and expression. Investigative journalism is strongly discouraged as it only ends up exposing ‘men of substance’ who are supposedly the makers of the law or its protectors. Journalism and general media in the country is obviously threatened in no small measures and there is practically no hope for them than to yield perpetually to the demands of the government and other top influencers.

## TRACING THE ORIGIN

It is often said that to critically evaluate a situation, it is necessary to trace its origin, this informs the popular African view that he who does not know where the rain started beating him will not be able to tell where and when it stopped beating him. Corruption in Nigeria has been attributed to a number of factors which could be taken as its origin.

Particularly, the colonization of Nigeria has received a portion of the blame, with claims that the real and perceived success of the British colonists triggered the locals to engage in series of irregularities to measure up. Seeing cars and houses that are greatly beautiful and belonged to the colonists and perhaps, to few local people close to them, many people looked up to them as the most fulfilling definition of success – it doesn’t matter how you

acquire it (Uzoh, 2015). More so, the mentality of Nigerians towards public property during the colonial era also made significant contributions to the spread of corruption. Notably, there were no regards for the nation's properties since people thought they belonged to the white man, it could be vandalized at will to the false expense of the white men. Uzoh (2015) citing Eccker avers:

Involvement in the agenda of colonial rule may have also inhibited idealism in the early stage of the nascent nation's development. A view commonly held during the colonial days was that the colonists' properties (cars, houses, farms, etc) are not our properties. Thus, vandalism and looting of public property were not seen as crime against society. This view is what has degenerated into the more recent disregard for public property and lack of public trust and concern for public goods as a collective national property (Uzoh, 2015).

There are also accusations that Britain has consistently aided and abetted corruption in the country, in 2016, the then prime minister, David Cameron made a statement that elicited a whole lot of national and international uproar, he said that Nigeria is a fantastically corrupt country. While many of the people who reacted to the statement accepted that corruption is pandemic in the country, it didn't as much settle with most people that such a derogatory comment is coming from Britain. For them, the Brits who colonized Nigeria are the chief cause of corruption in the country. The most vociferous among them, chief Ikechukwu Aduba, a former commissioner of police. In a report published on Vanguard newspaper (25<sup>th</sup> May, 2016), Chief Aduba stated that "*corruption in Nigeria originated from Britain whose exploitative tendencies started when they came to colonize us uninvited. Over the years, Britain has remained a hiding place for corrupt*

*Nigerians. British banks are harbouring stolen funds from Nigeria and using same to develop their economy. Corrupt Nigerians are buying up streets in Britain to the eternal joy of British Estate business.”*

Aside the colonization effect, many scholars have also associated corruption in Nigeria with “the rise of public administration and the discovery of petroleum and natural gas” (Uzoh, 2015). The era of oil boom was greeted with scores of corrupt practices, especially by the people in power who come in, guised as ‘contractors’. There was less concern for the common good when oil was discovered and turned into the chief source of revenue generation, many people wanted to catch a share of the oil money by any means. For some, the boom may be short-lived by both seen and unseen factors, it was only wise to step up your game and grab the money while it lasts. These are the key causative agents that popularized corruption in the country, though there are yet other factors.

#### CAUSES OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

Hinged on inequality, corruption in Nigeria spreads across many other areas commonly described as the causes of corruption; these include but not limited to decadence on the societal norms/values where successfulness is dangerously qualified by material accumulations. This appears to be the primary cause of corruption in the country, Uzoh (2015) accepted this truth as he wrote that *it has been noted that one of the popular, but unfortunate indices of good life in Nigeria is flamboyant affluence and conspicuous consumption. As a result of this, some people get into dubious activities, including committing ritual murder.*

There is also, little or no reward for hard work in Nigeria. Most of the people who struggle to earn their living through decent means are often derided. First class students who

graduate from public universities are rewarded with a token amount of money, and on the other hand, reality show stars are rewarded with millions and ambassadorial positions. This elicits ill thoughts in the minds of the growing generation who tend to perceive wrong actions as the ideal.

Various government agencies and organizations do not have regards for the moral demands of their positions, no one questions the other, there is no standard to follow – they've all adopted a do-as-you-like mentality where the heads overlook misdeeds. Or better still, they do not have the moral justification to combat these misdeeds because they too are corrupt.

This explains the impunity with which corruption is practiced across the country, one is almost sure that nothing will happen after the entire process. Many scholars have chosen to describe the law enforcement agencies in Nigeria as toothless bulldogs, ranging from the police force – who disgraces themselves with a public collection of ₦50 from motorists, among other irregularities. One of Nigeria's popular secular artist who is obviously taking after the late Fela Kuti, Falz who is also the son of a Senior Advocate (SAN) presented a song that assiduously describes the Nigerian condition. According to him, police stations in Nigeria close before 6pm for "security reasons". If a security body charged with the responsibility of protecting lives and properties close for security reasons, what becomes the fate of the society? There had been alleged cases of robbery, kidnapping and assassination traced to aid of armed forces in the country, and these will only make people to smile at the sight of corruption, knowing deep within themselves that a finger will not be laid on them.

The Economic and Financial Crime Commission(EFCC), together with the Independent Corrupt Practices and related offences Commission(ICPC) have also joined the bandwagon of shamelessness in their practices. As Uwak and Udofia (2016) wrote:

Though some efforts have been made towards the fight against corruption, much has not been achieved despite the establishment of anti-corruption agencies like EFCC and ICPC. It is very worrisome to note that even those who are in-charge of these anti-graft agencies are also corrupt. We now find ourselves in a situation where a corrupt person fights another corrupt person. This results in a scenario where “corruption fights corruption”.

#### CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

The effects of corruption in Nigeria are far-reaching, they factually, affect every layer of the country in no little measures, it has significant social, economic and political consequences.

There is diversion of public funds into private pockets, this translates into poor governance as there will no longer be appropriate resources to run the day-to-day affairs of the organization or the nation generally. We’ve had cases of released salaries that never got to employees and in some cases, the payroll submitted for the release of funds is different from the payroll used in the actual distribution of salaries – a lesser amount is often paid. This has led to strike actions, public protests in times past. We can as well consider the amount that is expended in setting up committees upon committees to probe corruption cases and assist in curbing the menace.

It is accepted everywhere that honesty is the best policy, but the Nigerian society is actually teaching and incubating the opposite. There is no need to be honest in Nigeria anymore; it practically takes one to no greater heights. The politicians work with this mindset and are ready to accumulate wealth through any means possible. Dike cited in Uzoh (2015) noted that anything spent to secure a political office is an investment which matures immediately one gets into office. For this reason, politics instead of being a service to the nation has become the most rewarding venture, it is not surprising therefore, to see people struggle for positions with all they have and are.

Corruption as it were, has also caused a decline in the quality of services and goods presented to the public for consumption. Most institutions neglect due process, perhaps to make undue profit at the detriment of the larger population. There are recorded cases of expired drugs, beverages, snacks and other products which are repackaged to conceal the expiry date.

Foreign investors are not encouraged in any way to establish businesses in the country, aside the security troubles that embattle the nation, there is also a culture of nonchalance towards paying for delivered services, locals always look for means of defrauding people, the foreign companies therefore, cannot make useful profits. They fold up in no little time and will as well discourage potential investors from doing so.

Human resources have not been spared by corruption, our best brains now prefer to start and build their careers outside the country; there is no faith in the Nigerian system any longer, the long term effect is often the brain drain we have at the moment. The country's image is in a deep mess, most nations of the world no longer believe that some Nigerians are not corrupt, we've all been painted with a single brush. This has crystallized into



reduced opportunities for Nigerians outside the country, they find it difficult to obtain the trust of foreigners – just for being Nigerians.

## THE WAY FORWARD

Combating corruption is herculean but not an impossible task, primarily, the anti-graft laws should be thoroughly reviewed to serve the purpose of dissuading corruption completely. Most of the times, corrupt individuals tend to receive punishments that are not commensurate to their offences, potential criminals see this and are not discouraged, they instead find solace in the disturbing truth that they will only serve trifling punishments, after which they can go back to enjoy their loot.

In Nigeria, it has been noted that the anti-corruption agencies are almost useless, and this is as a result of their independence on the executive arm of government. They are holistically influenced on whom to apprehend, probe and jail. Under this condition, we find out that only people who are not on the same page with the ruling power are prosecuted, every other person is invariably, a living saint. To bring an end to this, these agencies must be granted wholesome independence where no power interferes with their activities.

Be it as it may, there is no single way of fighting corruption which could be honored as the perfect means of its eradication, in a country like Nigeria where it is widespread, widespread actions must also be taken. These include national re-orientation on what it means to successful, people should be taught to see corruption for what it is – a collective war that must be fought with concerted efforts. School curriculums should be adjusted to include a study on corruption, when children learn to dread corrupt practices from a young age, they are less likely to practice it.

For the fight against corruption to gain stamina in the country, it must begin from the people at the helm of affairs. If the people who are at the top become free of corruption, they can as well establish structures that not tainted with corruption. However, it should be noted that corruption in Nigeria took a long time to gain its present robust stature, it is absurd therefore, to expect any miracle in a very short time. Habits take time to be formed and as well takes much time to be dropped. Fighting corruption in Nigeria must be taken gradually, one or few steps at a time, we shouldn't chew more than we can bite. In this way, we eliminate them in various degrees until they become completely absent.

## CONCLUSION

It has been proven that Nigeria is a massively corrupt country, a level of corruption that spares no aspect of the nation. Although corruption exists in every human society, it is varying degrees. The degree of corruption in Nigeria is evidently alarming and this has crippled the country, preventing it from progressing as every other country of the world.

This chapter dwelt more on Nigeria's public sector or public institutions, showing that the cause of every institution is reflection of the government that established or is managing it; corrupt governments build corrupt structures and vice versa. Having identifies this to be a major problem faced by the country, a number of solutions have been proffered.

The dilemma of corruption in Nigeria is that there has always been a fight or the other against it, various regimes of government over the years have introduced policies and agencies to assist in the struggle, but all seemed to have been nipped in the bud. This is primarily because those who are supposedly the fighters of corruption are in themselves, much corrupt than the ones they are fighting. This explains why every fight against corruption in the country is always lopsided.

In eliminating corruption, occupants of public positions must be honest men and women who understand the need to stand against this menace. Every loophole and/or opportunity that leads to corruption must also be closed. Meritocracy should be enthroned in the country above all else. As a multi-ethnic nation, tribalism is a chief factor that promotes corruption in the country, and this can be avoided by being less tribalistic about our politics and economy, let the best hands manage our resources and offices regardless of ethnic and religious affiliations.

## CHAPTER 10

### LAW, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA

Faced with numerous challenges, we are not alien to the truth that Nigeria is one of the developing countries in the world, owing to her diverse human and material resources. Yet, it is faced with so many social ills due to leadership problems such as: bad governance, lack of inclusion of masses in the decision-making processes, economic imbalance, power tussle, control and domination by those in power and their cronies among others which have over the years been the bane of her development. The Nigerian political elites have consistently failed to provide the sort of leadership which is needed to improve the quality of life of the teeming masses of the country thereby affecting the standard of living and the rights of the citizens.

Nigeria's political peregrination after gaining independence on October 1st 1960 took a major positive dimension on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1999. This marked the end of military regime and ushered in a new dawn of regular elections and return of civil liberties in Nigeria. During this period of exchange of baton, people were filled with happiness and joy. The expectation of people was very high and there was so much confidence in this new system of government to bring about an end to untold hardship of the masses and unprecedented transformation in the lives of the people. Unfortunately, this turned out to be a mirage.

Democracy is closely linked to the principles of rule of law, observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individuals residing within a state. Democratic governance means that people's human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected, promoted and fulfilled, allowing them to live with dignity. It entails equally that people

have a say in decisions that affect their lives and can hold decision-makers to account, based on inclusive and fair rules, institutions and practices that govern social interactions. Apart from participating in the leadership recruitment processes by way of voting in elections, the citizenry are equally active participants in the policy process in real democracies. Thus, according to Okeke and Obiorah (2009) "democracy makes meaning to the extent the people are integrated into the governing process and accorded a free rein in leadership recruitment, policy making, project design and even their implementation".

## NIGERIAN LAW CONCEPTS

Law can be described as a system of rules a society sets to maintain order and protect harm to persons and property. Law is a set of rules established by a governing authority to institute and maintain orderly co-existence. The law establishes restrictions and requirements for behavior and represents a general consensus of what is or is not ethical. Consequently, law acts as a guide for solving research ethics problems. Laws are created through legislations which are called **statutory laws**, or by judges in court cases which are called **case laws**. Statutory laws comprise of written laws enacted by either a state legislature or national assembly. Statutory laws are either civil or criminal. Case law comprises of decisions of the various courts. These decisions determine the outcome of individual court cases by providing precedents to be followed in the interpretation of statutory laws and the Constitution.

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## THE NIGERIAN LEGAL SYSTEM

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) is a Constitutional Republic. At independence, Nigeria consisted of three regions, namely, the Northern Region, the Eastern Region and the Western Region. Presently, Nigeria is made up of 36 states and a federal capital territory (FCT), located in Abuja. These states are, as a matter of convenience and political expediency grouped into 6 geopolitical zones of North East, North West, North Central, South East, South West, and South South. This grouping has however not been accorded any constitutional recognition. There are close to 400 linguistic groups in Nigeria, but the 3 major languages are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, while English is the official language.

The Nigerian Legal System (NLS) is based on the English Common Law and legal tradition by virtue of colonization and the attendant incidence of reception of English law through the process of legal transplant. English law has a tremendous influence on the Nigerian legal system, and it forms a substantial part of Nigerian law. Section 45 (1) of the Interpretation Act provides that, *the common law of England and the doctrines of equity and the statutes of general application which were in force in England on 1st January, 1900 are applicable in Nigeria, only in so far as local jurisdiction and circumstances shall permit.*

Consequently, legal issues evolving from common law in England and codes of conduct of the medical profession and professional ethics as a whole, such as confidentiality, consent, maleficence, beneficence, duty of care are applicable in Nigeria even though they have not been legislated upon. The sources of Nigerian Law are as follows:

### **1. The Constitution**

The Nigerian Constitution is a Federal one. A federal constitution is one which provides for division of powers between the constituents of the Federal Government.

The Nigerian Constitution is supreme. Constitutional supremacy relates to the supremacy of authority of the constitution over other laws. Section 1(1) provides, “*this Constitution and its provisions shall have binding force on all authorities and persons throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria*”. In addition to this, Section 1(3) provides, “*if any other law is inconsistent with the provisions of this Constitution, this Constitution shall prevail and that other law shall to the extent of the inconsistency be void*”. The current Constitution is the 1999 Constitution. It came into operations on 29th May, 1999.

By virtue of section 13(2)(b), the security and welfare of the people is the primary purpose of the government. Sections 15-21 set out the various ways in ensuring that this purpose is fulfilled without violating the fundamental rights of the citizens which are set out in Chapter 4 of the Constitution. These rights include, the right to life, right to dignity of persons, right to personal liberty, right to fair hearing, right to private and family life, right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, right to freedom of expression and the press, right to peaceful assembly and association, right to freedom of movement, right to freedom from discrimination and the right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria.

## **2. Legislation**

The Constitution regulates the distribution of legislative business between the National Assembly which has power to make laws for the Federation and the House of Assembly of each state of the federation. The current legislation in force at the Federal level is largely contained in the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 (LFN). Laws made subsequently are found in the annual volumes of the laws of the FRN. Federal laws enacted under the

military regime known as Decrees and state laws known as Edicts form the bulk of primary legislations.

### **3. Customary Law**

This emanated from the usage and practices of the people. The traditional classification of customary law is into the following categories:

- **Ethnic/ Non – Muslim:** is the indigenous law that applies to the members of the different ethnic groups. Nigeria is made up of several ethnic groups each with its own variety of customary law. Ethnic Customary law is unwritten, uncertain and difficult to ascertain. Ethnic Customary law is enforced in customary courts. These courts are at the lowest rung of the hierarchy of courts and in most cases are presided over by non- legally trained personnel.
- **Muslim Law / Sharia:** In the southern part of the country, Muslim/ Islamic law, where it exists, is integrated into and has always been treated as an aspect of the customary law. Islamic law has however been in use in the Northern part of the country since 1959. Islamic/Sharia/Muslim Law is written with clearly defined and articulated principles. It is based on the Islamic religion and was introduced in Nigeria as a consequence of a successful process of Islamization. It is based on the Holy Koran and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammad. The Muslim laws, also known as the Sharia are found in the Holy Koran and the Hadith (teachings of the Prophet Mohammad).

### **4. Judicial Precedent**



This is “an earlier happening, decision, taken as an example or rule for what comes up later. The doctrine of precedent is founded on the objective of law that ensures that like cases are decided alike. The operation of the doctrine is tied to the hierarchy of the courts. A court is bound by the decisions of any court above it in the hierarchy and usually by a court of co-ordinate or equivalent jurisdiction. The Supreme Court is the highest court of the land. The Court of Appeal is the penultimate court to entertain appeals from the High Courts, which are the trial courts of general jurisdiction. The Court of Appeal and all lower courts are bound by the decision of the Supreme Court. The judicial precedent does not apply to certain courts like the customary/area courts and the sharia courts. The Federal and State courts are not in two parallel lines. It is only to a limited extent that it may be asserted that each state has its own legal system.

## **5. International Law**

Nigeria is a member of the United Nations, the Commonwealth of Nations, African Union and many others. Although Nigeria is a signatory to various international conventions and covenants, these are not enforceable in Nigeria unless they are enacted into law by the National Assembly.

## **6. Government Bodies**

The system of Government in the FRN is modelled after the American presidential system with three arms of government, namely, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. This is known as ‘Separation of powers. The legislature makes the law, the executive implements the law, while the judiciary interprets the law.

## 7. Legislature

Section 4 (1) of the Constitution provides that the legislative powers of the country shall be vested in the National Assembly. By virtue of sub section (2), the National Assembly has powers to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the federation, to the exclusion of the state House of Assembly. It follows law making procedures as specified in sections 58 and 59 of the 1999 Constitution. It is bicameral and is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The powers of the National Assembly to legislate refer to:

- Any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative list, to the exclusion of the State House of Assembly.
- Any matter in the concurrent legislature list set out in the 1st column of Part II of the 2nd Schedule of the Constitution to the extent prescribed in the 2nd Column opposite; and
- Any other matter with respect to which the National Assembly is empowered to make laws in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

Each state has its own law-making organ known as the House of Assembly. State House of Assemblies have powers to legislate on any matter in the concurrent legislative list and any other matter with respect to which it is empowered to make laws in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. By virtue of S.4 (5), where there is inconsistency between the laws made by the State House of Assembly and the National Assembly, the latter prevails and the former, to the extent of the inconsistency becomes void. It pertinent

to note that scientific and technological research, this includes health research, falls within items on the concurrent list. Consequently, both the National Assembly and the State House of Assembly may make laws governing research ethics in Nigeria.

## **8. Executive**

The executive power of the Federation is vested in the President by virtue of section 5(1) of the 1999 Constitution. Such powers can be administered directly or through the Vice President or Ministers or officers of the government. In the states the executive power of a state is vested in the Governor and may through the Deputy Governor or Commissioners or other public officers.

## **9. Judiciary**

By virtue of section 6(1) of the 1999 Constitution, the following courts are established in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Federal High Court, High Court, Abuja, High Court of a State, the Sharia Court of Appeal of the FCT, Abuja, a Sharia Court of Appeal of a state, the Customary Court of Appeal of the FCT, Abuja and the Customary Court of Appeal. The courts established by the Constitution are the only superior courts of record in Nigeria. The Constitution empowers the National Assembly and the House of Assembly to establish courts with subordinate jurisdiction to the High Court. These courts are invariably inferior courts of record notwithstanding the status of the officer presiding in the courts.

## **10. Statutory Institutions**

Apart from the arms of government set up by the Constitution, there are institutions/ governmental bodies which are creation of statutes. These institutions such as the National Health Research Committee, and National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control, are allowed to make rules, regulations, directives and bylaws pursuant to their enabling Acts and consequently are binding. These institutions are also empowered to institute various committees as necessary in carrying out their duties. Procedures devised for these committees have binding effects on all parties concerned.

The legal basis for research ethics in Nigeria as with all other area of laws is created either through legislation which are called statutory law or by opinions written by judges in court cases which is called case law. Statutory laws influencing research ethics in Nigeria can be found in the Constitution; state and local government legislations; federal enactments (regulations, codes, directives) and international treaties. Some of these legislations have their basis in customary law and practices. Case law comprises of decisions of the various courts on matters brought under different heads of the common law such as Contract and Torts. These decisions determine the outcome of individual cases thereby providing precedents to be followed in the interpretation of statutory laws and the Constitution.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> These sources of Nigerian law where adopted from

- 1999 Constitution 2nd Schedule, Part II, Sections 1; 4-7; 12; 13; 33-43; 235; 237; Items 20-21.
- National Code for Health Research Ethics, 2007
- Interpretation Act, Section 45(1) & (2)
- Research Institute (Establishment) Order of 29th Sept, 1977 in Scientific and Industrial Act, Cap. S3 LFN, 2004

## UPHOLDING DEMOCRACY

Amongst different varieties of governments or regimes, democratic government is the greatest upholder and respecter of human rights. As such, expression of human rights blossoms most in a democratic setting. In Nigeria, democratic practice and its consequent protection of human rights are not what they ought to be. The flagrant violation of human rights in democratic Nigeria by so many governmental agencies casts doubt on the facticity of real democratic practice in Nigeria. Respect for human rights enriches democracy and makes it the best option among many others. The Nigerian democracy is stripped of its one of its beauties, (upholding human of rights), by the rulers and their cohorts. These people see themselves as above the law and have no regards for due process and rule of law. The immunity clause in the 1999 Nigerian constitution is an aberration of real democratic practice. People should be answerable for both their actions and inactions immediately and not after vacating offices. One of the beauties of democracy is the rule of law.

Democracy means the government of the people by the people and for the people. This means that people should be able to have their say on things that have direct bearing to their lives. Democracy as put by Larry J Diamond “is a system of government in which all the people of a state or polity are involved in making decision about their affairs typically by voting to elect representatives to a parliament or similar assembly” (Diamond 2006). Democracy is a government of the People, especially rule of the majority, a government in

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- NAFDAC Act, Sections 1, 5, 29
  - National Health Bill, Section 31

which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually through periodically held free elections. In another definition, democracy is a form of government in which the power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system. Nigeria practices a “representative Democracy”. Representative democracy allows for efficient ruling by a sufficiently small number of people on behalf of the larger number. This is a system in which people elect their lawmakers who are then held accountable to them for their activity within government.

Democracy from the time of the ancient Athenians to the contemporary period has been regarded as a people-oriented kind of government. This notion is gotten from its etymological derivation – “demos and Kratos”, meaning rule or government by the people. In the view of Sabine & Thorson (1973), the Greek Euripides clearly posited a democratic state as one that is ruled by the people through their representatives who are answerable to them. They went further to note the position of Rousseau in this regard as the government of the people for the General Will. This simply implies that the action of the government must be in fulfillment of the Will of the people which naturally is their welfare. As a matter of fact, the government must abide by the rule of law and make available to the people a system of education that will inculcate in the children the idea that the idea of the realization of their individuality resides in their affiliation with the state, a kind of citizenship education. Appadorai (2003), thought of democracy as a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by themselves.

According to Jega (2008), democracy is ancient in origin but continued to evolve, thereby, having varied meanings to various people, such as People’s Democracy; Guided

Democracy; People's Democratic Dictatorship (Chinese). Akinsanya (2000), in his own contribution maintained that democracy not only means a form of government in which the people rule in contradistinction to monarchies, aristocracies and gerontocracies; it also entails a state in which there is some form of political equality among the people. He went on to state that the central pillar of democracy the world over is based on the control of government by the people through free elections and universal adult suffrage. Therefore, only a democratic government, established by the consent of the governed in accordance with their shared values, has the moral authority to act as the legitimate agent of the people. Thus, democracy has been defended on the grounds that it achieves a number of fundamental values and goals; equality, liberty, moral self- development, the common interest, private interests, social utility, the satisfaction of wants and efficient decision. For authentic democracy to be on ground there must be as a matter of utmost necessity an independent electoral umpire, a strong and vibrant judiciary, an enlightened populace, a robust and free press, democratic culture and atmosphere of peace, and security.

Coming home to Nigeria in terms of democratic practice, we assert that the primary instrument of democracy today is the 1999 constitution as amended. From 1999 till date, the question we always ask is, do we really have real democratic government or civilian government and what is real or consolidated democracy? To the first question, the obvious answer is no democratic government since the basic features of democracy are not present. These features are contained in the definition of consolidated democracy which Akinsanya (2000), said is measured by the extent to which a country has regular and fair elections, genuine contestation over selection (or election) of leaders and the choice of policy outcomes and citizenship participation in the electoral process. As a matter of fact, the regimes that took over power since 1999 cannot be called consolidated democratic

regimes if we use the constitution as a guide, this entails measuring their performances using as yardstick by-products of consolidated democracy such as predictability, transparency, accessibility, adherence to constitutionalism and the 'rules of the game', respect for human rights and the rule of law, public accountability and the system of checks and balances. It is really unfortunate that after almost eighteen years of democratic experimentation in Nigeria democratic values have not been established. What one notices everywhere is civilian dictatorship which manifests itself in flagrant violation of human rights of the ordinary citizens of this country. The concept of separation of power which lubricates democracy is a mirage in Nigeria. The 'executive' flexes its muscles arbitrarily and always crows both the 'legislative' and the 'judiciary' and reduces them to mere puppets. In Nigeria the legislature and the judiciary are simply the 'will' of the executive.

The idea of election, in democracy, is to safeguard the human rights of citizens and the popular participation in the political process are forcefully emphasized to the extent that where a political system falls on the scale of democracy is largely a function of the degree to which it recognizes and enforces civil and political rights. In the presence of democratic structures, the more strongly civil and political rights are reinforced in a society, the more democratic it becomes (Arat, 1991). In fact, the fulcrum of every democratic governance are the people; and the nature and character of democratic governments include popular sovereignty, majority rule, protection of minorities, affability, constitutional liberties, participation in policy output and decision-making at every level, egalitarianism and much else. As Odion-Akhaine (2003) did note, democracy has come to approximate the irreducible minimum mode of managing human affairs on a global scale. It is possible only when the people are made the alpha and omega in the governing process, and where the



material prerequisites for man's self-fulfilment, actualization and objectification are available and possible.

However, democracy in Nigeria is a scenario where leadership is centered on and revolved around the elites. These elites, most often than not always forget that the true essence of leadership is service to the people. No wonder Margaret and Deborah in a book titled *Walk Out Walk on* posit that: "A leader is someone willing to help, anyone willing to take those first steps to remedy a situation or create a new possibility". With this characteristic of a leader as described above, we can clearly and confidently say that majority of leaders today in democratic Nigeria are those people who serve themselves and their families. Most of them usually become unwilling to serve when they finally have the mandate of the people who stood under the sun and in the rain to elect them into various positions of responsibilities. In order to satisfy their whims and caprices, they rather hold onto the view that the principles of democracy are not universal, but subjective depending on the environment. Samuel Igomu x-rays a statement made by the Nigerian ex-president Olusegun Obasanjo thus:

"Democracy as concurred in the West may suit our peculiar circumstances and needs. As such, our conceptualization of democracy must take due cognizance of our lived reality and whatever structure and institutions that would sustain democratic practice must reflect the peculiarities of our (Nigerian) environment" (Igomu 2015).

Going by this assertion, democracy thus becomes subjective and the people are liable or subjected to subjugation so as to produce this home-grown democracy. This contrary notion by Obasanjo and other like-minded so-called Nigerian leaders have only given rise

to political maladroitness and deception, and proven to be the root cause of our economic and political malaise and quagmire.

In a newspaper article entitled *The Story of Cain, Abel and Nigeria*, Abimbola Adelakun as cited by Igomu captures the practice of Nigerian democracy thus:

“Today, Nigeria is literally bleeding. There is too much violence. We have bred enough Frankenstein monsters to haunt us. We feed them red meat each time they cry for blood. Those who are not killed by Boko Haram are killed by the joint Task Force. Those who escape the JTF fall into the hands of min-bending illiteracy. Those who manage to escape all those are consumed by road accidents. Some die in poorly equipped hospitals. Those lucky to bypass all of the above are either killed with hunger, poverty, or frustration practically turns them a living dead. It is the curse of Cain. The earth antagonizes people who needlessly shed blood. Recently, multiple road accidents claimed almost 100 lives. In a country where life counts, that should have led to a major social change. Sadly, not even a paragraph of official response came from the government, not even the local government chairmen of the areas the incidents happened. Unfortunately, the government aides who explain these deaths are the same ones who rush to *twitter* to console President Obama over Boston bombing. They are not their own brothers’ keepers because their brothers’ life is worthless”. (Igomu 2015)

What this means is that, peoples’ lives in Nigeria are of little importance to the people they elect to represent them. Yet, when it is time for election, the political elites still fall back to these voiceless people canvassing for votes. In some other countries, the situation is different. For instance, in South Korea, there was a case of some students who

got drown when a plane crashed into a river because of a mistake on the side of the pilot, immediately the minister in charge of education resigned. In August 2015, China had a chemical explosion in a fertilizer plant, immediately the government evacuated and relocated the people to another safe haven. In Nigeria, when the Chibok girls were abducted, the minister in-charge of that ministry felt it's one of the happenings in one's life. This among others is one of the situations we are always confronted with in Nigeria today.

## CONCEPTUALIZING HUMAN RIGHTS

The ontological essence of man demonstrates he is a being with value. The cognition of this intrinsic dignity and value shows imperative inalienable rights of human beings. Those inviolable rights are foundation for justice and peace in the world. If the rights are neglected and disregarded, it will result to barbarous acts which are antithetical to the human conscience. The world in which human person shall express himself, enjoy freedom of speech, religion, freedom from fear, lack and want are the superlative dreams of the human family. Human rights then, are inviolable, inalienable basic rights which a human person possesses inherently simply because he or she is a human being. Human rights are perceived as universal, that is, it is for every person. These rights in national and international law could exist as natural or legal rights. It should be noted that what is meant by "Right" has generated lots of controversy and a subject of ongoing philosophical discourse.

Rights as freedom from unlawful imprisonment, torture, and execution are regarded as belonging fundamentally to all persons. Human rights are basic rights and freedom that all people are entitled to regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic

origin, race, religion, language, or other status. It includes civil and political rights, such as the right to life, liberty and freedom of expression and social, cultural and economic rights including the right to participate in election to work and receive education. Oraegbunam, Ike writes,

“Fundamental human rights are attached to every human being by virtue of that very fact of being human. They are rights inherent in the essence of man.” (Ike 2007)

Right and human rights have always been problematic since antiquity; correlativeness and comparativeness of the two have generated serious debate in the intellectual circle, depending on the school one belongs. Right is that which belongs to a particular thing. Human rights are those rights that belong to humans because they are human beings. Thomas Jefferson rightly articulated definition of human rights in 1887 as he writes from Paris to James Madison on the imperativeness and necessity of upholding individual liberty and the need for a bill of right. Hence, he writes... a bill of rights is what people are entitled to against every government on earth (Calude 1976). Humana opines, human rights are Laws and Practices that have evolved over the countries to protect ordinary people, minorities, groups and races from oppressive rulers and governments (Humana 1983).

Human rights were thus initially believed to be natural rights of every individual and as such, those rights had a distinct anthropological quality. In other words, basic human rights and fundamental freedom were determined by their author’s perception of the nature and essential characteristics of human person. The particular rights and freedoms that were thus thought to be natural concomitants of being human were identified by contemplating the condition of an individual person in a stateless society. By eliminating

all conditions that might be conditioned by a person's station in life as a member of a political society, philosophers attempted to penetrate the true essence of human being and sought to translate the vital modality of being human into rights Talk (Idowu, 2003).

In terms of the definition of human rights, it can be said that in spite of the abundant writings

the concept has generated, the term human rights do not lend itself to a precise definition. Indeed, there has never been a generally accepted definition of human rights among jurists, other scholars and commentators. It is a concept that can be best described rather than defined (Ajomo, 1985). However, despite the problem of not having a generally accepted definition of the concept, the attempt of two scholars in talking about it impressed me a lot.

For Humana (1983), it is laws and practices that have evolved over the centuries to protect ordinary people, minorities, groups and races from oppressive rulers and governments. Irele (1998), distinguished between legal and moral rights as relates to human beings. Legal rights are clearly stated in the legal system while moral rights are not. Moral rights are really regarded as ideal rights. The most important class of ideal or moral rights is that of human rights. Human rights are rights that are held by all human beings unconditionally, unalterably and they are inalienable.

According to Aduba (2012), human rights as those rights that are the very nature of every human person, hence, they define and affirm their humanity, therefore, they exist to ensure that human rights remain sacred and guarantee that inhumanity and injustice are prevented or reduced. He went on to maintain that since these rights are inalienable,

they are not to be taken away or given up and also, they are indivisible, there is no hierarchy among rights and no right can be suppressed in order to promote another right.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) holds that 'Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. They apply regardless of where you are from, what you believe or how you choose to live your life. They can never be taken away, although they can sometimes be restricted- for example if a person breaks the law, or in the interests of national security'. Expanding this apt definition of human rights, United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) posited that 'Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. We are equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, inter-dependent and indivisible.

The history of human rights<sup>107</sup> in Nigeria predates the advent of colonial rule. Human rights and fundamental freedoms were recognized in the traditional Nigerian societies. The idea of rights was not however conceived in the modern notion. Such values as right to family, kin and clan membership, freedom of thought, speech, belief and association, right to enjoy private property and right to participate in governance of the affairs of the society were jealously guarded. In areas where the Sharia legal system was firmly entrenched, especially in the Northern part of the country, human rights and fundamental freedoms were specifically protected and guaranteed in accordance with the tenets of Islam which hold justice and equity in high esteem. Colonialism largely eroded

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<sup>107</sup> Adapted from National Action Plan for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Nigeria 2006 page 3

traditional values and denied Nigerian's political and economic rights. It was not until 1922 through the Clifford Constitution that limited franchise was introduced for the first time in Nigeria by the British Colonial government. The struggle for better political participation by early Nigerian nationalists led to enhanced political rights in the pre-independence constitutions culminating in the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954.

The entrenchment of fundamental human rights in Nigeria in the modern sense could however be traced to the 1960 Independence Constitution and those that followed. The Independence Constitution of 1960 and the Republican Constitution of 1963 have provisions for the protection of fundamental human rights. The 1979 and the 1999 Constitutions went further by providing a bill of rights. Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy in Chapter II also recognized Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The entrenchment of human rights provisions in our Constitutions was aimed at creating a society which protects political freedom as well as the social and economic well-being of Nigerians.

However, despite the guarantee of fundamental rights and liberties in the Nigerian Constitutions since 1960, the country has had the misfortune of military interruptions. This had profound and far-reaching effects on the promotion and protection of democratic values and fundamental freedoms among Nigerians. Before the new dawn of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, successive military regimes systematically violated the rights of Nigerians with impunity. This large-scale denial of human rights in Nigeria reached its peak between November 1994 and June 1998. The abysmal situation of human rights under this regime resulted in Nigeria becoming a pariah state at the international arena and the country was put on the agenda of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for five consecutive years. Nigerians led by human rights civil society groups and professional

bodies engaged the military in the struggle for a better society governed by Constitutionalism, the Rule of Law, Social Justice and respect for Human Rights. This finally resulted in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 and the emergence of democracy and democratic institutions in 1999.<sup>108</sup>

## LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE BACKDROPS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA

The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948 laid the foundation for the adoption of human rights provisions by nation-states today. The Declaration spells out the rights that are essential for effective political participation and has consequently inspired constitution-making around the world and has contributed greatly to the global acceptance of democracy as a universal value.

Similarly, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) lays the legal basis for the principles of democracy under international law, particularly as it concerns freedom of expression (Article 19); the right of peaceful assembly (Article 21); the right to freedom of association with others (Article 22); the right and opportunity to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives (Article 25); and the right to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors (Article 25). As of July 2012, the number of parties to the Covenant was 167, which constitutes approximately 85 per cent of the United

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<sup>108</sup> Adapted from National Action Plan for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Nigeria 2006 page 3



Nations' membership. Nigeria has signed unto the Covenant and it is therefore duty bound to adhere to the provisions.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women stipulates that its 187 States parties (as of July 2012) shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right to vote and stand for elections, and participate in public life and decision-making (Article 7). It is pertinent to note that the whole of Chapter Four of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Amended was devoted to fundamental human rights provisions. Out of the fourteen (14) sections which make up the Chapter, eleven (11) contain various human rights provisions namely,

1. Right to Life-Article 33
2. Right to dignity of human person -Article 34.
3. Right to personal Liberty-Article 35
4. Right to fair hearing -Article 36
5. Right to private and family life -Article 37
6. Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion -Article 38.
7. Right to freedom of expression and the press Article 39.
8. Right to peaceful assembly and association -Article 40.
9. Right to freedom of movement -Article 41
10. Right to freedom from discrimination -Article 42 (1999:34-41).
11. Right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria

## **Right to Life**

Section 33(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended guarantees every citizen of Nigeria the right to life. In furtherance of that right, it provides that " no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria". By implication of the afore-said provisions, every citizen of Nigeria has a right to life, which right can only be taken away in the event of a commission of a serious crime such as murder and armed robbery and upon the order of a court of competent jurisdiction committing the said offender to death. By that very fact, no person or group of persons has the right to kill another person even in event of the latter committing an offence no matter how serious. However, in the wise of sub-section (2), a person shall not be regarded as having been deprived of his/her life if he/she dies as a result of the use, to such extent and in such circumstances as are permitted by law, of such force as is reasonably necessary (a) for the defence of any person from unlawful violence or for the defence of property, (b) in order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained; or (c) for the purpose of suppressing a riot, insurrection or mutiny.

### **Right to Dignity of Human Person**

Every individual, under Section 34 (1), is entitled to respect for the dignity of his/her person. This means that no person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment; no person shall be held in slavery or servitude; and no person shall be required to perform, forced or compulsory labour.

### **Right to Personal Liberty**

Section 35(1) grants every person right to personal liberty. It clearly set out the conditions under which such right could be deprived to include in execution of the sentence or order

of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which an individual has been found guilty; by reason of a person's failure to comply with the order of a court; for purpose of bringing a person before a court or upon reasonable suspicion of his/her having committed criminal offence. Other exceptions include in case of a person who has not attend the age of 18 years, for purpose of his education or welfare, in the case of persons suffering from infectious or contagious disease, persons of unsound mind, persons addicted to drug or alcohol or vagrants, for purpose of their care or treatment or the protection of the community. Section 35(3) provides that any person who is arrested or detained on reasonable suspicion of commission of a criminal offence for the purpose of bringing him/her before a court "shall be brought before a court of law within reasonable time, which in the case of an arrest or detention in any place where there is a court of competent jurisdiction within a radius of forty kilometres means a period of one day and in any other case, a period of two days or such longer period as in the circumstances may be considered by the court to be reasonable. (Section 35(5). It is worthy of note that the submission above does not apply in the case of a person arrested or detained upon reasonable suspicion of having committed a capital offence.

### **Right to Fair Hearing**

Section 36(1) of the Constitution provides that in the determination of civil rights and obligations including any question or determination by or against any government or authority, a person shall be entitled to a fair hearing within a reasonable time by a court or other tribunal established by law and constituted in such manner as to secure its independence and impartiality. Subsection (3) makes a mandatory provision to the effect that "The proceedings of a court or ... of any tribunal relating to the matters mentioned in subsection (1) of this section (including the announcement of the decisions of the court or

tribunal) shall be held in public; even as subsection (6) provides that "Every person who is charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until he is proved guilty."

### **Right to Private and Family Life**

The privacy of every citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications is guaranteed and protected under section 37. The implication of this is that no person or agency of government has the right to invade the privacy of another person.

### **Right to Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion**

Section 38(1) Every person is entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and the public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

### **Right to Freedom of Expression and the Press**

Section 39(1) every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas, information without interference. The section equally grants Nigerians the right to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions.

### **Right to Peaceful Assembly and Association**

Section 40 Every person shall be entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular he may form or belong to any political party, trade union or any other association for the protection of his interests.

### **Right to Freedom of Movement**

Section 41(1) Every Citizen of Nigeria is entitled to move freely throughout Nigeria and to reside in any part thereof, and no citizen of Nigeria shall be expelled from Nigeria or refused entry thereto or exit therefrom.

### **Right to Freedom from Discrimination**

Section 42(1) A Citizen of Nigeria of a particular community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion shall not, by reason only that he is such a person- (paragraph a) be subjected either expressly by, or in the practical application of, any law in force in Nigeria or any executive or administrative action of the government, to disabilities or restrictions to which citizens of other communities, ethnic group, places of origin, sex, religious political opinions are not made subject.

### **Right to Acquire and Own Immovable Property Anywhere in Nigeria**

Section 43 – Subject to the provisions of this constitution, every citizen of Nigeria shall have the right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria. All these rights have their restrictions or duties attached to them. In the defence of public interest, some of the rights may be denied. The right to alter some of these rights resides in the court. To buttress this point, Section 45(1) provides that nothing in Sections 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41 of this constitution shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society in the interest of defence, public safety, public morality or public health; or (b) for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedom of other persons. These are the conditions under which rights could be denied.

Democratic governance feeds into economic and social policies that are responsive to people's needs and aspirations, that aim at eradicating poverty and expanding the choices that people have in their lives, and that respect the needs of future generations. Depending on the context and the overriding objective sought, good governance has been said at various times to encompass full respect of human rights, United Nations Commission for Human Rights (2012). In essence, democratic governance is the process of creating and sustaining an environment for inclusive and responsive political processes and respect of the rights of the citizens.

Human rights are basic rights and freedom that all people are entitled to regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, language, or other status. It includes civil and political rights, such as the right to life, liberty and freedom of expression and social, cultural and economic rights including the right to participate in election, to work and receive education. Human rights are the fundamental features of any true democratic setting because the essence of democracy itself is based on the idea of human rights. Human rights are mostly viewed as the inalienable rights of people (Enebe, 2008). They are the legal entitlements which every citizen could enjoy without fear of the government or its fellow citizens. They are those rights which cannot be said to have been given to man by man but are earned by man for being a human because these are necessary for his continuous happy existence with himself, his fellow man and for participation in a complex society (Kaluge, 2013, p.4).

The basic issues involved in fundamental human rights according to Ndifon (2013) are: (a) freedom rights – freedom from oppression in its various forms, (b) participation rights – in the decision-making processes in various sphere of life, (c) benefits right – to food, work, medical care, education, etc. In a study of the development and evolution of

human rights (Nwafor, 2010; Kaluge, 2013; Ndifon, 2013) classified the stages in the growth of human rights into three generations: civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; and solidarity or community rights. It must be noted that in a democratic society, the basic rights of the citizens are guaranteed. That is why every modern constitution contains some formal guarantees of civil rights. Nevertheless, there is a great disparity at the level of sincerity that these rights are protected by different countries. This prompted Austin Ranney to remark that, "the mere presence of formally guaranteed rights in any nation's constitution means at least that the framers, for whatever reason, deemed it desirable to pay at least lip service-and perhaps more to the idea of the rights of men" (Ranney, 1975).

Idowu A.A in his journal explains that adherence to the concepts of human rights and democracy had since been recognized as a veritable means of achieving peace, stability and development in the world. At present, efforts are being intensified by various individuals, regional and international organizations as well as governmental bodies to internationalize and globalize the campaigns for promotion of human rights and democracy with a view to eradicating all forms of oppressive regimes in all human societies. (Idowu 2003)

Nigerian governments know in principle what human rights and democracy are all about. But in practice, it is far from their dictionary. The 1999 constitution was explicit on the fundamental human rights of her people but those in governance still close their eyes on the constitutional provisions of the rights of the people. Almost all the institutions of government saddled to promote and protect human rights and dignity have relatively failed if not totally. To give credence to the above; Ojo says, "in virtually all political systems, there are a number of institutional mechanisms put in place either formally to

safeguard the inalienable rights of man. The issue is only that the strength and efficacy of their safeguards differs from state to state and makes the level of political development cum democratic consolidation in each state". (Ojo 2006)

The most significant human rights problems in Nigeria are extra-judicial killings and use of excessive force by security forces, impunity for abuses by security forces, arbitrary arrests, prolonged pre-trial detention, judicial corruption, and executive lawlessness and influence on the judicial system. Joint Pastoral Letter delineates:

Unfortunately, in Nigeria, our democracy is ailing and some sectors of the institutions that ought to protect our democracy – the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, and the press are not doing enough for the people, and are not yet always at the service of our God-given freedom.<sup>109</sup>

The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria mentioned in section 1(1): "The constitution is supreme and its provisions shall have binding force on all authorities and persons throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria"<sup>110</sup>. The Federal institutions whose work it is to respect human rights seem to forget the above constitutional provision. The manner they go about their work shows that they don't have regard to the constitution. The law is made for the common people. That is why there is abuse of human rights in Nigeria. Some people are above the law. Rules can be bent to favour some people. Every

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<sup>109</sup> CBCN. *Growing A NEW Nigeria, Joint Pastoral Letter of Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria On The 50th Anniversary of Nigeria's Political Independence, Abuja: Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria.p26*

<sup>110</sup> *1999 Constitution, section (1)*



human being is equal in as much as they are human. The American Declaration of Rights of Man (1776) asserts,

... We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness<sup>111</sup>

The attitude of those in governance depicts the opposite of the above written quotation. There is a divide in the entity called Nigeria. The government sees itself as super-human being. For them, the self-evident truth that all are equal before the creator is nothing but semantic. The common people are piece of wood that could be burnt at will. They are low-humans. United Nations on the adoption of human rights in 1948 postulates the following,

Whereas, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world; whereas, disregard and contempt of human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind... that human rights should be protected by rule of law.<sup>112</sup>

In light of the rule of law, the public officers in Nigeria have not really done well to protect the human rights of her citizens. They took oath of office and allegiances to preserve, protect and defend the country's constitution. Implicit to this are the duties to protect the rights of Nigerians. The question and is. Has the Government in this Democratic

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<sup>111</sup> *The America Declaration of Rights of Man 1776.*

<sup>112</sup> *United Nations, "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

dispensation so far done well to reduce, if not eradicate series of abuses of human rights in the country? The government has not lived up to their responsibilities to protect and respect human rights and dignity of the individual. The agencies of government have not collaborated their activities to reduce human rights situation in Nigeria. Religious group have not also done well and government has not checked these religious laws that are inconsistent with constitution. Twelve Northern State have adopted the Sharia penal code: Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Kaduna, Kastina, Kabbi, Jigawa, Niger, Sokoto, yobe, and zamfara. The sharia panel code only applies to Muslims. It provides harsh sentences for alcohol consumptions, infidelity and amputations, lashing, stoning and long prison terms.

Christian's pastors in Nigeria have been accused of involvement in the torturing and killing of children accused of witchcraft. A number of children have been killed by their parents through the advice of the pastors who branded them witches and wizards. These types of practices and law should be seen as obsolete and as such replaced or abolished. The constitution should take precedence over these laws. Joint pastoral letters added in such country, human dignity is disrespected, just and peaceful co-assistance is at risk, anarchy sets in, and under-development reigns. It cannot be rightly said that such a nation is God fearing since the violation of human freedom is an affront to divine sovereignty. If the human is at the center of authentic development, education teaches us to take personal responsibility for the common good. The role of personal responsibility is to be seen in the fact that God created human person with a desire for and the capacity to seek self-fulfillment by undertaking some task.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> CBCN. *Growing A NEW Nigeria, Joint Pastoral Letter of Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria On The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of Nigeria's Political Independence, Abuja: Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria p. 26-31*

## HUMAN RIGHTS GOVERNANCE UNDER DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

There is no denying that Nigerian Constitution contains very elaborate provisions granting fundamental rights to Nigerians. There is also no doubt that the said provisions were in conformity with international human right instruments with the aim of deepening democratic governance in the country. What has however raised concerns was the extent to which successive governments particularly the present government have promoted and observed the provisions.

Human rights protection as used here entails conscious efforts targeted at preventing violations of constitutionally and legally guaranteed rights and offering redress, remedies or sanctions if human rights are violated and anticipating problems and using effective strategies and mechanisms to deal with the anticipated problems before they occur. It also involves receiving and responding approximately to, and acting upon individual and group complaints on human rights violations. According to Jega (2007), the promotion of human rights involves making citizens know their rights, to be able to defend them, as well as know the rights of others, to be able to respect and not breach them. It also includes training of the law enforcement personnel and those involved in the administration of justice, to enable them show greater respect for other people's rights, and sensitivity and tact in handling human rights issues in their duties as public officers. All these are aimed at entrenching the culture of respect for human rights.

Human rights records of the governments of Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Musa YarÁdua and Goodluck Jonathan were overly tainted by infractions and violations no doubt, however the expectations of the people were heightened by the change mantra of the present government regarding the protection of the rights of Nigerians under the

present dispensation. In a democracy, the rule of law protects the rights of individuals, preserves order, and limits powers of government. The reverse seems to be the case in Nigeria. Human rights are not respected. Extra-judicial killing, unlawful detention, and other series of human rights abuses are still prevalent. Ofoegbu (2013) noted that the most significant human rights problems in Nigeria are extra-judicial killings and use of excessive force by security forces, impunity for abuses by security forces, arbitrary arrests, prolonged pre-trial detention, judicial corruption, and executive lawlessness and influence on the judicial system.

Based on reports on the infringement of human rights, according to Human Right Watch Report (2018), the ongoing Boko Haram conflict in the North-east, cycles of communal violence between pastoralists and farmers, and separatist protests in the Southern part defined Nigeria's human rights landscape in 2017. The most serious human rights abuses during the year were those committed by Boko Haram, which conducted killings, bombings, abduction and rape of women, and other attacks throughout the country, resulting in numerous deaths, injuries, and widespread destruction of property; those committed by security services, which perpetrated extrajudicial killings, torture, rape, beatings, arbitrary detention, mistreatment of detainees, and destruction of property; and widespread societal violence, including ethnic, regional, and religious violence.

A news report by the United States Government published on Premium Times of March 26, 2018 has described Nigeria as a country where corruption, official impunity, and gross human rights violations occur at will. According to the Report, the terrorist group,

Boko Haram, and the Nigerian Government are the worst perpetrators of human rights abuses in the country.

Nigerian government has failed to implement a December 2016 court order for the release of Ibrahim El Zakzaky, leader of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN). Zakzaky and his wife Zeenat, as well as hundreds of IMN members have been in detention without trial since December 2015 when soldiers killed 347 IMN members in Zaria, Kaduna State. Violence between nomadic and farming communities spread beyond the North-Central region to southern parts of the country in 2017. Hundreds of people were killed and thousands displaced.

In April 2017, Nnamdi Kanu, leader of the separatist Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) was released from detention on the orders of a court. He was arrested in October 2015 and detained on treason charges in response to calls for Igbo independence by IPOB.

In June 2017 a northern-interest pressure group, the Arewa Youth Consultative Forum (AYCF), issued a notice demanding that Igbos leave northern Nigeria before October 1, 2017, or face “visible actions.” Following condemnation by various interlocutors, including United Nations independent experts, the AYCF withdrew the quit notice in late August 2017.

In July 2017, two days of clashes between herdsmen and farmers killed over 30 people in Kajuru village, 31 miles outside the city of Kaduna, Kaduna State. A similar attack in Jos, Plateau State left 19 dead and five injured in September. The governor of Kaduna State called for the intervention of the regional bloc, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to end the perennial violence between the two groups.

Daily Post News Online of February 22, 2018 published the **damning Report of Amnesty International on arbitrary arrest, unlawful killings and communal violence, freedom of assembly and expression as follows:**

### **On Arbitrary Arrests**

- By April 2017, the military detained more than 4,900 in extremely overcrowded facility in Giwa Barrack.
- Disease, dehydration and starvation killed at least 340 detainees.
- At least 200 children, as young as four were detained in children's overcrowded cell.
- Hundreds of women believed to be related to Boko Haram members were held by the military.
- In September 2017 the Office of Attorney General announced mass trial of Boko Haram suspects.

### **On Unlawful Killings**

- At least 12 IPOB members were killed by soldiers in Umuahia in Abia state on September 14, 2017.
- There was outrage over activities of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), and after huge pressure, police agreed to reform the squad.

## **On Communal Violence**

- Lingering violence between herdsmen and farmers claimed more than 549 and displaced thousands in 12 states.
- In February 21 villagers were killed by suspected herdsmen in Atad, Kaura district, Kaduna State.
- Twenty-one people were killed by suspected herdsmen in Ancha village of Miango, Plateau state.
- An attack by suspected herdsmen lead to the death of 27 people in Nkyie-Doghwro, Plateau state.
- In December herdsmen attacked 5 villages in Demsa LGA Adamawa State, killing up to 57 people.

## **On Freedom of Assembly**

- The police continued to deny Islamic Movement of Nigeria, which was banned by the Kaduna State government in 2016, the right to peaceful protest.
- On 25 July, Police in Kano city prevented a group of women from protesting against the persistent rape of women and children in the state.

## **On Freedom of Expression**

- On 19 September 2017, the Katsina State police arrested three bloggers, Jamil Mabai, Bashir Dauda and Umar Faruq for criticizing the Governor.

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- On 19 January 2018, police raided the offices of Premium Times and arrested publisher Dapo Olorunyomi and correspondent Evelyn Okakwu for several hours, after the Chief of Army Staff accused the newspaper of offensive publications. (Human Watch Report 2018)

As explicitly explained in this chapter, Human rights cannot be taken away in a democracy because democratic governments exist to cater for the interest of the populace by safeguarding their fundamental rights. The import of human rights is today underscored by elaborate provisions in the constitutions of states. In the case of Nigeria, the 1999 Constitution as amended provides for the rights of Nigeria, however, what is still lacking is any serious and conscious attempt by the present government to abide by those provisions. The democratic Nigerian government is fond of disobeying court rulings, abuses court processes, arrests and detains both real and imagined enemies without trial and releases some of them unconditionally (as a result of innocence) without compensations and apologies. It is necessary to re-orient the security agents by way of training to always respect the rights of Nigerians and also, Nigerians should know their rights and insist on them being respected without fear of intimidation, victimization and contradictions.



## MIKE OZEKHOME: RECOGNIZING A TRUE NIGERIAN PATRIOT

### BIOGRAPHY

High Chief (Dr.) Mike Agbedor Abu Ozekhome, Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), the Akpakpa Vighi Vighi of Edo land, Constitutional Lawyer, Human Rights Activist, pro-democracy campaigner, Author, Social Justice Crusader, Notary Public of Nigeria, Knight of the Order of St. Mulumba (KSM), Motivational Speaker and Public Affairs Analyst, hails from Iviukwe town in Etsako East Local Government Area of Edo state, Nigeria. His late parents, Chief Abu Ozekhome and Madam Alimoh Abu Ozekhome were revered Chiefs and notable Community leaders. The colossus who has bestrode the Nigerian legal landscape for over two decades. He has evinced his flashes of academic wizardry and enviable leadership qualities right from his secondary school days at St. Peter's College, Agenebode, Edo State (1970 to 1974) where he was the overall best student in the West African School Certificate Examination at the school.

His oratorical skill and writing prowess were honed in his secondary school days when he became the Co-founder and General Secretary, Press Club St. Peter's College, Agenebode (1972 to 1974) and the winner, Inter-Collegiate debates competitions Etsako Secondary Schools for three years running (1972 1974). These skills later flourished when he was a law student at the prestigious University of Ife. Amongst several other outstanding achievements, he was the best debater, Inter-faculty Debate, for three consecutive years (1977 to 1979) and the Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Editor-in-Chief and later Chairman at various times, of the X-Ray Club, publishers of the vibrant "The X-Ray" Magazine. He bagged his (LL. B. Hons) degree in 1980 and was called to the Nigerian Bar in

1981. He later bagged his Master of Law degree (LL.M) in 1983 from his Alma mater, University of Ife.

Mike Ozekhome started his professional legal practice as a Youth Corper posted to Yola, the capital city of the then Gongola State, now Adamawa and Taraba States, but got redeployed to the Federal Ministry of Justice, Lagos, as he felt his services and bubbling energy were grossly underutilized. He was subsequently seconded to the then National Provident Fund (now Nigerian Social Insurance and Trust Fund (NSITF), where he served as state counsel. Thus, while working as state counsel, he joined the legendary Chief Gani Fawehinmi on a part time basis to unleash part of his bubbling professional energy and zeal. This was later to sharpen his advocacy skills and build a stronger platform for his fiery human rights activism and dogged defense of people's rights.

A consummate scholar and highly successful legal practitioner, Mike Ozekhome was a Graduate Assistant, Faculty of Law, at the University of Ife (1982 to 1983), Senior Lecturer, Benson Idahosa University, Benin city (2004 to 2006) and Guest Lecturer to some Nigerian Universities (1985 till date). He was an Associate and Deputy Head of Chambers of Gani Fawehinmi's Chambers, Lagos (1984 to 1985). Today, he is the Chief Counsel / Head of Chambers, Mike Ozekhome's Chambers, a thriving legal firm of over twenty-five Attorneys with branches scattered across four zones of Nigeria, namely, Lagos, Abuja, Benin City and Agenebode (1986 till date).

Fondly called "Ozek Baba" and "Mobile Dictionary" by Late Chief Gani Fawehinmi for his advocacy skills, sheer brilliance, lucidity and clarity of thought, scholastic disposition and rich vocabulary in the English language, Ozekhome soon stamped his authority on human rights and anti-military cases, handling detention cases in faraway places as Jos,

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Kaduna, Yola, Umuahia, Enugu, Abuja, Ibadan, Makurdi, Maiduguri, Calabar, Port-Harcourt, Owerri, Uyo, Akure, Aba, Warri, Kaduna, Benin City and Kano. Mike Ozekhome specializes in Constitutional Law, Litigation and Arbitration, Corporate and Commercial Law, Taxation, Oil, Gas and Environmental Law, Real Property, Aviation, Maritime and ICT Practice, and several other branches of law. He is happily married with children.

Mike Ozekhome's membership of professional bodies are:

- a. International Bar Association (IBA).
- b. Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA).
- c. African Bar Association (A.B.A.).
- d. Nigerian Bar Association (N.B.A.).
- e. Fellow, Nigerian Institute of management (FNIM).
- f. Transparency International (Nigeria).
- g. Peace Initiative.

His notable Honorary Awards include:

- Senior Advocate of Nigerian (SAN) (2009).
- Senior Advocate of the Masses (S.A.M.) presented by the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) (2005).
- LL.D. (Doctor of Laws) degree (Honoris Causa) American Heritage University, California (2008).
- Ph.D. (Honoris Causa) (Business Administration). Cornerstone University and Theological Seminary, Jerusalem, Israel (2010).

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- “Great African Patriotic Achiever of the Year” Award by Vision Africa, London (April, 2010).
- Inducted into the American Hall of fame for his “Outstanding Commitment, Dedication and Inspiration Leadership” by the American Biographical Institute, Raleigh North Carolina, USA (2011).
- “Life Achievement Award” Plaque by the United Cultural Convention (2011).
- “National Hero African Hall of Fame Award” by the National Hero Magazine as “Most Dynamic Lawyer of the Year” (2006).
- Listed in “Dictionary of International Biography” (Who is Who in the World) by the International Biography Centre (IBC), Cambridge, England (1999).
- Today, Sir Mike Agbedor Abu Ozekhome, SAN, is a member of over twenty professional bodies, clubs and associations. He has received over 150 Awards and Honours both locally and across the globe. Some of these awards include the following:
  - “Award of Excellence” award by National Association of Edo state Students of Obafemi Awolowo University Chapter, Ile-Ife, Osun State “as the mouth piece of the masses” (2011).
  - “Award of Honour” by Bola Adekanle Campus Chambers by Faculty of Law, Ambrose Ali University, Expoma, “In recognition of his commitment and selfless contribution geared towards the development and Advancement of the legal profession in Nigeria” (2011).
  - Honeyland Schools, Most Supportive Parent Award “In appreciation of his consistent and positive support to Honeyland Schools” (2011)

- “Award for Excellence” honoured by Etsako Student Union, Auchu Polytechnic Chapter (2010).
- Human Rights Defenders Organization of Nigeria (HURDON) Award of Honour as the “Foremost Human Rights Activist for 2008”.
- Pan African Partnership Golden Award for Professional Integrity & Productivity by Pan News Magazine on 27th November, 2008.
- Fellow of the Academy For Entrepreneurial Studies, Nigeria (AES) (2008)
- Fellow of Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliations (FICMC) (2010).
- “Excellent Merit Award” given by Ancient Edo-Benin Cultural, Arts, Music and Tourism forum world – wide, for his invaluable law service to the Federal Republic of Nigeria as a constitutional lawyer and human rights activist (2006).
- “Industrious Barrister of the year (2005)” Award by the Law Students Society, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye (2006).
- Men of Achievement Award” in recognition of his outstanding achievement in business and contribution to the growth and development of Nigeria” (2006)
- “National Hero, African Hall of Fame Award” (2006)
- “Golden Award” by the Law Students Association of Nigeria “in recognition of his contribution towards the sustenance of Democracy Human Rights and the Rule of Law (2005)
- “Outstanding Niger Delta Award” made by Niger Delta Democracy Union for his “positive contributions in advancing the cause of the South-South at the National Political Reform Conference (2005)”.

- “Award for Excellence” presented by Weppa-Wanno Union, Lagos branch “In recognition of his selfless contributions to the ADVANCEMENT of Weppa-Wanno people (2005).
- “Distinguished Service Award” by the South South Peoples Assembly (SSPA) “in recognition and acknowledgement of his steadfastness, dedication and patriotism to the course of the South-South Zone at the National Political Reforms Conference” (2005).
- “Certificate of Merit” by South South Peoples Assembly (SSPA) “for his dedication, resourcefulness, steadfastness and patriotism to the aspirations of the South South geo-political zone at the “National Political Reforms Conference” (2005).
- “Law Students Association of Nigeria (LAWSAN) Golden Award in “recognition of his contribution towards the sustenance of Democracy, Human rights and rule of law in Nigeria” (2005).
- “Professional Excellence and Humanitarian Service Award” made by Centre for Academic Initiative in “recognition of his professional Excellence and Humanitarian service” (2004).
- “Corporate Affairs Management Award” for excellent performance as a top executive achiever in corporate management (2004).
- “Award for Excellence” presented by the Youth Campaign for Democracy “for his exemplary leadership in Political and Constitutional Advocacy” (2004).
- “African International Role-Model Leadership Gold Award for Excellence in recognition of his immense contributions in Africa through his sound leadership style (2003).

- “Honorary Fellowship Award” by the Institute of Corporate Affairs Management (FCAM) in recognition of his Excellent Performance as a Top Executive Achiever in Corporate Nigeria (F.ICA) (2003)
- “Distinguished Mentor to Nigerian Future Leaders”, an award by the Nigerian Institute of Leadership (2003).
- “Diamond Award for Professional Excellence” by Rolam Communications (2003) in “honour and recognition of (his) achievements in Legal/Human Rights”
- “Herbert Macculay Leadership Award” by New Nigeria Foundation for Human Rights Advocacy (2003).
- “Excellent performance Award” by the International Foundation for Excellence (IFEX) Nigerian Chapter (2002)
- “Honorary Citizen of the State of Georgia”, U.S.A (2002)
- “Ecowas Distinguished Corporate Achievers Gold Award” for the “unparalleled and imperishable contribution made to the overall development of Nigeria and the sub-region in the areas of Law, democracy, Human Rights and Social Justice” (2000).
- “Senior Advocate of the Masses (S. A. M.)”, an award conferred on him by the Ogun State University Law Students Association (2000).
- Senior Advocate of the Masses (SAM) conferred on him by the entire Nigerian students under the aegis of NANS (2005).
- Senior Advocate of Nigerian Students (SANS), an honour bestowed on him by all students in Nigerian Universities under the Aegis of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) (2001).

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- “Knight of the Law Students Society (KLSS)”, one of the highest awards by the Law Students Society, Obafemi Awolowo University (O.A.U.), Ile-Ife (1999)

High Chief Mike Ozekhome has received Political Assignments both in National and International Scenes:

- Appointment “National Leader of the Thought” by the National Summit Group to discuss and chart the way forward for Nigeria. He was the only representative from the entire Edo State (February, 2010).
- Member of the “Monitoring and Observation Board” by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to monitor and observe the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Area Council Elections which were adjudged to have been free, fair and credible (April, 2010).
- Federal Government nominee to Vision 2020 (representing the Judiciary and Rule of Law thematic area). This special committee was set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria to reposition Nigeria as one of the leading economics in the World by the 2020 (2009).
- Spokesman (Chairman, Publicity and Media Committee) of the South-South Delegates Forum of the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC) (2005). This forum spear headed issues bordering on Resource Control, Revenue Allocation and Fiscal federalism.
- Chairman, Subcommittee on Civil Society, Media and Labor at the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC) (2005).



- Member, Five-Member Special Presidential Committee that investigated and recalled many politically victimized and expelled students and lecturers of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, particularly during the military era. This committee toured all tertiary institutions in Nigeria, and arbitrated on and resolved cases of injustice done to lecturers and students during the military era. Many of those recalled or reinstated have since become big players in the Nigeria socio-economic and political scene (2001).
- Chairman, Seven-Man Panel of “Persons of unquestionable integrity”, appointed under section 188 (5) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, that investigated allegations leveled against the then Deputy Governor of Abia State, during impeachment proceedings against him, (2000).
- Member, Seven-Man panel of Inquiry set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria to probe, restructure and reorganize the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) whose recommendations led to massive and profound port reforms in Nigeria (1994).
- Ambassador of Peace World Peace Federation affiliated to the United Nations Organisation (UNO).
- Ambassador representing Nigerian at the World Forum in Cambridge, England (2010) and San Francisco, USA (2011).
- International Ambassador for Peace a recognition by University Peace Federation (an Interreligious and international Federation for World peace, a body with special consultative state with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOL) (2001).

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- Member of the “Monitoring and Observation Board” by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to monitor and observe the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Area Council Elections which were adjudged to have been free, fair and credible (April, 2010).
- Appointed as a Member of the “Monitoring and Observation Board” by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to monitor and observe the delicate Anambra State gubernatorial elections of 6th February, 2010, and subsequent elections in Nigeria (2010). These election were adjudged by local and international Observers as well and members of the public as one of the freest, fairest and most credible elections ever held in Nigeria.
- Federal Government nominee to Vision 202020 representing the Judiciary and Rule of Law thematic area. This special committee was set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria to reposition Nigeria as one of the leading economies in the World by the year 2020 (2009).
- Federal Government nominee representing Civil Society to the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC) (2005).
- Patron, University of Ile-Ife Campus Chambers (since 1988).
- Fought numerous detention cases, getting released and freed from illegal incarceration and jail, hundreds of Nigerians.
- Sir Mike A. A. Ozekhome was detained several times between 1986 and 1999 gun-toting Security Agents of the Federal government on account of his Human Rights and Pro-Democracy activities, especially during successive military juntas.
- Founder, Mike Ozekhome Foundation (MOF), a wholly philanthropic and charitable organization committed to salvaging from ignorance, abject penury, hunger,

disease and squalor, the down-trodden and wretched of the society. This Foundation is involved in granting interest-free micro credit facilities, promoting sports and social welfare, granting scholarships to indigent but brilliant students of secondary and tertiary institutions, youth and woman development and empowerment through provision of motorcycles, sewing machines, etc and general re-engineering of the society.

Mike Ozekhome has handled and participated in many sensational and epochal cases that have shaped Nigeria, contributed to her legal jurisprudence and enthroned Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law from the High Court to the Supreme Court. Some of these cases include:

The “Oil Subsidy” case; The “Umanah Umanah (Port-Harcourt money-man)” case; The “on-shore/Off-shore” suit at the Supreme Court; “36 Houses of Assembly Vs. Senate” suit; The “General Zamani Lekwot” case; The “Gwagwalada Five” case; The “Decampment” of Senators case; The “Electoral Act” case; The “Nzeriba Vs. Senate” Cases at the Federal High Court and Court of Appeal; “The ICPC Vs. Senate” cases from the Federal High Court to Supreme Court; The “Anyim Vs Nzeriba cases from the FCT High Court, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court; The “Anyim Vs. Akanbi” cases; The “Uduehi Vs. N'Abba” case, The Alamieyeseigba cases at the Federal High Court, in Yenogao, Abuja and Court of Appeal Lagos and Port Harcourt; The Daboh Vs. National Assembly case; Kenny Martins series of cases at the FCT High Court, Federal High Court, Court of Appeal; The Senator Bob Vs. Chief Ime Albert Akpan at Lession Petition in Tribunal, Uyo, Federal High Court, Abuja, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court; The FRN Vs. Femi Fani Kayode at the Federal High Court, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court; FRN Vs. Charles Ojo at the Federal High Court and Court of

Appeal; Prince Abubakar Audu's line of cases at the FCT High Court, Federal High Court, Lokoja and election petition, FRN Vs. Igbinedion, Global Fleet Vs. BPE; Daar Communications Plc series of cases in Lagos and Abuja; The Odom Vs. Amange Barigla cases at FCT High Court, Election Petition Tribunal, Yenogao and court of Appeal and Port Harcourt. He has also served as Arbitrator, Mediator or Conciliator in numerous cases across the globe.

He has variously been cited in:

- Dictionary of International Biography (Who's Who's in the World) by International Biographical Centre (IBC), Cambridge, England, 28th and 29th Editions.
- "Who's Who in Nigeria", by NIBC, Lagos
- "Who's Who in Nigeria" by NewsWatch Publications Ltd
- "Who's Who in Edo State"
- "Man of the Year, 1999" by International Biographical Centre (IBC), Cambridge, England.
- "One of 2000 Intellectuals in the World" by International Biographical Centre (IBC), Cambridge, England (1999).
- "One of the outstanding personalities of the 20th century" by International Biographical Centre (IBC), Cambridge, England (2000)
- "One of the 100 sports personalities of the 20th century" by Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) Lagos State Chapter.

In retrospect, it is obvious that High Chief Mike Ozekhome has a mission in which law is a tool, weapon and an instrument of socio-economic and political engineering, not

only for self- actualization, but more importantly, for the promotion of public interest and the struggle for the emancipation of the masses from oppression. He has given voice to the voiceless, hope to the hopeless and the vanquished, succor to the cheated, denied, rejected and repressed member of the *holoi poloi*.

A consummate Author who has written four Law books and over 200 articles, Dr Mike A. A. Ozekhome, is a realist with stoic determination. His guiding principles are: be bold, courageous and fearless in the defense of people’s rights. He is highly detribalized. He believes in the infallibility of God, the dignity of man and full respect of his God-given liberties and freedoms. He believes in one Nation only to the extent that such entity is characterized by a sense of social justice, peace, equity, equalitarianism and mutual respect by the various Nationalities for one another. The Nigerian people attest to his illustrious credentials, avalanche of achievements and strong legal pedigree.

Nigeria as a Nation treasures this outstanding legal and Human Rights colossus of our time, a man with a very clean report card; depth of thought, clarity and lucidity of mind, exceptionally compassionate personality and a God-fearing Catholic. He is happily married with seven Children to High Chief (Lady) Josephine Mike Ozekhome, a Barrister at Law and the Managing Partner of Mike Ozekhome's Chambers, Lagos, Abuja, Benin City and Agenebode.

High Chief (Dr) Mike Ozekhome, SAN enjoys reading and writing, traveling and sightseeing, sports and music, philanthropy and empowerment activities, hot argument/debates, tending pets and plants. He is a teetotaler. He fears and glorifies God, putting Him first in all his undertakings.

**SOWORE OMOLEYE**

The former presidential candidate of AAC, Mr. SOWORE OMOLEYE was arrested and detained by the Department of State Services (DSS) over his calling for a revolution over the alleged failure of the current federal government and this revolution was to result to a nationwide protest expected to start on Monday September.... In 21 cities across the country. Protests over his unjust arrests occurred alongside his unjust arrests in different locations of the country. This arrest was heavily criticized by Mike Ozekhome who said that the Buhari administration is intolerant of criticism. Speaking on Channels Television, he said:

“Dancing on the street saying we don’t want bad governance; how did that amount to treason? This government is allergic to plurality of voices. This government is allergic to criticism, this government is allergic to opinions. This government should know that Nigeria is a country with many colors.”

Further, recalling what the Nigerian police had already described this planned protest as “treasonable felony and acts of terrorism”. Mike Ozekhome described that statement has 'illogical'; “That allegation is most damning and most illogical from the government or security spokespersons.”

As a constitutional Lawyer, he authoritatively made references to the Nigerian Constitution, where he explained that to define treason, a person has to look at Sections 37, 39,40,41,42 and 43 of the criminal code that applied to the Southern part of Nigeria. Further he argued:

“You must look at Section 410 of the Penal Code that applies in the Northern Part of Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. Treason is the act of overthrowing the sovereign government of a state.”

Despite the unjust detention of Mr. Sowore, several potential demonstrators warned that the 'Revolution Now' (as the planned protest was tagged by Sowore) marches would go on whether he remained in custody beyond the 5<sup>th</sup> of August, 2019. The organizers of the protests spoke to media outlets that the government should focus on the underlying issues that sparked the planned demonstration and not going down on citizens for exercising their rights to speech, association and assembly. They further explained that the protest's demand is in three phases, each containing a laundry of critical issues that must be addressed and if it the government fails to meet them, the protests would continue. The first phase was to end antipeople economic policies. Second phase was to end special privileges for the ruling class while the third phase hanged on returning political power and national wealth to the working people. These were Sowore's plans for the protest before his arrest was described as 'an act of terrorism or treason'.

He was arraigned before an Abuja Federal High Court. The ruling was held in Favor of Sowore Omoleye due to an appeal Mike Ozekhome made to the Attorney-General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami to invoke his power under Section 174 of Nigeria's constitution to discontinue and terminate the trial of Sowore which says:

“The Attorney-General of the Federation under Section 174 of the constitution can one, take up, charge and terminate any criminal proceedings against any person.”

He can use his powers at this point to discontinue the case and allow Sowore to go home. With this the federal High Court led by Justice Taiwo Taiwo granted Sowore bail on September 24, 2019. In reacting to this ruling, Mike Ozekhome urged the Nigerian government to save itself from public ridicule by closing its case against Sowore. He said:

“It is good that the court ordered Sowore to be released forthwith to his lawyer. This is how it should be so that whenever the government is desirous of arraigning Sowore, it can go ahead and arraign him. My advice to the government is that they should honorably discontinue this case forthwith.”

Mike Ozekhome bravely stood up for the truth based on the constitution. As long as the constitution has not been altered, he made sure the Sowore case was withdrawn and he could enjoy his rights as a Nigerian citizen.

### **GEN. LEKWOT ZAMANI (STOPPING HIS EXECUTION)**

The case of General Lekwot Zamani takes us back in time before the civilian rule became possible today; it was a case of a sacrificial lamb who escaped the blade at the last minute. Religious and ethnic Riots were very severe in Kaduna State in 1992 and it was believed by two Special Tribunals that fifteen (15) Nigerians including General Zamani were involved in the riot uprising which led to the death of hundreds of Nigerians, hence they were imprisoned and to make it so difficult for these alleged ones, all constitutional guarantees were suspended for the trials and there was no right to appeal. These unjust legal proceedings threatened to culminate in a Government-sanctioned lynching since none of the trials even approached the due process requirements for the imposition of the death penalty established by both National and international standards.



Out of the fifteen imprisoned, six of them were sentenced to that and it gained international attention because of the distinguished record of Rt. Major General Lekwot Zamani, who was a military Governor of Rivers State in Southern Nigeria in the 1970s and after the end of his tenure, he held a title of Ambassador-at-Large to Mauritania, Cape Verde and Gambia. The trial of these six members on death row was bought before Judge Benedict Okadigbo, who was known for his blatant bias and hostility and an extraordinary level of abuse.

Before the riots and subsequent arrests, convictions and death sentences, Nigeria enforced the tightly controlled transition to Civilian rule which forbade Nigerians from forming Party alliances of their own choice including those based on ethnicity or religion. In denying Nigerians a legitimate arena for the promotion of interests based on ethnicity, the government drove these ambitions underground. This heightened tensions among the country's more than 250 ethnic groups, which often saw themselves as competing for political power. In Kaduna State, as in northern Nigeria as a whole, the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group was the largest and most politically powerful. The Katafs were one of the ethnic Christian minorities in the North, of which General Lekwot was a member and for whom he had been for years a vocal leader and organizer. Zango-Kataf, which was inhabited by both Hausas and Katafs, had been a center of tension ever since colonial days. It was there that violence erupted in 1992.

Disagreements between the Hausas and Katafs over land ownership did not start in 1992, it dated back at least a century ago. Katafs claim that Hausas are settlers on their land, which the Hausas denied. The Katafs resented the regional political system, a holdover from the colonial era, which vested authority over non-Muslims in Muslim leaders. The

Katafs and other non-Muslim ethnic groups in the north had been demanding for years that they should be allowed to elect a local chief of their choice. This right was denied. A precursor to the May devastation occurred in February 1992, when approximately sixty Hausas and Katafs died in communal violence. The immediate cause of the conflict was a plan to move the local marketplace from the center of the Hausa district to a site where the Katafs were in the majority. Political analysts stressed that a struggle for political power in light of the impending hand-over to democratic rule was also an important factor in the violence.

In February 1992, the Nigerian government promised to leave office by the end of the year. National Assembly elections were to take place in July 1992, Presidential elections were to be held in December and the new government was to take over in January 1993. The Katafs were irritated by several procedural issues surrounding the seven-person commission of inquiry established to investigate the violence. They complained that the then Kaduna State Governor Dabo Lere appointed a majority of Muslims to the Commission, thereby weighted it against the Katafs. They objected to the shift in the venue of the commission from Zongwa, the Zango-Kataf local government council headquarters, to Kafanchan, a larger city nearby, and finally to the city of Kaduna, capital of Kaduna state, where Muslims are the majority. Both Muslims and Christians criticized the government's inadequate response to the crisis. After the February violence, Isa Kaita, a former federal minister and respected Muslim, and Kaduna's Archbishop Peter Jatau led meetings to help resolve problems between Christians and Muslims. They recommended that joint Christian-Muslim committees be formed at all levels of government to resolve problems and sent the recommendations to President Babangida, but no government action was taken.

In mid-May, the violence spun out of control when a number of Katafs engaged in what was apparently a killing spree against the Hausas in Zango-Kataf. The violence spread to the cities of Kaduna, where some of the wounded were transported, and also to another large city, Zaria, also in Kaduna State. In those cities the violence took on a more overtly religious rather than an ethnic tone that earlier occurred in February, with Hausa Muslims apparently attempting to avenge the killings in Zango-Kataf by attacking Christians irrespective of their ethnic identity. The government claimed that fewer than 300 died, but others contended that thousand lives were lost. Calm was restored on May 20. On May 22, the Governor, without legal authority, dissolved the Zango-Kataf local government and appointed a sole administrator, Mallam Haruna Zok, who oversaw the area.

On May 18, the Federal government established the Zango-Kataf Civil and Communal Disturbances Tribunal in Kaduna City, with powers to try those allegedly involved in the bloodshed. In addition to the Chairman, Justice Okadigbo, the other members were: Godwin Alaye Graham-Douglas (Senior Advocate of Nigeria), Alhaji Aminu Malumfashi, Hajia Tani Yusuf, Otunba Adeleke Adedoyin, Colonel Yusuf Abubakar and Mustapha Wali. The composition of the Tribunal, which included five Hausas, four of them Muslim, led to a wide perception of bias against Gen. Lekwot and the five others on the death Row. General Lekwot was arrested on May 18, sent to Kuje Prison, nearly 200 miles away, and detained incommunicado under Decree 2, which provides for virtually unlimited detention without charge or trial.

After pressure from human rights organizations and others, Lekwot and five other Kataf leaders were arraigned on July 29 before the Tribunal and charged with unlawful assembly with intent to subjugate the Hausa community in Zango-Kataf. Both before and during the trial, the defendants were held in abysmal conditions in Kaduna prison, where they were

not allowed access to their families or attorneys. According to the Human Rights Attorney, Mike Ozekhome, the government violated its own military laws in establishing the Zango-Kataf Tribunal. Civil Disturbances Decree 53 of 1987, which provided the legal basis for the Tribunal, required the government to establish a commission of inquiry and conduct investigations before bringing charges. That requirement was ignored when the Zango-Kataf Tribunal was established. The trial was subject to obvious political influence. In August, when it became apparent that there was insufficient evidence to convict Lekwot and the others, the prosecution filed a motion not to pursue the case.

Meanwhile, however, as reported by the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, a Nigerian human rights group, the politically powerful Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, and other prominent Hausa-Fulanis publicly demanded that those responsible for the Zango-Kataf riots not be spared. In response, Justice Okadigbo, in ordering that Lekwot and the others be released, said "the police would have to do their duty." The six were immediately rearrested on the Tribunal premises and placed in incommunicado detention in Kaduna Prison.

On September 4, Gen. Lekwot and six others were charged in a new 22-count indictment, which included a charge of culpable homicide, punishable by death. Gen. Lekwot was also accused of distributing guns and ammunition to a riotous group and inciting a group of Katafs to violence. In December, virtually all the charges were dropped except that of culpable homicide. During the second trial, Justice Okadigbo repeatedly demonstrated his bias against the defendants to the point of reportedly terrorizing the defense attorneys, the defendants and spectators. His improprieties included telling the defendants during the trial that there would be "gnashing of teeth" on the day of judgment, and threatening to jail defense lawyers if he did not like their lines of inquiry.

On September 29, the leading defense counsel, Chief G. O. K. Ajayi, Senior Advocate of Nigeria, threatened to withdraw from the proceedings which, according to him, had become "impossible from the point of view of the defense." Mr. Graham-Douglas, one of the Christian members of the Tribunal, resigned early in the proceedings, giving the reason that the other Tribunal members met privately without him and gave judgments on cases they had heard together without seeking his opinion. In late October, defense lawyers went before a Kaduna High Court to seek an injunction restraining the Tribunal from further handling the case because the defendants were unlikely to receive a fair trial. The result? The Kaduna High Court refused to grant the injunction on the grounds that it lacked jurisdiction over the case. The ruling was upheld by the Court of Appeal on November 20, 1992. The defense then took their case to the Supreme Court.

However, on December 1, while the case was pending before the Supreme Court, the government promulgated Decree 55 of 1992, which removed the authority of the regular courts, including the Supreme Court, to hear any case regarding any abuse of constitutionally guaranteed rights by the Tribunal and in all other cases involving military decrees. According to Decree 55, constitutionally guaranteed rights may be obviated by military decree. The decree states in part:

2. For the avoidance of doubt, if any law enacted before 31st December 1983, including the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979 is inconsistent with any Decree promulgated by the Federal Military Government, the Decree promulgated by the Federal Military Government shall prevail and that other law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void.

3.-(1) No civil proceedings shall lie or be instituted in any court or tribunal for or on account of, or in respect of any act, matter or thing done or purported to be done under or pursuant to this Decree by or on behalf of the Federal Military Government. The decree was made retroactive to July 30, 1991, a common practice of the government in promulgating decrees.

Human rights attorney Chief Mike A. A. Ozekhome, president of the Universal Defenders of Democracy, a formed human rights group based in Lagos around the 90s, has challenged the death sentences on the grounds that Lekwot and the five others did not receive a fair trial. According to Mike Ozekhome, the federal government tried to impose its own defense counsel on the accused, but the offer was rejected and the trial was adjourned. The Tribunal did not sit again until February 2 1993, when its only act was to convict and sentence to death by hanging Lekwot and the five others tried with him. General Zamani Lekwot was convicted of culpable homicide, although, according to Mike Ozekhome, the only evidence linking him to the killings was the uncorroborated testimony of one illiterate farmer who claimed that Lekwot stabbed and cut the liver out of a Hausa Muslim, Rabiou Hassan. Also sentenced to death were:

- Major James Atomic Kude, retired, the former Zango-Kataf supervisory councillor for education, also convicted of culpable homicide.
- Yohanna Karau Kibori, a businessman and farmer.
- Marcus Mamman, a businessman and farmer.
- Yahaya Duniya, Zango-Kataf's former officer of the Social Democratic Party.
- Julius Sarki Zamman Dabo, a member of the Zango-Kataf community.
- Juri Ayok, former chairman of the Zango-Kataf local government, but was acquitted for lack of evidence.

Others sentenced to death by Justice Okadigbo in separate trials were Iliya Maza, a former member of the military, sentenced on February 1, 1993, and Gakon Dawa Kurfi, a retired police officer, sentenced on December 4, 1992.

A second Zango-Kataf Civil Disturbances Tribunal, chaired by Justice Adegbite, finished sitting in early March. Although the trials were apparently not characterized by the same level of abuse as those under Justice Okadigbo, it was responsible for sentencing to death with no appeal the following seven: Dan Zachary Azimi, sentenced on March 11; Bagwai Samaida, sentenced on February 15; Shubu Abubakar, sentenced on February 15; Shubu Ali, sentenced on February 15; Ayuba Tashie, sentenced on March 8; Jonathan Yashin, sentenced on March 8; and Bala B. Bonnet, sentenced on March 8. The death sentences contravene internationally accepted standards of human rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Although Nigeria has not ratified the Covenant, the Covenant's due process provisions are widely accepted as establishing minimum standards. Article 6-2 of the Covenant states:

“In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance with the law in force at the time of the commission of the crime.... This penalty can only be carried out pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court.”

The nature of such a "competent court" was clarified by the UN Economic and Social Council in the form of a resolution, enacted in 1984, entitled "Safeguards Guaranteeing Protection of the Rights of Those Facing the Death Penalty." Among the Safeguards are the following points:

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4. Capital punishment may be imposed only when the guilt of the person charged is based upon clear and convincing evidence leaving no room for an alternative explanation of the facts.

5. Capital punishment may only be carried out pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court after legal process which gives all possible safeguards to ensure a fair trial, at least equal to those contained in article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the right of anyone suspected of or charged with a crime for which capital punishment may be imposed to adequate legal assistance at all stages of the proceedings.

6. Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to appeal to a court of higher jurisdiction, and steps should be taken to ensure that such appeals shall become mandatory.

All of these provisions were breached by the Special Tribunal proceedings.

The reports of both tribunals were sent to Nigerian Attorney-General and Secretary for Justice Clement Akpangbo, who reviewed them and sent them with his recommendations to the National Defense and Security Council (NDSC), which in January 1993 replaced the Armed Forces Ruling Council. The NDSC had not decided whether to grant clemency. The government also had not indicated when it will make its decision. Since the death sentences were pronounced, both Christians and Muslims had indicated that whichever way the decision goes, it is likely to cause unrest. A number of protests have been staged, including one in Kaduna on February 8 in which some 300,000 Katsina women took part. Nigerian and International Human Rights groups and many prominent Nigerians, including former military leaders, have protested the death sentences. On February 10, Lars



Brinkenberg, Danish Ambassador and representative of the European Community, delivered a letter to Chief Ernest Shonekan, head of the Transitional Council (which in January 1993 became the official executive branch of government, although Babangida retained absolute power over the nation), expressing concern about the death sentences. Shonekan told Brinkenberg that the government would give "due consideration" to the appeals for clemency. The U.S. had made no public statements condemning the killings but, according to the State Department, had raised the issue privately. Meanwhile, the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and Jamatu Nasril Islam (loosely translated from Hausa as Movement for the Victory of Islam), both headed by the Sultan of Sokoto, have called for the death sentences to be carried out.

On February 3, 1993, Mike Ozekhome named President Babangida, Chief Shonekan, Justice Okadigbo and Attorney-General Akpangbo in a suit brought in the Lagos High Court to revoke the death sentences of Lekwot and the other five and to release them because they did not receive a fair trial. In the suit, Ozekhome argues:

“...that the purported `trial,' `conviction,' and `sentence,' of Lekwot, Kude, Kibori, Mamman, Duniya and Dabo by [Justice Okadigbo] are most barbaric, shameful, despicable, illegal and constitute a violent violation of their fundamental right to life and to a fair trial recognized by sections 30 and 33 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979, Articles 4 and 7 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and Article 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.”

He also asserted that Decree 55:

“...is a repulsive and draconian piece of legislative judgment promulgated and delivered specifically, and retroactively to convict Lekwot, Kude, Kibori, Mamman, Duniya and Dabo,

without any right of Appeal and is consequently a bad law made 'ad homine' which is repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience, and to various sections of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1990, And the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, to which Nigeria as a supposed Decent Nation within the international community is a signatory.”

At a hearing of the case on March 3, 1993, the court granted the six a stay of execution until a hearing on March 17. On that day, the Director of Legal Services of the Department of Justice, representing the government, requested a further extension in order to prepare the government's arguments. The judge granted the request and extended the injunction, barring the executions until March 31, when another hearing is scheduled. The Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), a Nigerian human rights group based in Lagos, has attempted to take the cases of Lekwot and others to the international arena. The CRP sent a petition for a review of the case to the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights, arguing that the Okadigbo Tribunal was unfair. The Nigerian member of the African Commission, Professor Umezurike, then wrote to Attorney-General Akpangbo urging that the death sentences not be carried out until the African Commission has had time to review the case.

## **PATIENCE JONATHAN**

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) had sought a final forfeiture of the sums found in various accounts linked to the former first lady. EFCC had secured an interim order for forfeiture of the sums on April 20, 2018, before Justice Mojisola Olatoregun, following a motion ex parte.

Joined in the suit as respondents are Patience Jonathan, Globus Integrated Services Ltd, Finchley Top Homes Ltd., Am-Pm Global Network Ltd, Pagmat Oil and Gas Ltd and Magel Resort Ltd and Esther Oba, younger sister to Mrs. Jonathan. EFCC counsel, Mr Rotimi Oyedepo, had on Oct. 29, 2018, moved his motion for final forfeiture of the sums to the Federal Government.

Meanwhile, defense counsels, Messrs Ifedayo Adedipe (SAN), Chief Mike Ozekhome (SAN), and Mr Ige Asemudara had respectively moved processes in opposition to the motion for final forfeiture. The court on Jan. 15 admitted electronic evidences presented by respondent counsels, which depicted videos showing various business outfits of Finchley Top Homes Ltd. and Magel Resort Ltd.

But in a judgment delivered on Feb. 28, the court held that it found the affidavit evidences conflicting, adding that same could only be resolved by oral evidences of parties. The court had consequently ordered parties to call their witnesses to give oral evidences. In compliance, counsels to the parties called witnesses to testify in the suit. The witness included: Mr Orji Chukwuma (EFCC operative), Esther Oba, Waripamo Dudafa and Achonye Obinna who testified for Am-Pm Global Network and Okwu Emmanuel who testified for Pagmat Oil and Gas.

The court then reserved judgment for July 1. Delivering judgment, Justice Olatoregun highlighted all arguments, counter arguments, and submissions of counsels as well as the facts deposed to in the affidavits, counter affidavits and further affidavits. The court held that it did not find the video evidences tendered by the respondent relevant to the facts as narrowed down by the applicant. the judge stated:

“I have no doubts that these monies are proceeds of unlawful activities,”

Olatoregun said there were no evidences to show why the sums were paid into the said accounts, adding that it was the duty of the respondent to relate the document to the sums of money.

” I am satisfied that the respective sums are liable to be forfeited to the federal government, the respondent having failed to show cause.”

She ordered that the sums be paid into the Central Bank of Nigeria as well as the Federal Government’s account. The court further ordered the commission to file an affidavit of compliance within 14 days.

## **AYO FAYOSE**

Governor of Ekiti State, Mr. Ayo Fayose had his share of allegations that he and his Company, Spotless Limited were facing an 11-count charge of conspiracy and money laundering amounting to the tune of ~~₦~~2.2 billion. According to the Economic and Financial Crime Commission, he received ~~₦~~1.2 billion to fund his 2014 Gubernatorial Campaign in Ekiti State, a sum the agency said he should have known were part of proceeds of an unlawful act. Ayodele Fayose honored an invitation by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission on Tuesday after losing his immunity from prosecution and arrest on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2018

Earlier in the day of October 16, 2018, before entering the EFCC premises, Fayose and scores of his supporters had created a scene at the entrance of the commission. Fayose, who wore a blue shirt with the inscription, ‘EFCC, I am here’, and a blue pair of trousers

with a blue face-cap to match, arrived at the Tunde Idiagbon House, Wuse 2, which is the former headquarters of the EFCC, around 1 pm. The former governor, who clutched a backpack and a small duffel bag, was accompanied by Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State; a former Minister of Aviation, Chief Femi Fani-Kayode; his lawyer, Chief Mike Ozekhome (SAN), and several of his aides and supporters. Addressing reporters before making his way into the EFCC, Fayose said,

“I am here in line with my promise that I will be here on the October 16. And, as I said to the EFCC, they should await my arrival. This morning, they have been to my house; they cordoned off my street, which I feel was unnecessary. It was unwarranted. When a man says he is coming, Nigerians should be given benefit of the doubt. I had led Ekiti, and the best I could give, I have given. Therefore, every question, whatever they need to ask today, I will be able to respond appropriately.”

Also speaking, Governor Wike said he accompanied Fayose in order to warn the EFCC to respect his rights. Wike added:

“He wrote a letter to the EFCC that he will submit himself on October 16. He is hale and hearty and I believe that EFCC should know he is well. Our fear from the present report that we have is that he may be harmed.”

Ever since he had arrived the EFCC interrogation center, Fayose rebuffed all attempts by the security operatives to talk, forcing the agency to approach a court to obtain a detention warrant to keep him beyond 24 hours. According to the Vanguard Newspaper, an official said that Fayose had started talking to the operatives of the commission but could not say in which area the former governor responded. The official said: "Fayose has surprisingly

begun talking and we hope he can open up on all the issues we are putting to him relating to the ONSA cash of N1.3 billion and the issue of alleged kickbacks from contractors."

However, Fayose's lawyer, Mike Ozekhome, SAN, said concerted efforts are in top gear to secure the former governor's release from EFCC custody. Mr Ozekhome said: "Fayose's lawyers are already taking steps to enforce his fundamental human rights by getting him released.

"Yes, his lawyers will go to court to enforce his fundamental human rights. The EFCC has no right to keep him beyond 24 hours. If they have done that by obtaining a Magistrate Court's Order that will be in the form of holding charge which has been declared unconstitutional and illegal by the Supreme Court. Holding charge is illegal. It is unconstitutional."

The commission asked him to return the money but Fayose refused to admit to collecting the money. An official from the commission said to news media outlet:

"We have treated Fayose with respect since he arrived in our office. We asked him about the money he received from Obanikoro and when he would return it but he is denying everything. He said in his statement on oath that he never received any money despite the overwhelming evidence. The man is refusing to cooperate despite the overwhelming evidence we have."

It was learnt that as of 7 pm on Tuesday October 16, 2018, the former governor was still writing his statement. The funds allegedly traced to Fayose were said to be part of the N4.7bn allegedly handed to Obanikoro by the then National Security Adviser, Col. Sambo

Dasuki (retd.) While about N1.3bn was given to Fayose, another N1.3bn was also handed over to the governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Osun State in 2014, Senator Iyiola Omisore. The funds were said to have been transported from Lagos to Ekiti State by air. Since the investigation began in 2015, the EFCC has interrogated over 20 persons. Apart from Obanikoro and Omisore, others interrogated by the EFCC include Captain Ahmed Borodo, the pilot whose plane was allegedly chartered by Obanikoro; Aide-de-Camp to Obanikoro, Lt. Olumide Adewale; and Fayose's aide, Abiodun Agbele (who is standing trial for allegedly receiving the funds on behalf of Fayose). Others interrogated include bureau de change operators and senior bank executives. Reporting the situation inside the commission, an EFCC detective said that despite the statements made by all these people indicating that Fayose received money, the man is still denying the allegations.

However, Fayose's lawyer, Chief Mike Ozekhome (SAN), said Fayose would not compromise himself in the name of administrative bail. Ozekhome said Fayose's accounts had already been frozen by the commission and was already in court over the matter. On whether Fayose would return the money as demanded by the EFCC, Ozekhome said,

"Which money are they saying he should return? Has he said any money is with him? They won't dare tell him to return the money. Fayose is not like other Nigerians that the EFCC will bamboozle and force and blackmail to make refunds. Why tell a man to refund the money he has not admitted to receiving when the matter is in court? If they offer him an administrative bail with no strings attached, which is not a Greek gift, then he should take it."

On October 17, 2018, On October 17, 2018, However, Fayose's lawyer, Mike Ozekhome (SAN), said the anti-graft agency will be sued for breach of fundamental human rights if Fayose is not released on Thursday, October 18 since the agency has secured a two-week remand order to have Ayo Fayose in detention. He said that the former governor is not a flight risk and should not be indiscriminately detained for questioning especially since he willingly surrendered. He said:

"His lawyers will consider approaching the court for the enforcement of his fundamental human rights if he is not released on Thursday. Section 35 and 36 of the constitution are clear on this. He is not a flight risk. He willingly submitted himself to the EFCC even earlier than the time he was supposed to come. What the EFCC is doing is nothing but media trial. From the way they have been chasing Fayose in the last three years, one would have expected that the EFCC would have completed its investigations and would arrest him immediately his tenure expires and charge him the next day but that is not the case. They want him to write a statement by force and then use the statement against him instead of using their own evidence."

According to a fact-sheet obtained from the EFCC and published by The Nation in August 2018, Fayose received \$5.377 million and another N1.3 billion (through a proxy) from then-Minister of State for Defence, Musiliu Obanikoro, to help his re-election campaign in 2014. The sheet read,

"On his part, Fayose was allocated N1.3 billion and \$5.377 million (at the exchange rate of N168. The \$5,377,000 was handed over in cash by Obanikoro to Fayose while the N1.3 billion was received by Fayose's associate, Mr. Abiodun Agbele, in the presence of the ex-Minister's Aide-de-Camp, who also accompanied them to the bank along with bank



officials. From the \$5 million, Fayose gave his Personal Assistant, Agbele about \$1 million, which he exchanged to Naira and paid for properties on behalf of the governor. Detectives suspected that Fayose added more of the N1.3 billion cash to what he gave Agbele to buy the affected assets. The properties worth N1.8 billion purchased with the said proceeds of crime have been recovered from Fayose and his sister, Moji Ladeji. These assets include four in Lagos (N1.1 billion) and two in Abuja worth about N500 million to N700 million. But Fayose has been claiming that he used his company, Spotless to obtain a loan of N120 million from Zenith Bank as part of what he used to buy one of the properties in Abuja. We are already tracking how he disbursed the N1.3 billion. A prima facie case has been established against Fayose but he is enjoying immunity from prosecution as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution. He will, however, face trial as soon as he hands over power to his successor. But the associate of the governor, Abiodun Agbele, has been charged to court accordingly."

Fayose was also believed to be under probe for allegedly receiving bribes from various contractors as Ekiti State governor. He was alleged to have used fronts to acquire properties in Lagos and Abuja with bribes from said contractors.

After two weeks in EFCC detention, Former Ekiti State governor, Ayodele Fayose, was released from prison, after meeting his bail condition, his lawyer, Mike Ozekhome, said on Monday.

"Yes, he has been released. He has perfected his bail conditions and was released this evening. I was with him and he was in a very high spirit, vowing to fight till this clueless administration is voted out of power,"

He was granted a N50 million bail.

## **JONAH JANG DETENTION**

The former Governor of Plateau State was allegedly found guilty over a ₦6.3 billion fraud case levelled against him. The offences were allegedly committed while Mr Jang was serving as governor between 2007 and 2015. He was arrested on April 23, 2018, by operatives of the EFCC for alleged misuse of cash worth N10 billion while in office. He was the senator representing Plateau North district at the time of his arrest. Mr. Jang stood trial alongside Yusuf Pam, a cashier at the Office of the Secretary to the State Government (OSSG) before Justice Daniel Longji in a divisional High Court in Plateau State on a 12-count charge bordering on diversion of public funds.

Habila Dung, who was the former Permanent Secretary, Cabinet and Special Services who served as a fourth prosecution witness in this ₦6.3 billion fraud case against Senator Jonah Jang, has said that the former Plateau governor's style of expending security funds was not peculiar to him.

"Jang's way of handling security funds was not new; it was the same way his successor, Governor Simon Lalong, was doing it". He told the Plateau State High Court trying Jang, on Friday, September 13, 2019 in Jos. while being cross-examined on Friday by Jang's counsel, Mike Ozekhome (SAN), Dung said that the practice of withdrawing security funds from the state coffers by a cashier and delivering same to the Governor in his office was not peculiar to Jang. He said:

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“The practice is still on-going, long after Jang left office in May 29, 2015. The current governor is doing the same. So, it is nothing new. I was the Permanent Secretary, Cabinet and Special Services in the office of the Secretary to the State Government, between December 2014 and September 6, 2015. Once there is a security challenge, the governor will ask me to raise a memo for a certain amount which will be withdrawn by the cashier and taken to the governor.”

Mike Ozekhome produced documents indicating withdrawals done between July 1 to October 7, 2015 in eight different bank statements by Yusuf Pam and his successor, Erick Kangnan, to further confirm that such withdrawals were “a normal trend with both the Jang and Lalong administrations;

“Will I, therefore, be correct to say that during Gov Jang’s and Gov Lalong’s tenures, while you were the permanent secretary, and when Yusuf Pam and Erick Kangnan were cashiers, the same pattern was adopted?”

Dung reaffirmed to the court;

“yes sir, the pattern was the same. The same pattern used in withdrawing security funds tagged as ‘classified expenditures’ during Governor Jonah Jang is still the same pattern within the administration of Lalong,”.

The defense counsel asked the prosecution witness whether he had ever seen Yusuf Pam delivering any of the withdrawn funds to Jang in his office, to which he answered in the negative.

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On whether he had ever seen Jang putting any such monies in the booth of his car to take home or heard anybody said he/she saw him (Jang), doing that when he was governor, Dung answered, “not at all sir”.

The defense counsel also asked Dung whether he had ever heard any of the beneficiaries of the security funds complaining that Jang ever denied him/her of his/her allowance, and the prosecution witness said that no one had ever complained. On whether the same security challenges Jang faced as governor were faced by Governor Lalong when he (Dung), was still in office as permanent secretary in the cabinet office, Dung answered in the affirmative.

According to him, Lalong was facing the same security challenges and was withdrawing and expending security funds “the same way”.

Another Counsel to the EFCC, Mr. Rotimi Jacobs (SAN), through whom he attempted to tender some statements of accounts belonging to the former governor. The News Agency of Nigeria reported that it was the second time Jang was contesting attempts to submit documents against him, the first being when he kicked against the submission of “highly classified documents” from the office of the Secretary to the Government. The document was said to have captured the minutes of state security and executive council meetings of 2014 and 2015.

Jang’s objection was, however, to no avail as the judge ruled in favor of the anti-graft agency on the resumption of hearing of the matter on Thursday, June 27, 2019. NAN reported that Jang, who had lost the attempt to stop the admission of the classified documents, again objected the attempt to tender the statements of his two bank accounts

at First City Monument Bank Plc. Mr. Jacobs had wanted to, through Mr Kichime Gomwalk, FCMB Branch Manager, Jos tender four letters from the bank to the commission with the bank accounts statements attached.

But Jang, through his lead counsel, Chief Mike Ozekhome (SAN), told the court that by section 90 of the Evidence Act, such documents could not be tendered before the court without meeting some conditions. He argued:

“My Lord, we are objecting to the attempt to submit the document because section 90 (1e) of the Evidence Act says that before such documents can be tendered, a foundation must first be laid. We are saying that for the prosecution not to have complied with that provision of the law, such documents can’t be tendered or admitted in evidence. Even section 84 of the Evidence Act also stipulates that such documents must be certified before they could be admissible. The Supreme Court made categorical pronouncements on such matter,”

Ozekhome, who was represented by Mr Benson Igbanoi, argued further,

“Details on accounts statements must be issued showing how they were printed from the computer system and well certified before any statement of account of a customer can be accepted in evidence in court.”

Also objecting, Mr Samuel Oguntuyi, counsel to second accused, Mr Yusuf Pam, told the court that the prosecution counsel was aware that by virtue of sections 83 and 84 of the Evidence Act, he could not tender such documents to the court. Oguntuyi urged the court

to reject the bank statements adding that even if they were accepted, they should be marked as 'rejected' documents". He pleaded

"Again, the Prosecution Witness is not the originator of the documents as clearly seen on them. One Mrs. Christina Olaitan and one Mr. Ahmed printed the statements and not Gomwalk. Gomwalk can't be the right person to tender the statements since he is not its originator by law. So, I wish to urge your Lordship to reject the documents,"

But Jacobs, the EFCC counsel, opined that from the defense counsel's points of arguments, they were only objecting to the tendering of the bank statements of Jang, and not the four letters written by the FCMB to EFCC. He pleaded:

"My Lord, section 146 of the Evidence Act says that as long as a document is being tendered by an official from such an organization, it is okay and admissible. Mr. Gomwalk is a Branch Manager of FCMB and is, therefore, qualified to tender any document that emanated from the bank as stipulated by law. I hereby urge your Lordship to disregard the arguments put up by the defence counsels and admit the documents in question, as part of our pieces of evidence against the accused."

Another prosecution witness, Musa Sunday, has revealed how aides of a former governor of Plateau State, Jonah Jang, illegally conveyed cash to him at the Government House, while in office. Mr Sunday, who testified as a prosecution witness, while being cross-examined by Mike Ozekhome, counsel for Mr Jang, gave a description of how Mr Pam took him through the hidden back passage through which he usually used to take cash to the former governor." His Statement read thus:

*Inexistent Country*

“The new Government House is located at the outskirts of town amidst a lot of buildings, amongst the buildings was the office of the SSG of the state where Pam and the EFCC detectives reported their arrival to the SSG. From the SSG’s office, we were led to the Government Office, the Governor’s office, a story-building with two doors one at the main entrance and at the back exit. There, Pam showed us how he delivered cash in ‘Ghana must go’ bags to the former governor. He had clearly said and even showed me the back entrances where the cash was stacked and given to the governor. Mr. Musa also reportedly told the court that investigations revealed that memos were written by the Commissioner of Finance, who was involved in seeking approval for the disbursement of the funds involved in the alleged fraud. An Exhibit P62, in response from the Plateau State House of Assembly dated July 19, 2018, and September 2014, alongside the letter from the EFCC requesting for information, the monies were further transferred from Plateau State One account to OSSG account where the second defendant withdrew cash and delivered to the first defendant.”

Under a cross-examination session, Mr Ozekhome, however, questioned the witness:

“So, between 2014 and 2018 when the petition was received and when he was first charged to court, it took four years, don’t you think this has a political undertone?”

Mr. Sunday replied:

” There are laid down procedures following an investigation, the legal team take up the cases and charge them to court. All these processes take time.”

The witness further confirmed that about \$100,000 was deposited by the accused in two days into the Standard Chartered Bank “On May 6, 2014, \$50,000 cash deposit in tranches

of \$10,000 five times and on May 7, 2014, the same deposit. Yakubu Jang, son of the first defendant was among the persons who deposited monies into the account.”

Justice Longji adjourned the case to September 13, 2019.

According to a statement on Thursday September 12, 2019 signed by the EFCC spokesperson, Adebisi Adeniyi, the commission’s prosecutor, Rotimi Jacobs, presented an EFCC investigator, Musa Sunday, as a witness. Mr. Musa, during a cross-examination session, debunked Mr. Pam’s claims to the court that he was pressured to make his confessional statements and was put under duress and psychological trauma. Mr. Pam had said the statement he made indicting his former boss was taken by EFCC under duress. The counsel to Mr. Pam, D.P. Dusu, had argued that his client was forced to indict the former governor. Mr. Adeniyi said the former cashier had admitted in the statements to being the one that paid monies into the ex-governor’s Zenith Bank account.

According to the statement, Mr Musa revealed that the amount was funded by various accounts of the state government, including Plateau State Government Account, Plateau State Government Project 1 Account and PLASUBEB account domiciled in Zenith Bank. He said from the statement of account, the funding was stated clearly in the OSSG Cabinet Special Services Account, and had a credit of over N35 billion. He said the account was opened in 2009 while Senator Jang was the governor. He narrated to the court:

“Investigation carried out by the EFCC team handling this matter shows a massive withdrawal in 2010 by the second defendant, Pam. This withdrawal was in tranches of N10million per withdrawal. However, in 2011, the withdrawal became more frequent, while in 2014 and 2015 it became massive, most especially on the 26 March 2015 to 9 April 2015. Pam withdrew over N3billion within these three weeks during this period the



presidential and governorship elections took place. Jang had contested for a senatorial position during the said period. While the investigation was ongoing, Pam was invited to EFCC and the statement of account was disclosed to him as the withdrawals summed at over N30billion were carried out by the second defendant, Pam. Pam thereafter volunteered a statement to his knowledge about the withdrawals from the bank accounts. The withdrawals were carried out without due process and the Permanent Secretary was not in the know and did not sign or approve any cheques for withdrawals. In the course of my investigation, during the interview with the second defendant on where he delivers the monies, Pam made it clear in his statement that he delivered the monies directly to Jang and there is documented evidence to prove the withdrawals and delivery to Jang.”

Counsel for Mr Jang, Mike Ozekhome, SAN, read through the Public Witness 11 in the Law dictionary page 267 that defines “classified”, in which Public Witness 4, Habila Doug, Permanent Secretary, OSSG Cabinet Special Services, prepared classified memos aiding the rationed cash allowance for the disbursement of the security funds. The classified expenditure had no formal voucher nor retirement. Mr. Ozekhome had while cross-examining the EFCC investigator, questioned his knowledge of “classified expenditure” and if he was aware that the monies were used to address security matters in the state via security votes given in support of the state.

Mr. Adebisi, however, opposed its admissibility, arguing that Mr. Musa was not a legal practitioner, “but a detective and law books or materials are for legal counsel to use in their written or oral submissions before the court”. Judge Longji admitted the document and marked it Exhibit D6. He said that “the document will throw more light on the meaning of classified and is relevant in this matter.”

## **AIT OFFICE SEIGE**

Early hours of June 8 2019, heavily fortified security operatives of the Nigeria Police Force and the State Security Service have surrounded the premises of African Independent Television (AIT) after the station came back on air late Friday. Group Managing Director of DAAR Communication Mr. Tony Akiotu speaking to newsmen said shortly after AIT commenced operation, security forces gathered around the station's premises. He decried the action saying the action of the Nigeria Police Force and the State Security Service was an 'unwarranted threat' on AIT. He explained that by 12.30 a.m. Saturday morning, the premises of DAAR Communications Plc was surrounded by security operatives of the Nigeria Police Force and the State Security Service.

He went further to say the "heavily fortified security operatives were carrying out surveillance on the premises," Mr Akiotu said this is "unusual" and the motive "unclear" but the station will not be deterred as "the station is still transmitting signals on its national and global beam," adding that the action of the security operatives was "unwarranted threat" .

The Federal High Court in Abuja, on Friday, had granted an ex-parte order that restored the operating license of DAAR Communications Plc, owners of African Independent Television, AIT, and Ray Power FM, which was earlier suspended by the National Broadcasting Commission, NBC. The court ordered both DAAR Communications Plc and NBC to revert to the status quo that was in existence as at May 30, pending the hearing and determination of the substantive suit before it. The order followed a suit the media establishment lodged to challenge the suspension of its operating licence on Thursday by the NBC.

The NBC had based its action on allegation that the media outfit breached its rules and regulations. Meanwhile, cited as Respondents in the suit the plaintiff filed through its lawyer, Chief Mike Ozekhome, SAN, were the NBC, the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture (FMIC) and the Attorney General of the Federation, AGF. The plaintiff equally filed an affidavit of urgency, wherein it urged the court to quickly intervene in the matter. Out of three principal reliefs that DAAR Communications Plc sought in its motion ex-parte, the court declined to grant two of them.

The NBC, had, on Thursday June 6 2019, suspended the operating licence of Daar Communications PLC, over alleged breach of the NBC's broadcasting code. However, in an ex parte application, Daar Communications PLC, had, through its lawyer, Mr Mike Ozekhome (SAN), on Thursday, asked the court to order the Commission to revert its ban. Daar Communications PLC, in the suit against the NBC, the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, and the Attorney General of the Federation, claimed that it did not breach any broadcasting code. It asked the court to grant its prayers in "restraining the defendants from blocking, jamming, stopping, removing from air and/or interfering with the air waves of the plaintiff/applicant (Daar Plc) in any way and manner however called from invading the premises of the plaintiff/applicant (Daar Plc) or closing down, viet armis, the said premises, its operations or broadcast services, pending the hearing and determination of the motion on notice filed along with this application".

Suspending Daar Communications licence on Thursday, the regulatory authority issued this long statement:

"Following monitoring reports and complaints from concerned Nigerians about the broadcast contents of Daar Communications Plc's AIT/Raypower broadcast stations, the NBC have over the last 2 years summoned on several occasions management of the

company to address issues regarding the operations of AIT/Raypower with the company, particularly, Political Platform and Kakaaki aired on AIT. In one of our meetings, held on 2nd June, 2017, the Commission expressed its disappointment with the way and manner Hate Speech, divisive and inciting comments are applied in discussion of national issues in breach of the provisions of the NBC Act and Broadcast Code. Again, on 15th August, 2017, it became imperative to invite the company for yet another meeting on almost same issues. Furthermore, while addressing another meeting on 7th February, 2018 we highlighted issues of concern to the Commission which indicated that the company had been breaching the provisions of Sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 of the broadcast Code. The company's delegates in their response promised to abate the breaches and comply with the law. However, on October 18, 2018, the Commission was disturbed with the manner in which social media issues became part of the mainstream media unedited on AIT/Raypower, and was constrained to issue a generic letter to all broadcast stations on The need to exercise caution in the use of user generated content from the social media knowing how volatile and misleading the social media has become. The management of Daar Communication Plc thereafter took to the social media to display our official correspondences. Recently, the Commission's monitoring reports on AIT/Raypower indicate the use of divisive comments accredited to the segment of "Kakaaki", tagged, "Kakaaki Social", where inciting comments like, "Nigeria is cursed, we declare independent state of Niger Delta", "Nigeria irritates me", "this country is gradually Islamizing" and other similar slogans are used without editorial control in breach of the broadcast Code. We were therefore constrained to issue Daar Communication letters of warning dated May 27th, 2019.

We also observed from monitoring reports that a documentary on the Presidential Election Tribunal, a pending election petition matter aired on AIT on Wednesday and Thursday, 22nd and 23rd May, 2019 without regard to the provisions of the Broadcast Code. The Commission, in line with its regulatory powers again cautioned AIT in another letter also dated 27th May, 2019. However, instead of making amends, the management of Daar Communications Plc resorted to the use of media propaganda against the regulator. Even the letters from the NBC were posted on social media platforms. Needless to state that Daar Communications have over the years turned themselves into a bad example of how a professional broadcast outfit should not be run. In their relationship with the NBC, Daar Communications carry on, as if it is beyond the regulatory direction of the Commission. They don't pay their licence fees as and when due. Its broadcast is patently partisan and one sided and deliberately inciting and heating the polity. The management of the Company has created the habit of using the channel to fight its personal battles contrary to the statutory requirements of the law.

Today the 6th of June, 2019, AIT/Raypower embarked on use of inflammatory, divisive, inciting broadcasts, and media propaganda against the government and, the NBC for performing its statutory functions of regulating the broadcast industry in Nigeria. Consequently, after several meetings with management of Daar Communications Plc and many letters of warning. The NBC, today 6th June, 2019 took a decision to suspend the licence of Daar Communications Plc for failure to abide by the Commission's directives, the provisions of the NBC Act Cap N11 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria and the Nigeria Broadcasting Code."

Specifically, the plaintiff had sought to restrain the Respondents, its agents or privies, from interfering with its operations in any manner whatsoever, pending the determination of its

application for injunctive reliefs. However, in his ruling, Justice Inyang Ekwo, said he was minded to grant the alternative relief to restore the status quo that was in existence as at when the matter was brought before the court for adjudication. The court therefore issued,

“An order for the maintenance of status quo ante bellum as at 30th of May, 2019, pending the hearing and final determination of the motion on notice filed along with this application”.

Justice Ekwo said he would not hesitate to sanction the plaintiff, if the court is later convinced that the order was made in error. More so, the court ordered all the Respondents to appear before it on June 13, “to show cause why the prayers in the applicant’s motion should not be granted”. DAAR Communications Plc had in its affidavit of urgency that was deposed to by one Mr. Kelly Elisha, prayed the court to wade into the matter that led to NBC’s sanction against it.

“The timeous intervention by this Honourable Court is necessary to prevent irreparable damage from being done to the Plaintiff, thus foisting a situation of complete helplessness on this Honourable Court”, it pleaded. In the motion, the embattled media organisation sought for, “An order of interlocutory Injunction in favour of DAAR Communication Plc, the Plaintiff/Applicant (operators of African Independent Television (AIT), RAYPOWER 100.5 FM, FAJI FM and DARSAT), restraining the Defendants, whether by themselves, their agents, operatives, servants and/or privies, howsoever called, from blocking, jamming, stopping, removing from air and/or interfering with the air waves of the Plaintiff/Applicant in any way and manner howsoever, in its broadcast and airing of news, views, documentaries, or any other legitimate broadcast material that is usually associated with

television, radio or social media broadcast pending the hearing and determination of the substantive suit.

As well as, “An order of interlocutory Injunction in favour of DAAR Communication Plc, the Plaintiff/Applicant (African Independent Television (AIT), RAYPOWER 100.5 FM, FAJI FM and DARSAT), restraining the Defendants, whether by themselves, their agents, operatives, servants and/or privies, howsoever called from invading the premises of the Plaintiff/Applicant, or closing down, viet armis, the said premises, its operations or broadcast services, pending the hearing and determination of the substantive suit”. As part of its grounds for making the application, the Plaintiff/Applicant, told the court that it was the first privately owned Independent Broadcasting Organisation in Nigeria, having been licensed to broadcast on television and radio since 1996. The Plaintiff/Applicant has in the best tenets and tradition of broadcast and in compliance with section 22 of 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 as altered, carried out its duties legally, legitimately, morally and nationalistically, in informing, educating and entertaining Nigerians both at home and in the diaspora on sundry matters, which activities have energized and contributed to national development and also nurtured, widened, deepened and strengthened democracy, rule of law, human rights and anti-corruption in Nigeria.

Since the emergence of the present government, the Plaintiff/Applicant has been under its close surveillance and undue monitoring of its operations by the present government which wrongly believes that the Plaintiff/Applicant had been too supportive of the immediate past government. “That sometimes on 16th April, 2019, agents of the Federal Government represented by the 1st Defendant, in a Gestapo- like- manner, attacked and

pulled down the two gates leading to the Plaintiff/Applicant's operational Headquarters which damage and destruction run into of hundreds of millions of naira."

Daar Communications at a press conference by its founder, Dr Raymond Dokpesi, accused the government of being "high handed" in "deploying all instruments of power to threaten, intimidate and harass our media organisation for my affiliation with the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the government's perceived bias by our stations in holding government, public officers and people in positions of power accountable to the people of Nigeria." He made a press release:

"As you drove up to our premises, you will have observed the destruction of our security house and perimeter fencing across the boundaries of DAAR Communications Plc (HQ) executed by the FCDA approximately 6-weeks ago. We have since gone to court and it will be subjudice to make further statements on the issues before the courts. Suffice to say, that our premises have been left exposed to all manner of threats which endanger the lives of our staff and property. We have persevered in the discharge of our duties and obligations despite the physical and psychological intimidation the actions of the FCDA, a department under the control of this government, has impacted on us.

Since coming to office in 2015 and in compliance with a well scripted program of action to shut down the DAAR Communications brand from Nigeria's broadcasting landscape, we have been inundated with letters from our regulator – the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). Every broadcast which appears to them to offer a dissenting perspective to the position of Government is reprehended as a threat to National interest. Every reference and reportage from various sections of the country concerning injustice, inequality and iniquity is reprehended as a threat to National security. We hold the position that it is the actions or lack of actions by the Government in responding to the above that



threaten public order, public interest, public cohesion, the peace and unity of this country and NOT the reportage of same.

It is our view that communications, including broadcasting as a form of mass communication serves public interest when the media is able to inform and educate the public on the activities and initiatives of Government whilst also availing people in Government an opportunity to feel the pulse of the nation by reporting unadulterated comments, opinions and perspectives without censorship. By so doing, leaders including the President, can access and discern the value of diverse opinions and positions”.

He further highlighted his proposed objective for the company

“I make bold to say, as founder and chairman emeritus of DAAR Communications Plc that our objective from inception to this day remain:

- i. To inform, educate and entertain,
- ii. To serve the interest of the general public
- iii. To set the agenda for the social, cultural, economic, political and technological development of our nation and
- iv. To hold the government and the people in power accountable to the people in pursuance of public interest over government or personal interests. These goals and objectives are derived from the character and objectives of broadcasting as defined in the NBC code.

Our obligation as provided for in section 22 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is to hold government, public officers and people in power accountable to the public. If AIT appears biased in propagating its editorial position, it is because the

representatives of Government have shied away from giving account of themselves on our platform and not because AIT denies the Government opportunity to make their perspectives known to our audiences. For our audiences who were unborn or were too young to track our pedigree in this industry, it is important to emphasise that DAAR Communications Plc has played this important role and stood by the tenets of the profession since we started broadcasting in 1993. We have suffered harassment from successive governments since the days of General Sanni Abacha and the struggle for democracy in Nigeria.”

In his reaction to the court order on the AIT closure, a senior lawyer, Mike Ozekhome, asked the government to promptly comply with the order. He said:

“As a necessary corollary, they should also immediately withdraw their security agents, including the Police and DSS Operatives, which they had happily deployed yesterday to shut down the operations of AIT/Ray Power. A free and independent press ensures transparency, accountability and responsibility of the government to the people on social, political, economic and cultural matters that affect Nigeria and Nigerians.”

## **DOKPESI ARREST**

Dokpesi, a chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and chairman emeritus of DAAR Communications Plc, filed the suit on April 30, 2019 seeking N5 billion damages from the defendants for alleged defamation. He alleged that Information Minister, Lai Mohammed and the Attorney-General, Abubakar Malami, defamed his character by the inclusion of his name on the treasury looters’ list.

The case was handled at FCT High Court on Monday October 21, 2019, Apo in front of Justice Adegboyega Adeniyi over the alleged N5billion defamation suit, instituted by Chief Raymond Dokpesi against the Minister of Information and Culture and Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice. The plaintiff had told the court that the Information Minister had on March 30,2019 during a press conference, portrayed him as “a corrupt and crooked person, a dishonest man and a thief.”

Dokpesi through his counsel, Chief Mike Ozekhome, told the court that the minister’s action negatively affected his reputation and that his image had been seriously injured. The plaintiff said he had suffered considerable distress, odium, obloquy, ridicule in political analysis in the media.

Dokpesi besides the ~~N~~5 billion damages, is also asking the court to order the defendants to publish a full retraction of the said publication. He further asked the court to order the defendants to tender an unreserved apology to him in all the major electronic and print media outlets in the country. He further urged the court to grant a perpetual injunction restraining the defendants, their servants, agents, partners, representatives, from further writing, publishing defamatory words about the plaintiff.

At the resumed hearing on Monday October 21, the plaintiff’s counsel, Ennaemeka Adasu, holding brief for Ozekhome, informed the court that the matter was slated for hearing and all the five plaintiff’s witnesses were in court. He, however, told the court that the defendants’ counsel only this morning in court, served the plaintiff with a notice of preliminary objection on the jurisdiction of the court to entertain the suit. Adasu who argued that the service on his client in court this morning was done in bad faith and in the circumstance, requested for an adjournment to enable him respond to the objection.

Justice Adegboyega Adeniyi, upheld the plaintiff counsel's submission and adjourned the case until October 23 for hearing of the preliminary objection.

The Federal High Court in Abuja on Wednesday October 23 struck out the no-case submission filed by the media mogul, Chief Raymond Dokpesi, and his Daar Investment and Holdings Company Limited, and ruled that they must explain the N2.1bn they allegedly received from the Office of the National Security Adviser in 2015. Justice John Tsoho ruled that the defendants, who are the founder and the parent company of African Independent Television and Ray Power Radio, had a case to answer in respect of the money laundering and procurement fraud charges.

Relying on the Supreme Court's decision in a similar case involving a former National Publicity Secretary of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Olisa Metuh, Justice Tsoho ruled that the prosecution had led prima facie case warranting the defendants to explain their own side of the story. The judge ruled,

"I am guided by the decision of the Supreme Court's decision in Metuh Vs FRN and hold that a prima facie case has been made against the defendants. This is not a stage to evaluate the evidence of the prosecution. The no case submission filed by the defendants on June 19, 2018, is struck out. The defendants are hereby invited to explain their own side of the story."

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission had in the seven counts of money laundering and procurement fraud it instituted against the defendants, accused them of fraudulently receiving the sum of ₦2.1bn from the ONSA between January and March

2015. The defendants had, however, through their lead counsel, Chief Kanu Agabi (SAN), filed their no-case submission after the prosecution called 14 witnesses, urging the court to dismiss the case on the grounds that the essential ingredients of the alleged offences were not proved.

The defendants for whom Chief Mike Ozekhome (SAN), appeared on Wednesday, had also argued that the prosecution failed to lead any evidence linking them to the alleged offences. But the prosecuting counsel, Mr. Oluwaleke Atolagbe, had opposed the application, urging the court to dismiss it and call on the defendants to enter their defense. Ruling on Wednesday, the judge upheld Atolagbe's submissions. He held that at the stage of no-case submission, the court was not expected to determine whether or not the guilt of the defendants had been proved, but only determine if any admissible evidence no matter slight had been led against the defendants. The judge however described as "instructive" the analysis of the case made by the prosecuting counsel, who contended in his written submission that Dokpesi and his company reasonably ought to know that the sum of N2.1bn was part of the proceeds of Dasuki's illegal activities.

Mike Ozekhome, the lawyer to Raymond Dokpesi, speaking to news media said he was not aware his client received money from the office of the former National Security Adviser, NSA, Sambo Dasuki. Mr. Ozekhome also said reports that Mr. Dokpesi was arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, over the alleged payment, were not correct because Mr. Dokpesi went on his own to the anti-graft agency after receiving a call from its chairman.

A source at the EFCC had told a news agency (PREMIUM TIMES) that Mr. Dokpesi was interrogated by investigators because he received N2.1 billion from the NSA's office on the eve of the 2015 general election. The EFCC detective said it suspected the money was payment for documentaries and advertisements by Daar communications during the electioneering campaign.

"The chief called me earlier in the afternoon to say he received a call from the chairman of the EFCC wanting to see him and I sent one of my lawyers to accompany him. He was not arrested by any group of operatives,"

Mr. Ozekhome said prior to an earlier invitation of Mr. Dokpesi, there was no formal communication from the EFCC to him.

"What I know is that the EFCC wrote to Daar Holdings asking for a list of directors and whether it has done any business or contract with the office of the NSA in the past and how much was involved. We wrote them a reply to say Daar did not do any contract with the office of the NSA and we are ready to give them all the information they need," he said.

The EFCC has arrested a number of individuals indicted by a presidential investigations committee into arms procurement by the Goodluck Jonathan administration. The committee had in its interim report said that it found extra-budgetary spending by the Jonathan administration to the tune of N643.8 billion and an additional \$2.2 billion in foreign currency component. EFCC investigators were 'suspicious that the money was passed to him as payment for the damaging documentaries and campaigns his station ran on Buhari, Tinubu and Amaechi'.

## CHAPTER 11

### INDIGENE-SETTLER CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA: A CLOG IN THE NATION'S WHEEL OF DEVELOPMENT

#### INTRODUCTION

Nigeria operates a federal system of government where Nigerians are free to reside in any part of the country without fear of discrimination, while still enjoying all rights and privileges accorded to citizens of the country. However, according to Bach (1997), the actual experiences of Nigerian citizens across the states have shown that this lofty ideal is not always true. For instance, the administrative lines drawn by the governments in many communities to help them manage cultural diversity also sustain discrimination and violence in some cases. Paramount among these discriminations is the controversial issue of who is an indigene of a place and who is not. It must be noted that government officials tend to use this slippery term 'indigene' in state policies to limit access to socioeconomic opportunities, including government jobs, land, and education.

As a matter of fact, an indigene-settler dichotomy is maintained by virtually every local government area (LGA) and state in Nigeria. For decades, discrimination against non-indigenes (people who cannot trace back their roots to the earliest times) in Nigeria has provoked serious violence on many occasions. The economic cost of the violence, when critically considered, is quite huge as shown in (Anca & Odukoya, 2016). Although governments at all levels in Nigeria do not keep good records, various news reports and interviews suggest that thousands of lives have been lost and billions of property destroyed in the orgies of violence. According to a publication by the (Human Rights Watch, 2006),

clashes caused by indigene/settler disputes in troubled Plateau State were responsible for the killing of over four thousand people between 2006 and 2014 alone as published in the Daily Independent Newspaper (2014). National figures from 2006 onwards also indicate that fighting in such conflicts displaced over eight million people in Nigeria during the same period of time. It is not unusual to see ethnic militiamen mobilised to settle scores in indigenes vs. settlers' imbroglios.

As a sovereign nation, Nigeria is quite unique and different from other countries of the world. For example, Nigeria with over 250 different ethnic groups, has one of the largest concentrations of tribal divisions in the world as published in (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Moreover, though Nigeria operates a federal system of government like Germany and the USA, the implementation of the system is peculiar in Nigeria. This is not because the country's Constitution is markedly different from what is obtainable in other federal systems in theory, but in practice. Chief among the strange things about the Nigerian federation is the 'definition' of who is a Nigerian. Despite the fact that everyone born in Nigeria is practically regarded as a Nigerian, not everyone born in a state (the second-tier of government in Nigeria) is regarded as a bona fide Nigerian in that state. Subsequently, this has given birth to the indigene-settler lexicon in the political vocabulary of Nigeria. Complicating the indigene/settler question in the country is the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), as amended. This Constitution upholds indigeneship of states yet frowns at discrimination. By implication, the document encourages unity and one Nigeria, while it also paradoxically endorses the disintegration of the country.

In reality, as shown by the Human Rights Watch (2006), the population of each state and local government area (LGA) in Nigeria is somehow divided into two broad categories of citizens: indigenes and those who are non-indigenes (or settlers). The indigenes of a state



are those who are able to trace their genealogical roots to the people who first settle on the land. Everyone else is regarded as settlers, no matter how long they have lived in the place.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE INDIGENE-SETTLER CRISIS IN NIGERIA

The British colonial authorities were the first to articulate a formal distinction between indigenous and non-indigenous communities in Nigeria (Bach, 1997). Nevertheless, the idea that 'host' communities should keep a distance from migrant communities was not entirely a colonial invention. In one way or the other, many Nigerian communities have always believe that there should be a distinction between indigenes and settlers, primarily to preserve their culture, land, and traditions in some cases. In a sense, Nigerian communities use distinctions between indigenes and settlers to differentiate between people who are eligible to hold chieftaincy titles in a community and those who are not eligible. The concept of indigeneity also serves to help communities keep track of their members by placing much emphasis on the history of the people's connection to a place (Mamdani, 1996).

In many cases, non-indigenous communities came into existence from patterns of migration beginning with intertribal wars and later colonialism, by people in search of safety, jobs, and other economic opportunities made possible by the country's unification in 1914. In other cases, the non-indigenes predate the colonial era by a century, but are still believed to be offspring of settlers on a land that was already occupied by the forefathers of today's indigenes.

Indigeneity attain more importance in Nigeria post-independence, however, with regional policies that discriminated against the people from other regions in such human areas as

acquisition of land and employment (Brennan, 2005). Unfortunately, the Federal Government of Nigeria legitimizes the marginalization of non-indigenes by doing practically nothing to oppose it and the country's first Attorney General even described it as "a temporary concession to expediency" (Daniel, 1997). That concession has since turned out to be not temporary or wise, but an impediment to national unity as it grew more severe in implementation over the years.

Since independence, there has been a rapid increase in the number of people who are regarded as settlers in the places they reside; and millions of Nigerians now reside in places where they are seen as settlers.

In its entirety, the concept of indigeneity is not an artificial construct. Nevertheless, many Nigerians have their own ethnic groups many of which are so small that they typically entertain fear of being totally dominated by the larger ethnic groups around them and losing their identity in the process. In essence, the distinction between indigenes and settlers in a community may help to guarantee each ethnic group in Nigeria the power to preserve their unique identity - their culture and traditions - by maintaining a semblance of separation between them and other Nigerians (Otite & Albert, 1999). This noble rationale is being misinterpreted and twisted around by local and state policies that seek to exclude and marginalize non-indigenes in such ways that have no constitutional justification and nothing to do with the intended motive of cultural preservation.

As a matter of policy, many states in Nigeria refuse to employ settlers into their civil services. Again, almost all of Nigeria's states bar non-indigenes from competing for academic scholarships and discriminate against them in their admission policies, with higher fees charged from those who manage to scale through the admission hurdle.

According to (Best, 2006), other discriminatory practices include barriers to political participation and overt discrimination in the allocation of public resources to their communities, which government has done nothing to stop. These unfortunate practises have since become more controversial and harmful, as a result of the increasing competition for scarce resources among Nigerians.

Generally speaking, these discriminatory policies have effectively relegated the non-indigenes of many Nigerian communities to the unfortunate status of second-class citizens in their country, a disadvantage which they could only escape by relocating to a part of the country where they supposedly belong. But some Nigerians do not have real ties to their states of origin and thus feel that they should be granted full citizens of the states they call home. Adding salt to the injury is the fact that many Nigerians are discriminated against as settlers even though their respective families have occupied the land for decades and no longer have an iota of knowledge of where their forefathers came from. Nigerians who cannot prove their indigeneship of a state by producing a "Certificate of Origin" are discriminated against in all the states of the country and are also barred from enjoying many opportunities meant for Nigeria citizens at the federal level.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has done virtually nothing to curb discriminations against non-indigenes even though the practice makes mockery of the Nigerian constitutional guarantee of "freedom from discrimination for all Nigerians" (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). The FG policies have rather served to reinforce it in reality. Apart from their immediate human impact on the non-indigenes in various ways, these discriminatory policies have also aggravated inter-communal tensions which are volatile in themselves. It must also be noted that after more than three decades of unaccountable and disastrously corrupt governance at all levels in Nigeria, the benefits of

Nigerian citizenship are in short supply. As chronic poverty and unemployment persist among Nigerians, competition for scarce socioeconomic opportunities to secure higher education, political patronage, and government employment has increased dramatically. For many scholars on the subject, this desperate competition for basic economic sustenance among Nigerians lies at the centre of most of the inter-communal conflicts witnessed across the country. The Secretary General of the Catholic Secretariat in Nigeria revealed in an interview that poverty in Nigeria had assumed the character of war and that was reflected in the ethnic violence that engulfed the country continually (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

From this background of scarcity and unbridled competition, disagreements over who should be called indigenes or settlers have increasingly become more violent by the economic implications of losing out in such innocuous debates. Just as important is the reality that government policies that consider indigeneity before resource allocation have exacerbated inter-communal tensions. They erode the meaning of national citizenship and further subordinate it to ancestry and ethnicity. Therefore, local and state governments treat their non-indigenous population like foreign citizens in many respects.

By its failure to exercise leadership on this thorny issue of indigeneity, the Nigerian Federal Government has somehow turned a blind eye to violations of the rights of Nigerian citizens to "Freedom of Movement and Association" as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution.

As a matter of government policy in Nigeria, every Nigerian is an indigene or a non-indigene wherever they live (Human Rights Watch, 2006). The exact meaning and consequences of this avowed categorizations have not been fully defined in the country's Constitution and they have been subjects of great controversy throughout Nigerian history. In theory, "an

indigene is an individual who has a biological link to the original inhabitants of a place and can claim to be its rightful owner". The lines between such indigenes and non-indigenes in Nigeria are rigidly drawn along cultural or ethnic lines and there is usually no way for a non-indigene to suddenly cross the social divide and become an indigene no matter how long they might have lived in the same community (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

Over the years, the concept of indigeneity has had much impact on the lives of Nigerians. Local and state governments, plus the Federal Government to a lesser extent, have launched policies that deny the rights, guaranteed to all citizens by the Nigerian Constitution, to the non-indigenes of the places where they reside.

In many cases, the disadvantages associated with being seen as a settler have provided fodder to fuel the cannon of hot controversies over where to draw the line between indigenes and non-indigenes. Thus, many non-indigenous communities contend with stereotypical historical accounts that classify them as "settlers". In other cases, people have refused to accept their second-class label because after generations, their families cannot simply trace back their filial roots to where they supposedly came from. In a country like Nigeria which is plagued by economic stagnation and widespread poverty together with high unemployment statistics among the restive youth, being a non-indigene of a state can mean economic exclusion or isolation from prospects of socioeconomic advancement. More often than not, this makes seemingly simple disagreements over who is and who is not an indigene of an area to descend into arguments worth fighting over or even full-scale war. Such disputes have since resulted into the bloodiest orgies of inter-communal violence which threatens the country's existence as a single entity (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

## CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

The origin of what is known as Nigeria can be traced to the different ethnic nationalities existing around the Niger River and its basin in the pre-colonial times. Four major political systems existed during the era: the Old Oyo Empire in the South West; the Sokoto Caliphate in the North; the Benin Empire in the Mid-West; and the village-level political structure of the Igbos in the East. Each of these political systems existed independent of each other in the pre-colonial era and they were organized based on the peculiarities of the people.

According to Dauda (2012), the people of the area called Nigeria today were organized into centralised or non-centralised political systems before the advent of colonial rule. The former system had kings, chiefs, administrative officials, tax regulation, and tribute collection, among other features of governance. In contrast, the latter did not possess these clear-cut administrative structures.

These are the political systems met on ground by the British Colonial officers when the area known as Nigeria became subjugated under British rule starting with the annexation of Lagos in 1861. Subsequently, the Colonial government created the Southern and Northern Protectorates separately, before amalgamating the two in 1914.

The merger of these two administrative regions paved the way for federalism in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the origin of the indigene-settler brouhaha in Nigeria is also traceable to the 1914 amalgamation of the unrelated ethnic groups. According to Babalola (2013), federalism in Nigeria became a reality due to the need to achieve unity in diversity. However, the British Colonial lords had another sinister agenda for the merger. It was rather a "divide and rule" strategy deployed by the canny imperialists to heighten "ethnic

sectionalism" in order to forestall Nigerian nationalism and maintain colonial power ab initio (Nnoli, 2003). In fact, British Colonial authorities did not stop spreading the propaganda that Nigerians had no common destiny because they were different in history and tradition. Their main objective was to maintain the right of each ethnic group to secure its identity, nationality, and political system that were presumed to have evolved from the wisdom of their past generations (Nnoli, 1978).

Therefore, instead of achieving the noble objective of unity in diversity, as (Babalola, 2013) said, Nigerian ethnic nationalities were pulled apart by heightened consciousness of group differences, than being drawn to each other by those features they all have in common. Since then till the Independence of 1960 and up till today, problems of discrimination, ethnicity, marginalization, and political exclusion among Nigerian citizens have been unresolved in the federation. These sad events have manifested themselves in different circumstances in Nigeria.

One major manifestation of heightened consciousness of group differences among Nigerian citizens is ethno-political crises. As indigenes and settlers struggle for political relevance in the states, this often lead to armed conflicts and violent ethno-religious clashes.

According to (Saheed & Egwaikhide, 2012), the indigenes settler controversy has provided reason for more inter-communal conflicts in Nigeria than any other cause since the return to democratic rule in 1999. Among the conflicts experienced in the country within four years of returning to civilian rule based on the indigene-settler controversy include:

- (i) May 30 - June 9, 1999: Warri Communal Crisis in Delta State.
- (ii) July 18, 1999: OPC vs. Hausa traders armed conflict in Sagamu, Ogun State.

*Inexistent Country*

- (iii) Nov. 25, 1999: OPC vs. Hausa traders clash in Lagos State.
- (iv) Jan. 25, 2000: Inter-communal clash in Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
- (v) Jan. 29-30, 2000: Inter-communal clash in Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo State.
- (vi) Feb. 2, 2000:- Inter-communal conflict due to boundary dispute between different communities in Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers States.
- (vii) June 12, 2000: Inter-communal clash between Ikot Offiong and Oku-Iboku communities of Cross Rivers State.
- (viii) July 21, 2000: Indigenes vs. Settlers armed conflict between two communities in Ikare Akoko town of Ondo State.
- (ix) Oct. 16, 2000:- Armed conflict between Igbo and Hausa traders at Alaba Rago Market in Lagos State.
- (x) Dec. 11, 2000:- Renewed hostilities between Ife and Modakeke towns of Osun State.
- (xi) May 12, 2001:- Inter-communal clashes between Odimodu and Ogulagba villages in Delta State.
- (xii) Feb. 2, 2002:- Clashes between OPC and Hausa traders at Idi Araba in Mushin Area of Lagos State.
- (xiii) Feb. 26, 2002:- Inter-communal clashes between Appapum and Osatura villages in Cross Rivers State.
- (xiv) March 10, 2002:- Violent protests by Ebira youths on local government creation in Kogi State.



In addition, devastating attacks by Fulani herdsmen have been experienced in Benue, Taraba, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kaduna, Adamawa, Anambra, Ondo, Oyo, Enugu, Edo, Delta, and Kwara States (Daily Independent Newspaper, 2014). The Fulani militiamen often sack communities and occupy them. This represents a special form of indigene-settler crisis that has taken more importance in recent times. Conflict between the farmers and Fulani cattle rearers often occur when the latter invade farmlands with their cattle which graze unrestricted on cultivated land thereby destroying valuable crops which are the mainstay of the farming communities (Kumolu, 2014).

The herdsmen are antagonistic towards their hosts and attack them with reckless abandon whenever they complain about destructions to their farms. This shows that even with democratic rule, the indigene-settler controversy still persists in the Nigerian federation.

#### THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL EXTENT OF THE INDIGENE-SETTLER PROBLEM IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

The unique diversity of Nigerian society presents complex problems and the increasing importance of the indigeneity issue is a reflection of the government's inability to effectively manage the problems. Nigeria's minority ethnic groups face a possibility of numerically becoming minorities in their own towns and will need to be reassured that they will be permitted to maintain their people's connection to the land and their cultural autonomy. Without a simple way to do this, as a former local government Chairman in Jos (Plateau State) put it, "Many communities would fear that if they are overwhelmed in numbers, they may lose total control of their lives" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

The Federal Government of Nigeria has strenuously sought to allay these fears of marginalization by creating new local government areas and states within which minority groups could enjoy a form of political dominance. In more recent times, however, the federal authorities have ignored calls for the creation of new LGAs and states, largely because of concerns that doing so would lead to a proliferation of unsustainable administrations (Suberu, 2001). Among other things, this tend to elevate the importance of indigeneity as another kind of autonomy and it also partly explains the hostile reactions from indigenes to suggestions that distinctions between indigenes and settlers should be abolished. Meanwhile, the associated consequences of being tagged a settler have outgrown the intended idea of cultural autonomy or any other considerations. As a Jos-based political analyst explained it, "The issue at stake is who will wield the political power to determine the pattern of politics and economic development" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

In effect, this trend shows that majority of Nigerians perceive politics as a zero-sum, winner-takes-all game, whereby a disadvantage to one is taken as an advantage to the other. By implication, the problem with Nigeria is that the people who do not have one of their own in a position of authority are often ignored or sidelined. In this light, it can be argued that widespread discrimination against the so-called non-indigenes is as a result of the idea by Nigerians that living in an area governed by people who are ethnically different from themselves means outright exclusion from any form of government largesse. However, the indigeneity issue has tended to create new forms of parochialism in many states of Nigeria where none existed before. For instance, some states now discriminate against one another's non-indigenous residents, even when there are really no meaningful cultural differences between them and they once belonged to the same state before state

creation. A case in point is the crisis rocking Oyo and Osun States over the rightful owner of the Ladoko Akintola University of Technology in Ogbomosho. The two states are on the verge of open hostilities to each other's citizens concerning the ownership tussle, despite the fact that they are brothers and sisters with a common heritage believed to be children of Oduduwa who is seen as the progenitor of the Yoruba race (Kraxberger, n.d.; Suberu, 2001; The Guardian Nigeria, 2018, May 9).

It must be also be emphasized that the indigene-settler debate has increasingly become more important due to the increasing levels of poverty in Nigeria caused by decades of corruption and mis-governance together with extreme environmental factors such as the increasing scarcity of land due to desertification and overpopulation. Successive Nigerian governments have woefully failed in catering for the basic needs of ordinary Nigerians and the state governments have rather sought to pacify the restive population by reserving more of their scarce resources to the "sons of the soil".

According to a Plateau State Government official, "The state's policies created to discriminate against settlers are justifiable because Plateau has few opportunities for its indigenes and if they are left to migrate to other states, nobody will take care of them there". Such thinking is often rejected by the non-indigenes who bear the brunt of those discriminatory policies (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

In addition to the competition for scarce economic opportunities, marginalization of non-indigenes in Nigerian States can also be seen as part of a competition of high-stakes against other ethnic groups for political patronage at the national level. A conflict-resolution expert at the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) in Abuja argued that, "A primary rationale behind the state policies such as discriminatory school fees for non-indigenous

students can be attributed to efforts to limit their academic opportunities so as to block them from political participation in the long run". Another Nigeria scholar also stated that such discriminations could be linked to the fear of unequal development relative to other areas of Nigeria (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

Whatever the case may be, the idea of discrimination against non-indigenes is now deeply ingrained in the psyche of ordinary Nigerians that people now see it as the norm. A Federal Government official living in Abuja once publicly declared in an interview that he has no problem with discrimination against non-indigenes in many states because he knew those people would likewise be sidelined in his own state. A state House of Assembly lawmaker from the Southwestern part of Nigeria confessed that he found it very difficult not to discriminate against his non-indigenous constituents:

"I received a letter from a church in my constituency - the pastor wanted me to help him obtain a scholarship to pursue further pastoral studies. He's not of my ethnic group, and my first thought was that the man was not an indigene of my constituency and yet this man was right to ask for my help as lived in my constituency and he probably even supported me" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

Non-indigenes often contribute to the local economies, vote in the places they reside as Nigerian citizens, work without job security as public civil servants in states where there are no qualified indigenes and generally do all what normal citizens do, but get little in return.

In places where non-indigenous residents have come out to publicly protest against discrimination, local and state governments have only reacted with more hostility. In some cases, indigenous political leaders have accused their "unruly" non-indigenous constituents of conspiracy to dominate the original sons of the soil. Before the outbreak of violence in the 2001 Indigene-Settler Crisis in Jos (Plateau State), the non-indigenous man whose appointment to a federal post sparked the conflict received many threats including the one that read "Trace your lineage back before it becomes too late" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

Some people often justify these attitudes with the notion that non-indigenes are transients who have no real stakes in their places of settlement. One prominent public official from the volatile Plateau State echoed this popular belief by claiming that "Discriminations against non-indigenes in Plateau has no real harmful impact because, at the end of the day, those settlers will still relocate back to wherever they came from and that is the reality". However, this view is patently false for some of the so-called non-indigenes. For many years, settlers have put down roots in their places of residence and seldom call any other place 'home'. An Igbo lawyer based in Kaduna famously retorted that, "My father moved from [from Southeastern Nigeria] to Plateau State when he was just 13 years old. I was born in the state and have lived all my life in the North. Whenever I say I'm going home, I mean to say Plateau State. I did my National Youth Service in Kano and I have been working for 20 years in Kaduna. So, where do you want me to go? To a part of the country with which I'm not acquainted, an area I don't know the culture and where my children don't speak the language?" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

## DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA

*"We do not want to go to Lake Chad and meet strangers catching our fish in the water, and taking them away to leave us with nothing. We do not want to go to Sokoto and find a carpenter who is a stranger nailing our houses. I do not want to go to Sabon-Gari in Kano and find strangers making the body of a lorry, or to go to the market and see butchers who are not Northerners".*

*- Alhaji Ahmadu Bello (House of Chiefs Debates, 1965).*

Nigeria is home to over 250 ethnic groups and it is known to be a country of diversity. However, some of the ethnic groups had no prior contacts or meaningful relationships with one another before being amalgamated together by the British Colonial authorities led by Sir Frederick Lugard in 1914. In reality, many of Nigeria's pre-colonial entities were antagonistic to each other and fought countless wars of domination which left scars too deep to be easily healed. This is especially true for the country's North Central Region (comprising of Niger, Kwara, Kogi, Plateau, Nasarawa, and Benue States) where numerous minority groups have long history of resistance to conquest and slave raids from the powerful Hausa/Fulani kingdoms up North. Nigeria is also divided along religious lines, with the disagreements between Christians and Muslims often overlapping with cultural and ethnic divisions (Daniel, 1997).

The importance of these divisions is reflected in the frequent episodes of inter-communal violence that have bedeviled Nigeria since the Independence of 1960. Most importantly, tensions between the violence-prone North and the "calmer" South helped drive the events that led the country to the atrocious Biafran Civil War of 1967-70 - a conflict that was said to have claimed an estimated three million lives on both sides and nearly resulted into Nigeria's eventual break-up. Ever since then, Nigeria has not been able to resolve

repeated orgies of inter-communal violence that have claimed more thousands of lives and destroyed properties worth billions of naira in many States of the federation.

Nigeria's political system is divided into the Federal Government at the center, the 36 state governments, and the 774 local governments at the grassroots; making the three tiers of government in the federation. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for these three tiers of government to be governed by popularly elected officials, and it contains, in detail, the concurrent and exclusive powers of each. At the same time, there is a parallel system of governance that revolves around the traditional rulers, including the emirs in the North, the Obas in the West, and the Obis or titled chiefs in the largely republican South East. Traditional rulers represent their communities in government functions even though they mostly ascend the throne by inheritance and divine rights. In some ways, influential traditional rulers like the Sultan of Sokoto wield considerable political power and tend to dictate the government's policies in a way that favors their own ethnic group. In fact, these local kings have the authority to deny indigeneity of certain groups, seen as settlers in their domains, based on narrow historical considerations.

Right from the colonial era, Nigerian politics has revolved around the obsession with the arduous task of forging a nation out of a country of different ethnic nationalities, while ensuring that no geographical area or ethnic group would be dominated or marginalized in the scheme of things by the rest of the country. Since Independence, Nigeria has had four different constitutions and each has been drafted around core provisions designed to strike a perfect balance in the allocation of government resources and dispensation of political power along the various ethnic groupings (Rotimi, 2011).

Perhaps the most controversial of these provisions is the Federal Character Principle which is found in the Article 14(3) of the 1999 Constitution. The Principle, in theory, is designed to ensure that the Federal Government of Nigeria is broadly inclusive in policy formulation, thereby promoting 'loyalty' and 'national unity' among the citizens. Also in the Constitution is the provision for a Federal Character Commission charged with enforcing the Federal Character Principle at the Federal level.

#### HOW GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATES AGAINST NON-INDIGENES IN NIGERIA

Rather than pursuing the common interests of humanity - equality of rights, the satisfaction of material needs, universal respect for the dignity of an individual, their [our] efforts are directed mainly at asserting the rights of their [our] own group (James, 1991).

Non-indigenes across Nigeria's states and LGAs are often forced to cope with the discriminatory policies which sideline them from benefits of Nigerian citizenship. Such untoward practices reflect the belief popular among Nigerians that local and state governments exist to serve only the interests of their indigenous populations. This is buttressed by the words of a former Attorney General of Kaduna State who once declared that: "The problem arises when they [non-indigenes] try to throw away where they come from and they want to have the same status as their hosts. They don't want to be seen as people from another state, so they would say, 'Look, I'm an indigene. I want same privileges and rights as other indigenes'. They want to enjoy scholarships from Kaduna State. But I don't think it will be right to give these people the same rights as our indigenes." (Human Rights Watch, 2006).



Echoing this sentiment, the special media adviser to the Plateau State Governor bluntly retorted that his government's mission was to meet the needs and aspirations of the state's indigenous people. Such attitudes reflect the prevalent political reality in Nigeria. As one Senator from the North Central said, "The Nigerian Constitution states that there should not be discriminations of any kind, but we all know that when you're a non-indigene of a state in Nigeria, you don't enjoy all the rights enjoyed by the indigenes" (Best, 2006).

The truth is that discriminatory policies vary in nature and in the ways they affect the non-indigenous communities, and should therefore not be considered out of context. However, there is some truth to the claim that non-indigenes are marginalized in the provision of vital social amenities and services, such as motorable roads, healthcare facilities, and schools. In some states, non-indigenous parents complain that government officials routinely waive school fees for 'sons of the soil' while non-indigenes are made to pay outrageous school fees. In other areas, non-indigenes have discovered that they would not be allowed to purchase land or houses even if they have the means.

While these discriminatory practices contravene the Nigerian Constitution, many Nigerians have reported that they are powerless against the problem because government officials, including the security agents refuse to take complaints seriously. As such, discriminatory policies have become so widespread that many Nigerians now see them as proper and legal.

At this junction, it is important for us to discuss the various ways in which governments at all levels in Nigeria contribute to the indigene-settler problem, if only to expose the hypocrisy behind it.

## AMBIGUOUS DEFINITIONS OF INDIGENEITY IN THE NIGERIAN CONSTITUTION

Nigerian Constitution contains no clear definition of indigeneity, even though government officials often refer to the idea in policy formulation. The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria stipulates that the President's cabinet of ministers should include at least one indigene from each of the 36 states, but it falls short of given a clear definition to the concept. In the same vein, the Federal Civil Service Commission takes care to distribute positions of employment equitably among citizens of Nigerian states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, but leaves the states to decide who their so-called indigenes are. Further down the line, state governments also pass the responsibility to the local governments who possess the initiative and power, in turn, to determine who has the right to indigeneship. The authority granted local government councils to grant indigene status to residents also gives them a de facto power over any citizen's attempt at securing Federal Government employment. This lack of clear-cut definition of the word 'indigene' is somehow mitigated by the fact that it has a peculiar meaning which is widely understood by Nigerians. As explained earlier, an indigene of a place is interpreted to mean somebody who can trace his/her family roots back to the original inhabitants of the place. However, this definition is very difficult to apply in reality and it is usually used to express ethnic solidarity. Government officials have to divide the population into different categories based on poorly documented historical accounts that might not date back to more than a century. Perhaps because of the issue's complex nature, Nigerian state governments have failed to articulate any distinct criteria that could be used by local council officials to determine whether a person belongs to a particular community or not (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

## CERTIFICATE OF INDIGENEITY

As mentioned above, local government councils in Nigeria are in charge of issuing certificate of indigeneity, otherwise called certificates of origin, to people in their jurisdictions. These certificates serve as proof that the bearer is a bona fide indigene of the local government area. Any Nigerian who does not have the indigeneity certificate would be treated as an alien in his/her interactions with government. This stateless condition has trapped many Nigerians and limited their political aspirations, especially those who do not remember where their ancestors came from. Some other non-indigenes know where they migrated from but cannot convince the local officials of those places that they are true indigenes.

As the Federal Government of Nigeria allocate educational and employment opportunities among the states, Nigerian citizens must show where they come from before applying. Therefore, Nigerians without proof of origin cannot obtain civil service employment at the Federal level or apply for other opportunities such as recruitments into the military academy or the Nigeria Police Force, that are allocated among Nigerian applicants based on a Quota System and the Federal Character Principle (Human Rights Watch, 2006). They are also denied admission into Federal educational institutions because applicants are required to submit their certificates of origin for them to monitor compliance with the aforementioned Federal Character Principle. Along with these absurdities, Nigerians with no certificate of origin must also contend with government discriminatory policies against non-indigenes.

## DISCRIMINATIONS IN PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

Nigeria's public sector is the country's second largest source of employment opportunity (Dabalan and Bankole, 2000). So, in an economy beset with high levels of unemployment, recruitment into the government civil service is basically the only hope many Nigerians have of economic upliftment. Stable employment is also one of the tangible benefits that the Nigerian masses enjoy from a government that has failed to provide good governance. However, non-indigenes have increasingly found themselves barred from applying for government jobs and prevented from obtaining equal terms of employment with the indigenes, when they manage to secure employment in the civil service.

In Borno, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara, Zamfara, and some other states in Nigeria, the government policy prohibits hiring a non-indigene into the state civil service, unless there is no qualified indigenous applicant for the position. The former Kaduna State Attorney General said, "Allowing non-indigenes to compete for civil service posts is totally unacceptable except in specialized fields that may require expertise we do not have" (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Even when such discriminatory policy is not officially articulated by the civil service hiring guidelines, it is still taken as the norm accepted by government officials.

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## IMPEDIMENTS TO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Throughout Nigeria, non-indigenes are allowed to vote in their places of residence. Despite this, they still face barriers to full political participation such as intimidation and threats of death whenever they aspire for elective posts in their constituency. One non-indigene in Ilesa, Osun State complained that he was interested in contesting for an elective post in the town but, "Even though I've lived in Ilesa for thirty years, I couldn't run for the Chairmanship election of our LGA. The party leaders told me to go back to my home state. But of course, nobody

would allow me there either, after being away for those long years" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

Another non-indigene in Kano State declared that "settlers there generally would not consider competing for public office since all kinds of coalitions would prevent them from contesting effectively" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

The situation is more combustible in the Warri part of Delta State where community leaders publicly threatened violence against non-indigenes who contested for the chairmanship posts of their LGAs (The Urhobo Progressive Union). Moreover, the Plateau State Government, on many occasions, has appointed administrators for the Jos North LGA due to fears that their large non-indigenous Hausa population might vote their preferred candidates to victory if elections were allowed, a situation which could spark violent clashes in the area (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

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## IMPEDIMENTS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In September 2004, the Zamfara State government was reported to have banned children of non-indigenes from the state's public schools. That decision sparked protests across Nigeria against the apartheid-style policy and the Attorney General of the Federation also described it as "Unconstitutional and tantamount to treason" (The Vanguard Newspaper, 2004; The Guardian Nigeria, 2004). Attacked from all sides, the Zamfara Government insisted that the report was untrue, but acknowledged that it introduced school fees in public schools that only non-indigenes were required to pay. The State's Commissioner for Information defended this by declaring that the state's allocation from the federal government was meant for only the people of the state (The Guardian Newspaper, 2004).

It must be noted the Zamfara State's discriminatory school policy was not in any way strange or unique, though it might have been entirely new. Even at that time, many state governments in Nigeria have made it very difficult for non-indigenous students to secure admission into their state-run higher institutions by imposing outrageous fees or limiting the number who could gain admission, and denying them access to scholarship opportunities.

State universities in the country operate admission policies based on the "Catchment Area" Principle that reserves over sixty per cent of admission opportunities for their indigenes and charge higher school fees to outsiders. School fees in some state higher institutions in Nigeria are displayed below:

### **School Fees in Selected Nigerian State Higher Institutions**

- Benue State University:

Indigenes: ~~N~~25,500 - 45,900

Non-indigenes: ~~N~~38,200 - 69,800

- Nasarawa State University:

Indigenes: ~~N~~26,700 - 68,100

Non-indigenes: ~~N~~35,800 - 103,000

- Ebonyi State University:

*Inexistent Country*

Indigenes: ~~₦~~100,000

Non-indigenes: ~~₦~~150,000

- Kwara State Polytechnics:

Indigenes: ~~₦~~52,000 - 69,200

Non-indigenes: ~~₦~~72,000 - 89,700

- Sokoto State University:

Indigenes: ~~₦~~29,000 - 40,000

Non-indigenes: ~~₦~~89,000 - 100,000

- Ondo State University of Medical Sciences:

Indigenes: ~~₦~~200,000 - 380,000

Non-indigenes: ~~₦~~250,000 - 430,000

- Kaduna State University:

Indigenes: ~~₦~~20,000 - 27,000

Non-indigenes: ~~₦~~30,000 - 38,000

- Kano State University (KUST):

*Inexistent Country*

Indigenes: ~~₦~~22,800

Non-indigenes: ~~₦~~50,800

- Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH):

Indigenes: ~~₦~~40,000 - 170,000

Non-indigenes: ~~₦~~40,000 - 200,500

\* Fees depended on courses of study and on academic levels. Only the maximum and minimum fees payable in each school (as at September 2019) have been shown above.

Non-indigenes are also barred from applying for the much coveted bursary awards or scholarships from state governments in Nigeria. This constitutes a real hardship for many students who need those benefits to defray the huge costs of higher education (Suberu, 2001).

Similarly, discriminations in admission policy exists in all Federal universities in the country except a few ones designated as national institutions. Most of these universities grant preferential treatment to indigenous students of their catchment areas, which encompass the hosting state and a few neighboring states. Therefore, students who are not from the catchment area of a Federal university find themselves at a disadvantage in competition for admission opportunities.

AN OVERVIEW OF INDIGENE-SETTLER CONFLICT IN NIGERIA



Over the years, Nigeria has been beset with regular episodes of indigene/settler conflicts as a country of different nationalities, and the crisis has grown worse in recent years. For example, over fifty thousand Nigerians are reported to have lost their lives in intercommunal clashes since the end of military rule in 1999. The Nigerian National Commission for Refugees estimated that over three million Nigerians have been displaced by the conflicts during that period (The Reuters, 2006). Some of those conflicts have seen entire villages razed down and thousands of lives lost.

Ethnic tensions, poverty, competition over scarce land and other economic resources, poor handling of the indigene-settler issue plus other factors, all combined together to push intercommunal relations towards violence. Many Nigerian political and religious have also contributed to intercommunal tension by stoking the embers of group differences along ethnic lines. This failure of leadership is most visible on the various public policies on the indigeneity issue, which have helped foster conditions for conflict by tolerating discrimination against a sizeable proportion of the Nigerian population.

By providing Nigerian ethnic groups with a secure means of cultural preservation, the idea of indigeneity is often regarded as a way of stemming conflicts resulting from indigenes' fear of domination by migrants. As one European Scholar in International Affairs put it, "In a social environment pervaded by mutual fear, it has become more crucial to possess some space from which potential enemies could be excluded" (Johannes, 2004).

An Ibadan-based political analyst further explained that, "Some kind of distinction between indigenes and settlers is necessary to assure people that no one will destroy their shrines or usurp their titles of traditional leadership" (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

Nevertheless, indigeneity has become a powerful tool for political discrimination against a group of Nigerian citizens, just like the widely criticized Apartheid System that once held sway against black South Africans. In consequence, arguments regarding indigeneity have become sources of inter-communal tension and of Nigeria's most violent conflicts. In recent years, such disputes have led into bloody clashes in Delta, Kaduna, Plateau, Gombe, Zamfara, Nasarawa, Taraba, and some other states; and these cases have exposed Nigeria as a mere political contraption and not a nation in the true sense of it

#### SELECTED CASES OF INDIGENE-SETTLER CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

##### **The Jukun-Tiv Conflicts in Taraba**

Jukuns and Tivs live together in the Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State. Since the pre-colonial times, they have been coexisting in peace with the Tivs being the settlers having arrived the region in the 19th Century. They engaged predominantly in farming and seldom interfered with local administration. The cordial relationship between the host and the settler changed dramatically in mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century when Wukari was established (Best et al, 1999). Reasons advanced for the change in relations between the two ethnic groups are the rapid growth in Tiv population and the introduction of party politics in Nigeria. By the 1940s, the Tivs have become the largest ethnic group in Nigeria's Middle Belt area and three times as more populous as the Jukuns (their hosts). Consequently, the Tivs (settlers) began to impose their political supremacy on the Jukuns by using their numerical strength; this is actually the origin of the Jukun vs Tiv dichotomy in Taraba and Benue States (Agaba and Akintola, 2012).

This situation has led to violent clashes between the two groups over the years including: the Tiv riot of 1959-60, the 1964 'head breaking' clashes, the 1979-83 fracas, the 1990-92 local government election violence, the August 2010 riot, and the ongoing clashes in 2019. The bone of contention has been to determine who should enjoy benefits of indigeneity in Wukari and its villages. The statement made by Dr. Shekarau Angyu Masa-Ibi Kuvyo II, the paramount ruler of Wukari demonstrates the sentiment among Jukuns. During the 2001-2002 Jukun-Tiv Clash, he said that: "The Tiv came here to farm. We allowed them, gave them chieftaincy titles. Now that their population has increased, they think they are many enough to colonize us" (Agaba and Akintola, 2012; Asuni, 1999).

Like many other settler groups in Nigeria, however, the Tivs have argued that having lived in Wukari for more than a century, it is not proper for them to be regarded as settlers again, but rather as 'sons of the soil'.

### **Zagon-Kataf Crisis in Kaduna**

Zagon-Kataf town is located in the Southern part of Kaduna State. The people are predominantly Christians, with Muslim Hausa/Fulani in the minority. The crisis began in 1992 during the IBB military regime stretching all the way to 2010. The central issues in the conflict are the unequal opportunities, deprivation of access to basic economic resources, socio-political marginalization, unresolved fear of domination, and unhealthy religious rivalries among the different communities. The Atyaps of Kaduna have occupied the land at least since the 19th Century, while the Emir of Zazzau also claim authority over the place for the Hausa/Fulani. The imposition of the Emirate system on Zagon-Kataf from Zaria enthrones political hegemony over the aborigines.

The ugliest episode of Zagon-Kataf conflict in 1992 centered on suspicions of the Muslims that the Christian Local Government Chairman intended to relocate the town's main market to the disadvantage of the Hausa/Fulani people living in the area. The decision by the government to decongest the urban area was perceived by the Hausa/Fulani community as a ploy to dislodge them from the urban areas and neutralize their political clout in the place. It must be noted that the Hausa/Fulani people dominated the aborigines in all spheres of life - economically, politically, and socio-culturally, and the situation was complicated by the Christian and Muslim divide. The ugly situation became worse as the colonial authorities created ethnic lines of socio-religious divides by establishing Mission Schools and Native Authority School for Christians and Muslims respectively. Native Authority School was reserved for the children of the Islamic Emirate Council, which was restrictive in nature. In contrast, the missionaries established mission schools starting from the 1940s and the Atyaps who felt oppressed quickly embraced Christianity as a panacea to their plight. These two contradicting school and legal systems, in such a violent terrain, eventually heightened the level of political consciousness and social awareness of the Atyaps. As a result, Atyaps became more belligerent towards the Hausa/Fulani and their overlordship in economic enterprises. The 1992 episode of the conflict recorded huge waste of lives and poverty, and the Federal and state governments were variously accused of complicity in their half-hearted intervention (Adetutu, 2012).

### **Hausa/Fulani and Afizere/Anaguta/Berom Crisis in Plateau**

The Berom are the indigenous people of Jos in Plateau State. They are mostly found in Jos South, Jos North, Riyom, and Barkin Ladi (Gwol) LGAs. The people are predominantly Christians, while a few of them are Muslims and the rest are traditional worshippers.

Ironically enough, the Jos Crisis is multicultural and multilateral in nature. There are many ethnic groups contending for indigeneity over 'Jos', especially in Jos North LGA.

Berom are only one of the few contenders who assert that Jos belongs to them. They have claimed that the Berom occupied Jos along with the Anaguta long before the coming of the British colonialists who made the city the centre of their government administration via conquest. As the account goes, the British brought the Hausa/Fulani people to Jos as cheap laborers in the Tin mines.

The Anaguta people corroborate the Berom and Afizere claim that the Hausa/Fulani group are settlers in the place. Anaguta does not agree with the Hausa/Fulani claim of right to political suzerainty in Jos. This ethnic group dismisses the idea that the Hausa/Fulani have ruled Jos from time immemorial (Sampson, n.d.).

The Afizere people of Jos corroborate Berom's claim that the Hausa/Fulani people are mere settlers in the city, who do not appreciate the hospitality extended to them by their hosts. The Afizere contends that the Hausa/Fulani have no right to the land in Jos and debunk claims of the Anaguta and Berom as original owners of Jos. The people claim that they are the aborigines of Jos and there is enough evidence to prove this stance. Accordingly, they claim that the boundary between their community and Berom Land was located around the Bukuru Low Cost Bridge, but the British Colonial authorities joined Afizere with the old Bauchi Province, and this allowed the Berom to acquire their land in Jos with much resistance.

Hausa/Fulani people of Jos claim that they are the ones who established Jos and nurtured the city into what it has become today, without the contribution of the so-called

aborigines. The main point of their own argument is that the city was founded on a virgin land in the 19th Century with no indigenous people around. A paramount ruler of the Hausas in Jos called the Turakin Jos reaffirmed in 2002 that Jos is a Hausa city and it was confirmed by Mr Ames, a British colonial figure who estimated that Jos population was 10,207 in 1950 out of which 10,000 of them were of Hausa/Fulani origin (Sampson, n.d.).

## TOWARDS NATIONAL INTEGRATION & NATION BUILDING

It can be seen from our earlier discussions that Nigeria is not yet a nation in the true sense of it. Unlike countries like Germany, Japan, Canada, USA, and Italy that practise federalism, Nigeria is an amalgam of different nations and little has been done to fuse the different cultures together in the way of nation building.

The core issue in the Nigerian indigene-settler controversy is the competition for scarce economic and political opportunities. While the Nigerian Constitution stipulates the use of indigeneity for sharing government benefits, Section 15, Subsection 2 of the same Constitution provides that national integration should be actively pursued, while discriminations based on age, religion, sex, status, or ethnic background shall be prohibited. Section 15(4) also provides that the states should foster feeling of national cohesiveness among Nigerians, as to ensure that loyalty to the nation overrides ethnic loyalties.

### **Conclusion**

A country whose foundation is laid on sentiments of ethnic differences, primordial political ideologies, and insensitivity to crucial matters of national interest will continue to stumble

due to fear of domination, mistrust, and suspicions of political marginalization among its ethnic nationalities. Fanning the embers of indigene-settler conflicts in Nigeria to gain cheap political popularity among the people is not an enviable trait of a good statesman. The intractable indigene-settler crisis in the country is nurtured by government at all levels and it is one of the reasons why Nigeria can still not be regarded as "One Nation" in reality. Whittling down recommendations from the various panels of enquiries to proffer solutions to the crisis is quite unfortunate. Non-provision of adequate grazing land for cattle rearing, nonintervention of the Federal Government in the incessant farmers vs Fulani herdsmen clashes all over Nigeria, and pampering the Fulani pastoralists in the conflicts with other groups are actions that suggest government partisanship in sensitive issues of national importance which are hallmarks of failed countries. The persistence of bloody conflicts and banditry across the Nigerian landscape is caused more by the government's reluctance to address the grievances of contending parties rather than by the communities themselves. Government needs to take decisive actions to stop the excesses of Nigerian ethnic nationalities or any group of people for that matter, in order to foster peace and progress, security and national unity.

## THE WAY FORWARD

### **Review of Nigeria's Constitutional Provisions on Indigeneity**

There are clearly fundamental flaws in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with regards to the indigeneity question. Contradictions in certain Subsections of the Constitution has spurred the indigene-settler dichotomy. For example, the provision in Section 147 that, "...Each minister in a Federal Cabinet must be an indigene of a state

which they represent contradicts the Constitution's notion of citizenship as enshrined in Section 25(1a). Therefore, it is expedient for these conflicting provisions to be reconciled through a constitutional reform process in which all Nigerian citizens will be taken into consideration.

### **Promotion of Good Governance**

The main antidote to the challenges of democratic sustenance in Nigeria remains the promotion of good governance at all levels of governance. Otherwise, the ruling elite will continue to recourse into ethnic, regional, and religious appeals which inflame primordial identities of the Nigerian masses. In essence, only a truly accountable and transparent leadership can enhance the peaceful coexistence of Nigerians.

### **Canvassing Education**

Many of the violent conflicts that have engulfed Nigeria over the years are attributable to ignorance and illiteracy. The substantial population of uneducated Nigerians are pliable tools for political manipulation in the hands of the elites. It is therefore crucial to promote mass education by making it compulsory and free at primary and secondary school levels.

### **The Expansion of the Country's Political Space**

The restriction of Nigeria's political space has been one of the causes of armed conflicts in the country since 1960. In many instances, the political space has been so restricted that it was completely dominated by the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group. Out of the 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Hausa/Fulanis alone has ruled the country for more than 30 years out of 59 years of independence. This has in no small way fanned the embers of ethnic



rivalry in the polity. Accordingly, freeing up the political space to give all the ethnic groups equal rights to contest and win elections, no matter how big or small their populations are, could help promote national sense of belonging and unity.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### To the Nigerian State Governments

- ✓ Reverse policies that discriminate against non-indigenes in securing access to educational and employment opportunities open to the state residents.
- ✓ Proactively enforce the amends made to indigeneity laws.

### To the Federal Government of Nigeria

- ✓ Sponsor Federal legislations that will bar any government institution from denying non-indigenes of their citizen rights wherever they live in the country.
- ✓ Challenge non-indigene discrimination in state and local governments by prosecuting culprits.
- ✓ Sponsor a nationwide public enlightenment campaign focused on repeatedly broadcasting the rights of every Nigerian and the need to end non-indigene discriminations.
- ✓ Mandate Federal agencies to abandon any reference to indigeneity in the implementation of their administrative functions.

### Potential Policy Alternatives

Discrimination against non-indigenes constitutes one of the impediments to the attainment of nationhood by Nigeria. Nigerian governments at all levels are culpable in this crime in ways that contravene the country's Constitution and International Human Rights Laws.

International Human Rights Laws frown upon discriminations based on race, religion, or ethnicity. Governments can take affirmative actions (positive discrimination) on behalf of minority groups to correct unfortunate conditions that might impact their fundamental human rights. This could include preferential treatments for university admissions or employment opportunities. However, such policies must be objective and reasonable enough to diminish discrimination against the group.

In Nigeria, however, non-indigeneity policies are not reasonable and they are unrelated to any earlier discrimination. They are not implemented to reverse discrimination but to favor a particular group over the other. Therefore, those discriminatory policies are distortions of the ideals at the center of Nigeria's Federalism.

## CHAPTER 12

### TERRORISM AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

#### **Introduction**

Nigeria (the most populous country in Africa) is presently embroiled in a security crisis which has seemingly become intractable, not only by defying security measures, but also making a mockery of the various efforts of the Nigerian government and the billions of naira budgeted annually as security votes by governments across the country. However, we must emphasize that terrorism and insecurity is not a problem that is peculiar to Nigeria because other nations (from Asia to South America) also face similar challenges. Nevertheless, the point of departure here is the way this social menace is managed in each country. As a matter of fact, insecurity and terrorism in Nigeria has so heightened with unspeakable aftermaths which have affected economic activities in the affected states. For example, the nefarious activities of the Boko Haram sect have alone resulted into the loss of thousands of lives and properties, especially in the North eastern states of Nigeria. Some of their atrocities include sporadic shooting of innocent citizens, bombing attacks and the use of suicide bombers, wanton destruction of villages, rapes, arson, kidnapping of school girls and women to be used as sex slaves, burning of churches and attacks on police stations, etc. For this reason, Nigeria has come to occupy a prime place on the Global Index of Terrorism. Also, the Boko Haram insurgency has led to the displacement of millions of residents of Borno, Yobe, Adamawa and other seriously affected states. These helpless people have found themselves running hundreds of kilometers to escape from the terrorists, only to arrive at neighbouring states and be placed in ramshackle camps constructed for the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) facing social stigma. Thousands

have lost their lives, many women are now widows, while children have become orphans with no hope of survival. This situation has serious implications for national development. However, the rising wave of insecurity in Nigeria is not restricted to the Boko Haram Crisis. Even in the relatively peaceful Southern Nigeria, we read of ritual killings, kidnappings, armed robbery attacks, militancy, and other violent crimes, almost on a daily basis. This shows that terrorism and insecurity in Nigeria is not restricted to a particular region. In view of this, we shall attempt to investigate the remote and immediate causes of the unfortunate situation and proffer possible solutions to address the menace.

## OVERVIEW OF TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

According to (Omoyibo & Akpomera, 2013), security can be defined as a concept necessary to nation building, and nations exist in order to guarantee this fundamental requirement of human societies. Therefore, it can be argued that security of lives and properties is the most important responsibility of a nation state (Thomas, 1996). In Nigeria, the Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution (1999) specifically declares that the security and welfare of the people would be the primary purpose of the democratic government. Quite unfortunately, the governments at all levels in Nigeria have failed in this onerous task of providing a safe and secure environment for millions of Nigerians. The alarming rise of insecurity in Nigeria has further fueled the high crime rate and terrorism in different parts of the country, thus leaving unimaginable consequences for the nation's growth and development.

To combat the increasing waves of violent crime in the polity, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FG) enacted the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011 and National Assembly has had to continue to budget billions of naira on security every year (Ewetan, 2013). Despite these

efforts, however, the level of insecurity in Nigeria is still very high, and a confirmation of this is the persistent low ranking of the country on the Global Peace Index (GPI). Notwithstanding the plethora of security measures introduced by the government to overcome the mounting security challenges in Nigeria, the efforts have failed to produce the desired positive results. In recent times, this has compelled the Nigerian government to approach USA, Britain, Israel, and the EU for foreign assistance to combat the increasing level of terrorism and insecurity.

Despite the fact the Nigerian government and the security agencies claimed to be on top of the situation, high level of insecurity has persisted in the country. From every indication, government officials seem to be incapable of securing the lives of Nigerians from violent criminals. It also needs to be mentioned that coupled with the deteriorating security situation in Nigeria, the country is also faced with daunting development challenges that pose serious threats to the country's drive towards economic development. Some of these developmental challenges include high rate of unemployment, endemic urban and rural poverty, mass illiteracy especially in the far North, low industrial output, high inflation rate, very large domestic and foreign debt, inadequate, social infrastructure, and deteriorating exchange rate (Ewetan, 2013).

According to a publication by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria's rate of unemployment increased to 23.9 per cent from 19.7 per cent between 2009 and 2011. This data becomes more important in light of other statistics that Nigeria has an estimated youth population of about 80 million which represents about 60 per cent of the country's total population with an annual growth rate of 2.6 per cent. Also, national demographic figures show that the youth population is vibrant with 1.8 million average annual entrant

to the labour force between 2006 and 2011. Furthermore, 37.7 per cent of Nigerians were aged 15-24 years in 2011 and 22.4 per cent of people between 25 and 44 ages were able and willing to work but could not get jobs.

As a result, this chapter attempts to discuss terrorism and insecurity in Nigeria in the face of increasing waves of violent crimes and terrorist attacks by examining the issues involved, the socio-economic consequences, and the way forward.

## CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

### **Insecurity**

Within the context of our discussion, insecurity can be seen as reduced capability and capacity of the government to protect and safeguard the country, persons, property etc., against attacks by armed bandits, insurgents, criminals, rebel groups, and terrorists. Insecurity occurs whenever the government is powerless to protect its citizens, interests, and cherished values from threats. Again, a country is said to be insecure not only when its boundaries and sovereignty are expressly violated but also when the collective rights of the citizens to life are constantly violated with impunity. A country can also be described as insecure when human rights, the sanctity of human lives, and right to economic opportunities are not guaranteed with little or no effort by the government to address the situation.

From these clarifications, we can categorically say that Nigeria of today is insecure as there are sufficient evidence (which we shall provide) to show that violent criminals and extremist groups are having a field day in carrying out wanton destruction of lives and property across the country.

Insecurity is a multidimensional concept which has been the subject of many debates. It is viewed differently by different scholars depending on their own worldview, with some associating it with how it affects human existence. (Achuma et al., 2013) argued that insecurity is a state of being subjected to danger, or exposed to danger. Thus, a person is said to be secured when he/she is not exposed to any form of danger, accident, and physical aggression (Eme & Anyadike, 2013). In (Achumba, Ighomeroho & Akpor-Robaro, 2013), two major sources of insecurity were identified as remote factors and immediate factors. The remote factors include lack of institutional capacity resulting in failure of government, pervasive material inequalities, conflict of perceptions between the rulers and the ruled, weak security system, ethno-religious conflicts, and loss of communal and social-cultural value system. On the other hand, the immediate factors include porous borders, social irresponsibility of companies, unemployment, poverty, rural-urban drift, and widespread unemployment.

Consequent upon this, commerce and trade have suffered greatly, resulting into further pauperization of Nigerian citizens and dwindling of government revenue accruing from the affected areas. Socioeconomic activities in the crisis-prone areas are very poor due to the fear of the unknown as people have fled for fear of being caught in the orgy of violence.

The security challenges facing Nigeria appear insurmountable due to the nonchalant attitude of the Federal Government which is supposed to uphold Section 12 (2) b of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). The situation will persist if not become worse because the security agencies seem unprepared for the present challenges as noted by (Bankong-Obi, 2011). A remarkable consequence of this state of affairs is the

gradual loss of confidence in the ability of the country's security agencies to protect lives and investments, especially against the glaring inefficiencies attributed to lack of modern communication gadgets and sophisticated weapons (Adegbami, 2013).

Additionally, the rising wave of insecurity in Nigeria has drawn more attention to the raging debate about Nigerian statehood. A lot of people believe that the intractable security problems are symptoms of the "faultlines" inherent in the foundation of the country when people of different nationalities were cobbled together by the will of the British colonial officers led by Lord Lugard. Many also believe that these challenges will become a thing of the past if only the people are allowed to take charge of their collective destiny by constitutional amendments to restructure the country along the lines of True Federalism as practised in the USA and Germany. How effective these ideas will be in addressing Nigeria's security crisis can only be imagined.

### **Terrorism**

Terrorism is an act aimed at causing death or serious injury to perceived adversaries with the intent of frightening the people (audience) or compelling the government or an organization to act in a way that negates their cherished values. In (Madunagu, 2011), terrorism is defined as an unlawful act committed against civilians for political or other ideological goals by subnational groups, usually with the intention to influence an audience. Radu (2002) also affirms that terrorism is any attack or threat of attack against unarmed targets, which is intended to influence or change major political decisions. Similarly, Wardlaw (1982) postulated that terrorism could be seen as the use or threat of use of violence by an individual or a group, whether acting for or in opposition to



established authority, when such action is intended to create extreme anxiety and/or fear, including such effects in a target group much larger than the immediate victims with the main goal of coercing those people into acceding to the political demands of the perpetrators.

In view of recent developments across the globe, terrorism has become a hydra-headed monster associated with violence, suicide bombings, tortures, and coldblooded killings, and this has kept governments on their toes. As stated by Stibli (2010), terrorism is one of the most complicated sociopolitical phenomenon of the contemporary world. The current wave of terrorist attacks rocking the world constitutes a greater security threat to human societies than ever before. It is causing harms to societies in terms of loss of lives and properties from London to Kabul, diversion of public funds meant for development purposes to use as security votes, and diversion of foreign direct investment (FDI) away from target countries to non-target countries, thus resulting into huge economic losses for the affected countries.

Two types of terrorism have been identified, namely: domestic and international terrorism. Domestic terrorism involves the activities of terrorist groups in an affected country, and their targets are mostly fellow citizens, government officials and institutions for political reasons. Prime examples of such groups are the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria and the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka. On the other hand, international terrorism involves the activities of terrorist groups acting in more than a country. This could stem from the victims (who are usually from different countries), targets, institutions affected, and perpetrators (who may have international collaborators). A good example of this is the attack on the World Trade

Center in New York on September 11, 2001 (9/11) by agents of the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization (Sander & Ender, 2008).

Coming to Nigeria, the level of terrorism and insecurity has become a major issue for the governments at all levels. Since the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-70 to the 1990s when the Niger Delta militants became more violent and the recent episodes of Boko Haram attacks, Nigeria has recorded unprecedented security challenges. As mentioned earlier in this book, these include kidnappings, suicide bombings, ritual killings, assassinations, armed robbery incidents, and all these violent crimes have claimed thousands of lives and also discouraged new investments in the affected states. According to Ewetan & Urhie (2014), the security challenges have stifled Nigeria's socioeconomic development in the last two decades.

Given the various perceptions of terrorism above, it can be seen as that terrorism has four essential features:

1. Terrorist acts must be violent.
2. The main target of terrorism is usually noncombatants.
3. Terrorism usually takes place in hitherto peaceful environments but not necessarily without a conflict situation.
4. The ultimate aim of the terrorist act is to instill fear in order to force those in political authority to respond to the demands of the group behind the attack.

In the Northeastern part of Nigeria, terrorism has become the predominant security challenge today. The Islamic fundamentalist group called Boko Haram has notoriously

made the region the top haven of terrorism in West Africa. The sect has a strange ideology which is completely averse to the Western culture and everything it represents. Also, the sect seeks an enthronement of Islamic rule in Nigeria. They attack churches, schools, markets, police stations, and even army barracks, through suicide bombing or armed attacks. Notable terrorist attacks perpetrated by the Book Haram sect with huge losses of lives include the Mogadishu Barracks bombing in Abuja (FCT) in June 2011 and the UN building bombing in the same city in August 2011 (Robinson, Obayori & Kingsley, 2014).

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE INSECURITY CRISIS IN NIGERIA

Without gainsaying it, Nigeria has enormous potential to be great, considering its large population consisting of a dynamic work force, diverse raw materials and abundant natural resources, a reservoir of intellectuals, and a growing economy. In spite of the aforementioned factors for greatness, it has remained an underdeveloped country which is struggling to find her feet in the comity of nations due to bad leadership, nepotism, cronyism, ethnicity, and the prevailing atmosphere of ethno-religious animosity, that have continued to constitute hindrance to national development. To be candid, Nigeria is truly passing through tough times as echoes of terrorism and violent crimes pervade the nation space. The insecurity crisis that has engulfed Nigeria can be traced to the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-70 and the subsequent misadventure of the military into governance which necessitated the use of arms and ammunition in large numbers according to (Ewetan & Urhie, 2014). The same scholars also noted that after the Civil War, the arms given to some soldiers and civilians were not returned and were used to carry out criminal activities. Besides this fact, a lot of people lost their means of livelihood during the war and just needed to survive. To survive, they simply resorted to criminal activities, such

as armed robbery, frauds, and drug trafficking. Violent Crimes like pipeline vandalization and kidnapping entered the nation's public discuss in the 1990s and were used by the so-called Niger Delta militants as means to protest environmental degradation of their communities. The Niger Delta region which provides the bulk of Nigeria's wealth from crude oil regrettably suffers from poverty amidst of plenty. Therefore, the frustrations of the marginalised youths of the region eventually led to their formation of militant groups like the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) and the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND). These militant groups were involved in kidnapping of oil workers and bombing of the nation's oil installations. These resulted into a security crisis which the Federal Government battled to bring under control between 2003 and 2010.

In the Southeastern part of Nigeria, the agitation for Biafra which was first muted in the aftermath of the 1966 pogrom against the Igbos in Northern Nigeria and which led to the regrettable Nigerian Civil War, later gained popularity in the activities of MASSOB and IPOB led by Nnamdi Kanu who was recently hounded out of the country by security agencies. These agitations for emancipation and independence have led to security crisis in the South East of Nigeria in the past and the recent resurgence has been variously attributed to the perceived marginalization of Ndigbo by the President Buhari's government.

In the North-central geographical zone, insecurity is also rife. In Benue State for example, Governor Samuel Orton has had a tough time with the incessant conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers. The situation led to the destruction and pillaging of whole villages and loss of thousands of lives. In Plateau State, the Hausa/Fulani and the Berom people are

perpetually at war and the crisis has defied many 'peace panels' with no reasonable solution in sight.

Going further to the Northeastern part of Nigeria, the region has witnessed the worst security crisis in recent history, particularly as it has been the epicentre of Boko Haram activities. Contrary to the claims by the Federal Government that it has effectively degraded and subdued the Islamic sect, evidence abound to show that the claim is false. The Northwest and Southwest regions are also facing the scourge of kidnapers, armed bandits, assassins, and the murderous Fulani herdsmen.

The Northwest also plays host to the rampaging armed bandits roaming the jungles of Zamfara, Sokoto, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, and Kaduna states. They kidnap for ransom, pillage and destroy entire villages while leaving scores of loss lives in their wake. At a time, the people started avoiding the Abuja-Kaduna Expressway for fear of being attacked by the criminal gangs who were described as aliens by the Governor of Kaduna State Mallam El-Rufai.

At this junction, it must be clarified that terrorism in Nigeria is not a recent social phenomenon. It started with the notorious Maitatsine Islamic sect in Northern Nigeria during the Alhaji Shehu Shagari Civilian administration in the Second Republic and it was effectively contained by a detachment of Nigerian security forces who overpowered the extremists in the ensuing armed confrontation, with their leader Marwa fleeing to Northern Cameroon. Terrorism reared its ugly head again during the Obasanjo Civilian administration in the present Fourth Republic which witnessed religious riots in Plateau, Kano, Kaduna, and Borno states in Northern Nigeria.

From the discussions so far, it would appear that the pattern of security crisis in Nigeria has been dimensionally regionalized. Militia groups and Boko Haram in the North, kidnapers and Fulani herdsman in the Middle Belt, Eastern, Western, and other Southern states of the federation, ritual killings in the Western states, and assassinations across the country.

## PREDISPOSING FACTORS CAUSING INSECURITY AND TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

### **Weak Security and Judicial System**

The constitutional role of maintaining law and order in Nigeria rests squarely on the law enforcement agents. However, it would appear that the security agents are unaware of the increasing security challenges and are not proactive (Lygcal, 2012). Temple (2013) also observed that the law enforcement agents are not well catered for in terms of accommodation, life insurance, and other welfare packages. The scholar advised the Nigerian government to stop endangering the lives of its security agents who are sent to face criminal gangs without adequate security equipment. In addition, (Achumba, Ighomereho & Robaro (2003) revealed that even when the security agents have the required training and equipment, many of them would be influenced by ethnic or religious sentiments to take sides and serve their people's interest instead of the national interest. Moreover, according to (Olonisakin, 2008), the Police population ratio in Nigeria is below 1:450, which fell far below the UN's recommended ratio of less than 1:100. What this implies is that as a country, Nigeria is chronically under-policed and this further explains the inability of the Nigeria Police Force to effectively tackle crimes and other security challenges in the country.

Also, Oputa (1991) argued that the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has a serious image problem among the citizens it was created to serve. Throughout the length and breadth of the country, the Police are viewed with suspicion, perceived to be unfriendly and brutal, trigger-happy, crime collaborators, extortionists, and gross violators of fundamental human rights. The increasing crime rate, especially violent crimes and terrorism involving ritual murders, unresolved political assassinations, armed robbery attacks, electoral violence, suicide bombings, kidnappings, and terrorist attacks, has dampened the hope of the people in the capacity of the NPF to safeguard their lives and property. The general feeling is that the law enforcement agents can neither prevent nor resolve crimes in Nigeria.

Closely associated with the reality of a weak security system is a weak judicial system in Nigeria. In the Nigerian Constitution (1999), the judiciary is specifically charged with the task of interpreting the law and adjudicating in civil and criminal cases. While doing these, it should be fair and uphold the sanctity of the Constitution. However, Fukuyama (2004) observed that the rising impunity and looting of public funds by government officials is encouraged by the weakness of the Nigerian judicial system. Justice and rule of law depend on the law and the integrity of the judicial officers. Unfortunately, Obarisiagbon (2017) has noted that the Nigerian Judiciary is very weak and tends to encourage criminality as many culprits are easily set free based on flimsy legal technicalities after being arrested and prosecuted. The country is thus in great danger if the security agents cannot prevent crimes due to lack of basic training and equipment, and the judiciary is also unable to perform its roles of adequately prosecuting offenders due to the inherent flaws in the system that inhibit the dispensation of justice.

## **Porous Borders**

It has been observed that Nigerian porous borders facilitate unrestricted movements of people in and out of Nigeria in such a way as to contribute greatly to the security crisis in the country. Apart from this unrestricted movement of aliens into Nigeria, military arms and assorted weapons of various calibers have been smuggled into the country undetected and have been subsequently used by criminal elements to launch criminal attacks across the country. Edeko (2011) showed that Nigeria harbored over 70 percent of about an estimated 8 million illegal firearms in West Africa, which have been used in the various crisis flashpoints in the country. On their part, (Adeola & Olayemi, 2012) argued the porosity of the Nigerian national borders has led to uncontrollable influx of illegal migrants mainly from neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad, Benin Republic, Ghana, Mali, Togo, and Cameroon, many of who are criminals in intent and purpose.

## **The Prevalence of Poverty and Unemployment in Nigeria**

According to data released by the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) as cited in (Ogah et. al, 2011), Nigeria's poor economy with high poverty and unemployment rate has been the bane of the country's drive towards peace and progress. Every year, Nigerian institutions of higher learning produce graduates who are regrettably thrown into the over-saturated labor market with no hope for jobs. To survive this harsh condition, many of these frustrated youths go into criminal acts like kidnapping, armed robbery, drug trafficking, and militancy. Others are brainwashed and recruited into the intellectual arms



*Inexistent Country*

of terrorist groups. The cases of Niger Delta militants, IPOB, Shiite militia, and Boko Haram easily come to mind.

The evidence abounds that past governments in Nigeria failed to implement measures to reduce poverty and unemployment, which have constituted the major factors responsible for the prevalent security challenges in the country (Nwagbosa, 2012).

To a large extent, however, the militancy in the Niger Delta region was effectively resolved by the late President Umar Yar'adua and former President Goodluck Jonathan when they introduced the Amnesty Programme in 2009, under which former militants were allowed to lay down their arms without fear of being prosecuted. Those who embraced the peace offer were rehabilitated and sent to skills acquisition centres for educational and vocational trainings, which brought relative calm to the entire region and encouraged many investors to transfer their businesses back to the area.

### **Lopsided Development and Marginalization in the Country**

The present government of President Buhari has been severally accused of marginalization of some sections of the country in appointments and budgetary allocations of the country's resources. According to Nwadiakor (2011), this tendency for every president in Nigeria to bend towards the dictates of their own ethnic group has greatly affected the security fabric of the country. Most times, key political appointments are reserved for people of Northern extraction who have had their sons ruling Nigeria for about 43 years out of the total 59 years of the country's independence. All this while, no

person of Southeast origin has been allowed to rule except for the ill-fated six months when General Ironsi assumed leadership after the bloody coup of January 15, 1966 which consumed the then Prime Minister Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. This perhaps explains the renewed agitation for the Republic of Biafra and the security breaches that have accompanied the agitation.

Besides, it is glaring that there is discontent and feelings of frustration among Nigerians. A vast majority of the people have misgivings about the extreme poverty and lack of economic opportunities prevalent in the country. People feel cheated and marginalized in the scheme of things, and this has led to loss of hope, especially among the teeming youth population. These disillusioned youths now express their frustrations in the system by any possible means, be it legal or not. As we have seen, the consequence is the ongoing security crisis bedeviling Nigeria (Onuoha, 2011).

### **The Ignoble Role of Partisan Politics**

Partisan politics and political patronage play significant roles in the origin of terrorism and the security crisis in Nigeria. As many scholars have argued, the sustenance of Boko Haram and the Fulani herdsmen in Northern Nigeria is a clear case of political partisanship. Corroborating this argument is the former National Security Adviser, Col. Sambo Dasuki in a paper delivered at the 2012 South-South Economic Summit held in Asaba, Delta State. He revealed that Boko Haram members were getting well-equipped and better trained, while Nigerian security forces had no answer to the questions posed by the terrorists. He further traced the incessant bombings and terrorist attacks ravaging the country to the politics of exclusion of the then ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria (The Nation, May 3 2012).

## **Introduction of Unfavorable Economic Policies**

Researchers and conflict analysts including Ilo (2008) have disclosed that ethnic, religious, and regional tensions in Nigeria can only be fully comprehended in the light of the social conditions created by economic crisis, debts, chronic inflation, and the ill-advised Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the Babangida administration. As noted by Adekunle (2007), unfavorable economic policies such as the Austerity Measure of the Shagari era and the SAP of IBB were accompanied by violent protests, strikes, economic crises, political upheavals, coups, militancy, and general insecurity.

## **Religious Intolerance**

More than any factor, religious intolerance is responsible for the activities of the violent Islamic sect Boko Haram who threatens to impose Sharia law on the entire country. Inability to tolerate one another's religion in Nigeria's secular society as enshrined in the Constitution is a major cause of ethno-religious tension in the country. Somehow, religion in Nigeria has become a matter of competition by which adherents engage in 'holier than thou' attitudes and build large worship centres on strategic highways as a testimony to their religiosity, while corruption continue to thrive in the country and some people slaughter innocent Nigerians for the mere fact that their religion affiliations differ from those of the murderers.

## **NIGER DELTA MILITANCY AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA**

Since the 1970s and after the end of the regrettable Nigerian Civil War, violence aggravated by the involvement of the military in political governance has become

legitimized, and the country's youth's social struggle for survival has included violence. The society gradually stopped recognizing merit and impunity became a path to the top of the socioeconomic ladder, with drug trafficking, ritual killing, fraudulent practices, smuggling of contraband goods, and other negative money-making ventures like armed robbery and prostitution, becoming quick ways of getting rich (Oruwari, 2006).

The emergence of the Ijaw National Congress (INC) and its youth arm (IYC), the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Egbesu Boys, the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), and the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) has been seen as a fallout of the inability of the Nigerian political system to address felt frustrations, injustice or marginalization by certain groups within the national space. Admittedly, the Niger Delta militancy impacted Nigeria's revenue generation and posed a serious security challenge to the country as a whole.

As various public affairs analysts have explained, the Niger Delta struggle is attributable to the neglect of the region since the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantity at Oloibiri in 1956, a development which pitched the frustrated youths of the region against the Nigerian Federal Government. The people of the affected states believed, albeit rightly, that they have been deprived of the gains from their God-given resources. The environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was a prominent son of the region, became a vocal voice both locally and internationally in the fight against this injustice but he, alongside 8 other activists, was eventually arrested and executed by General Sani Abacha's regime on November 10, 1995 (Otoghagua, 2007).

The killing of the Ogoni nine escalated the Niger Delta crisis and led to the Kaiama Declaration in 1997 by the Ijaw Youth Congress which opened the way for armed struggle against the Nigerian state and its oil installations, including kidnapping of oil workers for ransom, extortion of the oil companies, oil bunkering, and pipeline vandalization.

The demand for resource control gave the Niger Delta struggle an international recognition, as it was acknowledged that there had truly been an injustice against the people who have been contributing over 80 percent of the country's revenue since the 1970s. It took the implementation of the Amnesty Programme by President Yar'Adua in 2009 for the militants to lay down their arms and embrace dialogue before respite came to the region and the return to normalcy of oil exploration activities in the affected areas.

In the light of our findings, the militancy activities of the Niger Delta youths was due to their demands for adequate compensation from the Nigerian government and the oil multinationals for the long years of neglect and environmental degradation in the region. Since the end of the Nigerian Civil War when Nigeria started shifting from agriculture to crude oil production as its economic mainstay, a larger percentage of the country's revenue has come from the Niger Delta area, but a great percentage of this wealth has been used to develop Lagos, Abuja, and other Nigerian cities or to fund the expensive lifestyles of Nigerian corrupt leaders. During these years, the Niger Delta ,which is the goose that lays the golden egg, has remained neglected with no good access roads, poor educational facilities, poor electricity supply, poor health-care delivery system, lack of pipe-

borne water system, and unspeakable environmental pollution from oil spills and gas flares, amidst lack of viable economic opportunities.

As a consequence, the main goal of the Niger Delta militant groups has been to protect the interests of their people within the Nigerian state by violent means if necessary and has at times posed serious threats to the country's national security (Otoghagua, 2007). MOSOP, MEND, NDVF, the Egbesu Boys, and other militant groups were all in arms against the Nigerian government, agitating against the neglect of their region in the issue of development which prevented the indigenes from enjoying the basic necessities of life. It must be noted, however, that the militant activities in the Niger Delta area were reduced to the barest minimum after the introduction of Amnesty Packages for repentant militants by the late President Umar Yar'Adua in 2009.

The argument that militancy in the Niger Delta has not been completely eradicated and it may flare up in the future is still a matter of conjecture.

## THE BOKO HARAM CONUNDRUM

Boko Haram is a Salafist Islamic extremist group that operates in the Northeastern part of Nigeria, and in the neighbouring countries of Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. The group is responsible for a growing number of deadly terrorist attacks that have taken thousands of lives and destroyed millions of property since the death of Mohammed Yusuf, the alleged founder in 2009 which ushered in a new era of deadly confrontations with the security forces. Their terrorist activities have created image problem for Nigeria on the international stage, prompting some countries like Britain and the USA to designate Nigeria as a terrorist country and in some cases, they issue traveling warnings to their nationals

coming into Nigeria.

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## BOOK HARAM'S EARLY HISTORY

### **Is Boko Haram What It's Proclaimed to Be?**

In the Hausa language, Boko means book (education), while Haram is an Arabic word for sin. Since the commonest form of education in Nigeria is the Western model, Book has come to mean Western education to the majority of Hausa speakers in Northern Nigeria, Niger, and Chad Republic. Therefore, Boko Haram simply means Western education is a sin. This is the name given by the Nigerian media to Jamatu'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'wati wal-Jihad because of the assumption that the group's philosophy is against Western education. However, the group has variously contested the misrepresentation. According to a Boko Haram member, Mallam Sanni Umaru, "Boko Haram usually means 'Western Civilization' is forbidden. The difference is that while the first (Boko) gives the impression that we are opposed to formal education coming from the West.....which is not true, the second affirms our belief in the supremacy of Islamic culture (not education), for culture is broader. It includes education but not determined by Western Education" (Onyebuchi & Chigozie, 2013).

Mallam Umaru's exposition on Boko Haram has inspired further attempts to explain the group's emergence and philosophy within the clash of civilization. So, the violent extremism going on in Nigeria amidst the transformation of the country's political space could be attributed to the clash of civilizations (Samuel, 1996). Hence, the driving force of the Boko Haram sect is religion, with fundamentalist Islam violently questioning Western

values imposed on the country through colonial influences. This reasoning resonates with the global political Islam from which Boko Haram members draw their inspiration.

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#### ORIGIN OF BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA

According to Nnaemeka (2011), Boko Haram group had no specific name at inception as its members attracted different descriptions wherever they were found based on the perception of the local population. Therefore, whether as Boko Haram, Yusufuya sect, Khawaarji, Nigerian Taliban, Shabaab Muslim Youth Movement, Jamaatul Takfur Wal Hyra Ahlus Sunna, or Jamaatu Alhissunnah Lidda'awatiwal Jihad, a name which the sect approves of, the exact time which the group manifested on the Nigerian landscape has remained a subject of speculation. In fact, while some scholars have traced the origin to 1995, others argued that the group was founded around 2002. In the same vein, identity of the actual founder of the group is also a subject of controversy. It is either ascribed to an Islamic evangelical group formed by some Muslim students of the University of Maiduguri who reportedly felt dissatisfied with Western values, or to one Lawan Abubakar, who later left for further religious studies at the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia (Simeon, 2012).

However, relevant to our study is the fact that Mustapha Modu Jon, popularly known as Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf, was the de-facto leader of the group in 2009 when the Boko Haram clashes with the security forces gained national attention. Under the leadership of Yusuf, the sect recruited its membership from mostly women and children, school drop-outs, and unemployed graduates who tore up their educational certificates (Simeon, 2012). Just like its origin, Boko Haram's disposition to violence has also been a subject of



debate. Certain accounts cast Yusuf himself as a fiery preacher who advocated violence. This is often premised on the simple fact that the late leader derived his inspiration from the works of Ibn Taymiyya, a 14th-Century legal scholar who preached Islamic fundamentalism, and was also seen as an advocate of Islamic radical groups in the Middle East (Mohammed & Toni, n.d). There was also a story that Mohammed Yusuf, who was a native of Girgir in Yobe State, received Quaranic education in Chad and Niger Republics and was subsequently imbued with radical instincts, which generated much animosity between him and moderate Islamic scholars, such as Yahaya Jingir, Sheik Abba Aji, and the late Jafa Adam (Freedom, 2011).

Surprisingly, Yusuf was the son of the late Mallam Yusuf who was a clerk at the Maiduguri branch of the Kaduna State Transport Authority, and who later left his secular job to establish an Islamiyya school where he taught Almajiris (street children) the recitation of the Holy Qu'ran. Yusuf Jr., who had already dropped out of secondary school, would later join his father in his Qur'anic school to hone his profound oratorical skills. According to Simon (2009), it was at the Qur'anic school that Yusuf Jr. developed his effortless ability to persuade people about the sincerity of his cause and his charisma also began to manifest. As time went on, he became more popular, grew in influence, and naturally succeeded his father. If we are to go by this account of Yusuf's history, which portrays him as someone with radical instincts, and who was forced to relocate from Borno to his native Yobe State at a point, he could be seen as someone with trouble-making potentials (Suleiman, 2009).

In contrast, other accounts cast Yusuf as opposing any form of violence and that he

believed that it was against the tenets of Islam. He was said to have resisted some of his followers' radical beliefs that an Islamic state could be realized through preaching and mobilization of the people to reject secular authority, by taking up arms and fighting to conquer the unbelievers (Suleiman, 2009). This personality trait stands in contrast with that of Abubakar Shekau, the Kanuri man who is Yusuf's successor and Al-Barnawi, Yusuf's son who would later head a splinter group of Boko Haram. Shekau has been described as a psychopath who enjoys killing anyone that Allah commanded him to kill, the way he enjoyed killing chicken and rams (BBC, 2014 May 9). This emphasis on the personality difference between Shekau and Yusuf is relevant in determining whether Boko Haram's current level of terrorism is a function of the death of its founder and clampdown by the security agents, or due to the ascension to its leadership by radical elements.

#### NEXUS BETWEEN NIGERIA'S SECURITY CRISIS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL POWER

The early history of the Boko Haram sect casts it both in the mould of political Islamic groups which strive to promote public virtue and as a fundamentalist group hell-bent on waging Jihad on the entire country. For instance, it was alleged that Yusuf leveled charges of corruption and failure to preach pure Islam on the Sheiks who appointed him the leader after Lawan Abubakar's departure. Also, the sect under Shekau would later declared its mission to Islamize Nigeria and introduce Shariah Laws throughout the country (Ujah et. al, 2015).

We also found out that Yusuf embraced technology, contrary to rumors, and he believed that Western education should be mediated by Islamic scholarship, such as rejecting Western-style banking and the Darwin's theory of evolution (Lengmang, 2011). He

preached a doctrine of withdrawal and not until his murder in 2009 together with the alleged financier Foj, and later his father-in-law Fugu, including thousands of other members at a funeral procession in Maiduguri, did the sect embarked on unprecedented violence in the Northeast.

It must also be noted that Boko Haram's philosophy of imposing Sharia Law in Nigeria seemed to have been encouraged by the reintroduction of Sharia laws in 1999 by Ahmed Yerima, the former Governor of Zamfara State, which was also copied by 12 other Northern States. Widespread disillusionment among the masses would accompany the manner in which the laws were being applied to favour the elite who still continued to embezzle government funds, while petty thieves were subjected to amputations. This warped justice system provoked dissatisfaction among the commoners, which the leadership of Boko Haram quickly tapped into to promote the idea that only a full Islamic Stars could eliminate the inconsistencies (Saturday Sun, 2012 January 21). Despite the fact that Boko Haram's emergence is attributable to the ideology of abhorrence of Western culture, the sect was actually established in a society prevalent with the culture of impunity and political hooliganism. By this culture, unscrupulous politicians established their own political militias which they deploy in the struggle to capture political power. These political militia groups existed in different names and forms across the country. In the North, Gombe State had Yan-Kallare, Borno and Yobe States had the Ecomog, Kano had Yan daba or Yan Gumurzu, Bauchi had Sara Suka, Taraba had Banu-Isra'il, and Adamawa had Yan-Shinko. In the South, Governor Chinwoke Mbadinuju of Anambra State funded the Bakassi Boys, the South-West had NURTW boys and the OPC, while the Niger Delta Defense Force operated in the South-South region. These militia boys are drawn from the country's immense pool

of jobless university graduates, school drop-outs, criminals, street wanderers, area boys, and from the huge population of Almajiris in the North (Alozieuwa, 2014).

Nevertheless, it is important to make some distinctions among these political militia groups. Whereas in the South, no political militia group was known to have emerged from any religious origin, those in the North do. The Boko Haram sect as a violent group started off as Ecomog in Borno, a band of political thugs linked to the former Governor Ali Modu Sheriff and his political associates in the state. Sheriff was said to be one of the early financiers of the group till their alliance broke down (Saturday Sun, 2012). Despite Sheriff's denial of any link with Boko Haram, an arrested member of the sect known as Ali Konduga, actually confessed to the security agents that certain politicians from Borno State stepped in to continue sponsoring Ecomog when their relationship with Sheriff went sour (ireports, 2015).

#### KEY FACTS ABOUT BOKO HARAM

1. Boko Haram is not the first Islamic fundamentalist group to wage jihad against the Nigerian state. That distinction goes to Maitatsine led by Mohammed Marwa who also instigated violent confrontations with the Nigerian security agents in the 1970s and early '80s in Kano and Kaduna States which claimed the lives of thousands of people (Johnson, 2011).
2. The original name for the Boko Haram sect is Jama'atu Ahlis SunnaLidda'awatiwal-Jihad (The Group of Al-Sunna for Preaching and Jihad).

3. The group came under Mohammed Yusuf in 2001/2002 in Maiduguri and he was eliminated by Nigerian security agents in captivity in 2009.
4. According to Al-Jazeera (2019), Yusuf once relocated from Borno to Yobe State in the village of Kanamma when he faced hostility from other Islamic preachers who saw his teachings as too radical.
5. The group's ideology is against both Christianity and moderate Islam in Nigeria.
6. The Boko Haram sect rejects the Theory of Evolution, the notion of a spherical Earth, the concept of rain originating from evaporated water, and other valid scientific principles.
7. Members of the sect are indoctrinated to exist in the physical realm, but seek for spiritual development, and hence prepare to die at anytime.
8. Boko Haram is listed as a terrorist organization by the UNO, USA, Britain, France, Germany, etc.

#### SUMMARY OF BOKO HARAM ATTACKS IN NIGERIA AT ITS HEIGHT IN 2014

1. Year of Attack: 2009

States Affected: Borno, Bauchi, Kano, and Yobe.

Casualties: Over 800 persons killed.

2. Year of Attack: 2010

States Affected: Abuja, Borno, and Plateau.

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Casualties: Over 300 persons killed and 700 prison inmates freed.

3. Year of Attack: 2011

States Affected: Borno, Abuja, Bauchi, Kaduna, Niger, Yobe, Katsina, and Plateau.

Casualties: Over 425 persons killed and over 300 individuals injured. Bombing of the UN building in Abuja.

4. Year of Attack: 2012

States Affected: Adamawa, Abuja, Bauchi, Kano, Kogi, Kaduna, Plateau, Katsina, Yobe, and Sokoto.

Casualties: Over 1047 persons killed and many more injured.

5. Year of Attack: 2013

States Affected: Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Plateau, Kano, and Yobe.

Casualties: Over 732 persons killed and several others injured.

6. Year of Attack: 2014

States Affected: Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe.

Casualties: Over 270 school girls kidnapped at Chibok village in Borno State, kidnapping of some women in Adamawa State and killing of over 200 persons, while several others were injured.

*Adapted from Achumba et al. (2013).*

Some of the major attacks carried out by the Niger Delta militants before the full implementation of Amnesty include:

1. Date: March 16, 2003

Attack and Effect: Attack on SPDC oil facilities in Warri and the Nigeria Navy patrol team on the Escravos River, killing 7 people and injuring several others.

2. Date: July, 2006

Attack and Effect: MEND militants killed four Naval officers and injures three soldiers escorting Chevron oil tanker along the Warri Creeks.

3. Date: April 14, 2007

Attack and Effect: Militants attacked the Rumuokoro/Elelenwo Police Station in Port-Harcourt, killing several police officers in the process.

4. Date: January 1, 2008

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Attack and Effect: NDVF attacked two police stations and a 5-star hotel in the Port-Harcourt metropolis.

5. Date: October 1, 2010

Attack and Effect: MEND militants detonated a bomb at the Eagle Square in Abuja during the Independence Anniversary parade.

## CONSEQUENCES OF TERRORISM AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

The scourge of terrorism and insecurity has retarded the country's socioeconomic development in various ways, including:

- Social dislocation and population displacement with millions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in emergency camps across the country.
- Social tensions and new patterns of settlements which encourages ethno-religious confrontations.
- Heightening of the citizenship question which encourages hostility between indigenes and settlers.
- Disruption of communal life as the bedrock of society.
- Dehumanization of women, children, and men who are subjected to rape, child abuse, and also used as instruments of war in the affected areas.



*Inexistent Country*

- Deepening of hunger and poverty in the country as farmers have had to abandon their farmlands to criminal gangs.
- Discouragement of local and foreign investments in the country.
- Increase in security spending by both public and private organizations.
- Mass emigration of people away from the crisis-prone areas.

## CONCLUSION

The presence of terrorism and insecurity in any society is a serious threat to the peaceful coexistence of the people and their economic wellbeing. Nigeria has been bedeviled with the twin scourge of terrorism and insecurity since the country gained independence in 1960. From the massively rigged Federal elections of 1964 to the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-70, and then the long periods of military rule with coups, counter-coups, inter-communal conflicts, riots, armed robbery attacks, ritual killings, political assassinations, election-relates violence, militancy, the country has always lived in the throes of violence and insecurity. The increasing wave of violence has not abated but has assumed a more dangerous dimension in the form of terrorism which currently threatens the corporate existence of Nigeria as one geographical entity. Hence, the urgency to eliminate these threats which informs our attempt to diagnose the manifestations of insecurity, the causes, groups involved, as well as recommend a way forward. Otherwise, Nigeria will not achieve any significant development if the security crisis persists.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Accountable Leadership:**

One of the greatest challenges facing African countries and Nigeria in particular is the lack of accountable leaders. Nigeria has not been blessed with quality leadership who have the intellectual ability to effectively pilot the affairs of the country. There is a need for leaders at every level who will positively transform the country's economic potential and also distribute the wealth equitably among the citizenry. Here, we are talking about leaders who see their positions of authority as a call to serve the people and not as an opportunity to amass wealth at the country's expense. Thus, there should be exemplary leadership in Nigeria to improve governance and service delivery at all levels of governance.

### **An End to Impunity:**

Official Impunity in Nigeria is a major source of grievance for many and serves as a recruitment tool for criminal gangs roaming about the four corners of the country. The government needs to investigate and prosecute criminal acts committed by armed robbers and terrorists, as well as those perpetrated by the security personnel and the political leaders who feel untouchable. This will go a long way to discourage impunity.

### **Creation of Poverty Alleviation Programmes and Employment Opportunities:**

The macroeconomic and sociological solution to the Nigerian security crisis is the creation of more employment opportunities for the jobless youths and commissioning of economic empowerment or poverty alleviation programmes for the masses. If poverty is alleviated and youth unemployment is reduced to the barest minimum, the pool of idle youths available for recruitment into criminal gangs will be greatly depleted.

As explained by Obayori (2016), Nigeria's unemployment stood at 23.9 percent of the over 50 million youth population between 2001 and 2016. This constitutes a great danger to the future of the country. Thus, the Nigerian government has to take urgent steps to create more job opportunities in order to effectively minimize the level of poverty in the land.

### **Affordable and Quality Education for All Citizens:**

Education is the bedrock of a progressive society. This is because education brings enlightenment, empowers the people with new skills, and dissolve unfounded religious superstitions. With quality education, the people will become the fulcrum of the country's drive towards positive socioeconomic transformation. Good knowledge acquired from education will emancipate the youths from shackles of religion fundamentalism, enlighten them about the consequences of wayward life, and free them from manipulations by the elite who use them to settle political scores.

### **Transformation of the Nigeria Police Force:**

In every democratic state like Nigeria, the police and not the military forces are trained to combat crime, and control internal conflicts. In the same vein, the NPF, being closer to the people, should be allowed to discharge their duties without the overbearing influence of the Nigerian Army. Similarly, the police officers ought to be well paid, and to enjoy nice welfare packages essential to their service condition in order to boost their morale for the task of maintaining law and order in the country. Again, they should be well-equipped with sophisticated weapons to effectively combat violent criminals.

### **Restructuring Nigeria:**

Apart from the need to empower the Nigeria Police Force with better training, welfare packages, and equipment, government should also restructure the Nigerian Constitution (1999) to allow community policing with the creation of a community-based police structure, as it is available in the USA and Britain, where they have the New York Police Department (NYPD), Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the Scotland Yard in London, etc.

Only a police officer born and bred in a community will be committed to lay down his/her life to protect his/her people. Moreover, indigenous security agents will likely find it much more easier to fraternise with and gather necessary intelligence among the people to combat crime efficiently.

**To effectively combat terrorism in Nigeria, we suggest:**

- That the Federal Government should declare total war on terrorism and seek more assistance from international communities who have faced and overcame similar challenges in the past.
- The FG should improve the welfare of the Nigerian armed forces and urgently investigate the rumoured abuse of privilege by the top echelon which is causing dissatisfaction among the rank and file hindering victory against the terrorist groups.
- The Nigerian Military High Command should be empowered with modern fighting tools better than those in Boko Haram hands to quicken the defeat of the terrorists.
- The FG should consider dialogue with the group and rehabilitating repentant Boko Haram members to encourage others to lay down their arms and embrace peace.
- Cattle ranches should be established in Northern States with significant Fulani population

who can settle there to forestall the continuous clashes between the roaming bands of pastoralists and indigenous farmers across the country.

## CHAPTER 13: CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL TERRAIN

### INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian political discourse is incomplete without talking about the nature and composition of the entity with respect to its economy, people, history, and several other sociopolitical considerations. Nigeria had no common interface before the advent of British colonial rule. The Nigerian landscape was made up of a few empires, (the Benin, Kwararafa, Oyo, and Kanem-Borno empires), kingdoms (Nri, Ife, Igala, Nupe, etc), the Islamic Caliphate in the North, and other smaller tribes scattered around the geographical area. During the pre-colonial era, the subsisting political system consisted of the monarchical system of Obaship among the Binis, the Yorubas, the Nupes and the Igalas, the Obis and age-grade among the largely republican Igbos in the East, and the emirate system in the North under the banner of the Sultan of Sokoto. Except in Igboland where anyone can aspire to become anything, one common denominator about these pre-colonial political systems is that ascension to the throne is hereditary in nature and only children born in royal families could become Obas, Attahs, Etsus, and Emirs. Another noticeable feature of the old systems is that rulership is by divine right as oracles would have to be consulted by kingmakers before the kings are selected and crowned. In view of these revelations, it has been argued by many scholars that the present political realities in Nigeria can only be fully understood in the light of the country's pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial political history. As a consequence, we shall attempt a brief discussion of the country's political past in this chapter, only to serve as background information to our discourse of Nigeria's contemporary politics.

## A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF NIGERIA'S POLITICAL HISTORY

As mentioned earlier, the Nigerian political landscape was once an amalgam of ethnic nationalities, each featuring its own political system, either a monarchy as seen in many places or an age-grade system among the republican Igbos. The monarchical system had a pyramidal structure with the rulers (Obas and Emirs) at the top and a flow of authority from the top echelon down to the masses in a centralized political arrangement. In contrast, the republican system of the Igbos was a decentralized system of government made up of independent units with a little allegiance to any central authority. Major issues with these pre-colonial arrangements include the arbitrary use of political power by the rulers, inability of commoners to participate in decision making, and near impassibility of social ascension from commoner to royalty. Another issue of concern was the issue of women participation in political leadership. It is a fact that women were generally relegated in the political system of the pre-colonial era, except for the few instances of Queen Amina in the Zazzau Kingdom and Queen Idia of the Benin Empire.

Moreover, it is also unarguable that the pre-colonial political systems did little to assist in the emergence of modern Nigeria. For one, the British colonial officers met the ethnic nationalities preoccupied with slave raids, inter-communal conflicts, rivalries and mutual distrust. These states of affair provided the perfect excuse for the British to bring the whole country under their colonial rule by simply arguing that they wanted to put a stop to slave trade in the hinterland. The rivalry between Dosumu and Kosoko (two Princes to the Lagos throne) gave the British the chance to annex Lagos in 1861. Benin fell in 1897. Sokoto in 1904. The Long Juju of Arochukwu was destroyed by the British-commandeered West African Frontier Force in 1903 under the guise of putting a stop to slave trading. Other

minor kingdoms like Opobo, Gwandu, Itshekiri, Ilorin, Ijebu Ode, and so on would also be put under British rule in later years with their hostile kings either killed or banished, and more amenable rulers installed instead.

Just as pointed out earlier, the current political realities in Nigeria is a function of the country's past experiences dating back to the pre-colonial era, to British colonial rule, the Independence experience, and the post-independence tussle for power among the different ethnic nationalities. Apart from these facts is the issue of the forced amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates in 1914 by Lord Lugard (then Governor-General of Nigeria), which made the country "a marriage of convenience between the diligent groom, the North, and his bride, a woman of means, the South" (Lugard, 1922). Though the North and South were united into a country by Lugard with the intended advantage of unity in diversity, nothing was done to unite the country or forge a common link between the groups of people outside trade. As a matter of fact, Awolowo (1947) argued that the British deliberately made it a policy to prevent educated Southern leaders from mingling with or forging a link with their Northern counterparts. According to Nnoli (1978), there was a deep-rooted distrust among the ethnic nationalities across the country as an off-shoot of the pre-colonial rivalries and the forced amalgamation which brought new questions of development and coexistence. For example, Nnoli (1978) alleged that the British deliberately falsified census figures to favor the North in order to perpetuate the myth that the North was more populous than the South, and to shortchange the South in revenue distribution which is the basis of the Nigerian federalism.

Coming to the present, the Nigerian system sadly fosters nepotism, encourages impunity, disregards creativity, and promotes mediocrity due to the continual use of the faulty



federal structure and the Quota-system. The return to civil rule in 1999 after years of military rule has done little to correct these anomalies. The election that ushered in the Obasanjo administration, though characterized by several flaws, was only grudgingly accepted by the citizenry as the ultimate aim then was to do away with military misrule. The follow up general election of 2003 was no better off as it lacked transparency and witnessed widespread electoral violence. The transparency of subsequent elections also been faulted by observer groups and several victories upturned by the election petition tribunals across the country. One important take-away from the current Nigerian democratic experiments is that the political parties lack internal structure and are not political parties in the true sense of it, as most of the candidates were imposed on the electorates by the political godfathers who wield enormous power in the national political space (Babalola, 2013).

## THE NIGERIAN POLITICAL SCENE

Nigeria is blessed with a diverse range of economic resources, not least of which is her 180 million-plus population which makes it the 7th most populous country in the world and the largest economy in Africa. Also, Nigeria is the fifth largest exporter of Petroleum to the USA, which makes the country of strategic importance to the West (Saheed & Egwaikhide, 2012). These facts coupled with the country's laudable achievements in peacekeeping operations, commerce, trade, sports, and music truly qualify Nigeria as a potential giant in Africa. Unfortunately, these potentials have not brought the much-needed sociopolitical cum economic benefits to Nigerian citizens. For instance, though Nigeria has billions of cubic metres of oil reserves, the Niger Delta, which produces the oil wealth, has remained poor and largely underdeveloped with general lack of social infrastructures. Further, even

after five to six attempts at the democratic experiment, Nigerian democracy continues to be described as nascent due to the inability of the political parties to transform into real vehicles for political participation. Political brigandage, electoral violence, vote-buying, political corruption, godfatherism, political assassinations and lack of transparency in electoral contests have continued to bedevil the country's democracy. Therefore, a discussion of the existing Nigerian political terrain cannot be done in isolation of other sociological dynamics.

## NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Nigeria operates a federal system of government just like the USA, Brazil, Canada, Germany, and India. It is made up of 36 states or federating units, 774 local council areas, plus a federal capital territory at Abuja. Unlike the other federalist countries, however, the main political power in Nigeria is vested in the government at the center, which controls the vast economic resources and the revenue accruing therein. In 2005, a futile attempt was made by the Obasanjo administration to review the constitution with the aim of addressing such controversial issues as revenue allocation, indigene-settler question, fiscal federalism, population census, local government autonomy, state police, and power rotation among Nigerian ethnic nationalities. The major aim of the intended reform was to reduce the power of the Federal Government as contained in the Exclusive List and correct the flaws inherent in the structure and political framework of the federation (Babalola, 2013). Suberu (2001) suggested a better federalist system that reduces the influences of the powerful central government with a view to expanding the country's overall revenue base, rather than the present arrangement in which the state governments act as mere "middlemen" to the FG. According to Babalola (2013), there is an ongoing "constitutional

crisis" in Nigeria and reforms were needed to improve the Constitution. Unfortunately, the reports of the 2005 Constitutional Conference were thrown away at the National Assembly due to the suspicion that it was an attempt to elongate the term of the then President Obasanjo.

Moreover, though Nigerian states continue to collect their monthly revenue allocations from the FG based on the nebulous national derivation formula, many of these states still have nothing to show for it in terms of developmental projects for the people. Moving around Nigerian states, one will be surprised to see that there are few good infrastructural facilities to show for the billions collected monthly by the state governments from the national purse. In fact, the situation is worse off in the oil-rich Niger Delta region where people lack access to basic social amenities, an ugly situation which provoked the youths of the area to launch violent attacks against the oil installations in the region, at some point.

At this junction, one may want to ask why Nigerian governments at all levels have little or nothing to show for the huge amount shared monthly at the National Executive Council (NEC) meetings in Abuja.

Well, the answer lies in the fact that more than 80 state governors, past and present, are presently facing criminal charges of embezzlement of public funds by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). With this figure, the number of corrupt civil servants, local council chairmen, state commissioners, ministers, and other political functionaries, can only be imagined. Corruption has been so entrenched in the Nigerian political system to the extent that the Federal Government even began to publish the monthly allocations

accruing to each of the three tiers of government in 2016 to sensitize the people about the revenues shared among each tier of government.

As a matter of fact, the EFCC and the ICPC were created by the then President Obasanjo in response to the demand by Nigerians, the US, EU and other international organizations, for Nigeria to reduce corruption to the barest minimum in order for Nigerians to fully enjoy the benefits of democracy. According to the Dauda (2012), Nigerian state governors ran their states like personal fiefs and were not accountable to the people and they have "godfathers" who sponsored them for elections and who they were only accountable to.

#### FEDERAL STRUCTURE, ETHNIC AND REGIONAL TENSIONS

The dysfunctional federalist structure in Nigeria has continued to cause tension among the various ethnic nationalities. Some of the issues generating controversies are the indigene-settler problem, power rotation, resource allocation, population census, minority rights, etc. Attempts to address these grey areas have been feeble and only effected in the form of state creation by which the three old regions (North, East, and West) were divided into the present cancerous 36 state structures, with the attendant creation of bureaucratic obstacles to policy implementation. On his own, Suberu (2001) argued that the expansion of Nigerian government structure into 36 states and 774 local council areas helped to mitigate ethnic tensions by diluting the intensity of conflict between the country's three major ethnic groups.

However, as noted by (Human Rights Watch, 2006; Reuters, 2006), over three million people have been displaced from their homes since the advent of democratic rule in 1999, while more than 30,000 lives have lost their lives to "indigene vs settler" disputes across

the country. Few among these ethno-religious conflagrations in Nigeria include the incessant Jukun-Tiv conflicts in Taraba State, the Ife-Modakeke conflict (1997 to 2003) in Osun State, Hausa/Fulani-Berom clashes in Plateau State, OPC-Hausa/Fulani clashes at Idi Araba in Lagos, Aguleri-Umuleri conflict in Anambra, Hausa/Fulani-Jukun clashes in Wukari, Taraba State (2012-2015), etc (Kumolu, 2014; Ancä & Odukoya, 2016).

In addition to this is the mutual distrust among the three major tribes in Nigeria. It is not uncommon to see Hausas vowing never to support Igbos in any political venture due to the way Igbo army officers were believed to have acted treacherously in killing Northern political and military leaders, including the Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa, the Premier of the Northern Region Ahmadu Bello, Lt. Col. Maimalari, Lt. Col Abogo Largema, and numerous others in the bloody January 15, 1966 Coup. From eyewitness accounts of the major actors in the unfortunate incidents, we could draw the conclusions that:

- The coup was the initiative of the revolutionary young officer Major Ifeajuna who coopted four other officers of the Nigerian Army of equal rank (Major Onwuatuegwu, Major Ademoyega, Major Anuforo, and Major Kaduna Nzeogwu).
- The young Nigerian officers had the noble intention of reforming the country which was widely perceived to be in the doldrums due to the breakdown of law and order in the Western Region and also the Tiv riots in the North (Nnoli, 2003).
- They intended to overthrow the floundering civilian administration of Balewa and hand over to Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the former Premier of the Western Region

who was then imprisoned in Calabar due to charges of treasonable felony proffered against him by the NPC/NCNC-controlled Federal Government.

- The Coup succeeded in the West with the elimination of Chiefs Akintola (Premier of the Western Region) and Festus Okotie-Eboh (Federal Minister of Finance). It also succeeded in the North with the killing of Balewa and Bello, alongside Brigadier Ademulegun (Senior officer of the Nigerian Army) and other senior officers of Northern extraction. In contrast, the Coup completely failed in the East as all assigned targets managed to escape. The turn of events so enraged the Northern-dominated rank and file of the Nigerian Army that they wasted no time in planning a counter-coup which was carried out in the night of July 15, 1966 and before the dawn of the next day, General Aguiyi Ironsi, the then Head of State, who was on a general tour of the country to consult with Nigerian traditional rulers and douse the prevailing atmosphere of inter-ethnic tensions, had been abducted in Ibadan alongside his host Col. Adekunle Fajuyi (Military Governor of the Western Region) by mostly Hausa soldiers led by Theophilus Danjuma.
- The killing of Ironsi and subsequent massacre of Igbos in the North prompting the call for secession by the Igbos, was the immediate cause of the Nigerian Civil War that claimed millions of lives.
- The call for Biafra and the much-discussed strained relationship between Igbos/Hausa on one hand and Igbo/Yoruba on the other can be properly dissected through the prism of the civil war which affected the Igbo worldview. For instance, Igbos still hold Yorubas liable, rightly or not, for the actions of Chief Obafemi

Awolowo as the Minister of Finance during the War, for suggesting the "Starvation Policy", by which food supplies to the war-ravaged region were stopped and which directly led to the death of thousands of people from hunger. Awolowo was also said to have advocated for banks to give the returning Igbos 20 pounds each no matter the value of their previous deposits or investments.

Other causes of tension among the major tribes in Nigeria include the "cross-carpeting" saga of 1953 between Awolowo and Azikwe, when lawmakers elected into the Regional Parliament on the platform of the Ibadan People's Party were alleged to have "cross-carpeted" to the Action Group led by Awolowo in order to prevent the Azikwe-led NCNC from having the requisite majority to make Zik the Premier in a Yoruba-dominated region. Similarly, the acclaimed free and fair June 12, 1993 presidential election which was annulled by military junta led by General Ibrahim Babangida also strained relations between the Yorubas and Hausas, as the annulment was perceived as an attempt by Northerners to perpetuate themselves in power and not hand over to a Southerner in any way. The agitation for restructuring of the country by the South has also been seen by some Northern leaders as a call for the breaking up of the country. Other serious issues generating friction among Nigerian ethnic nationalities are issues relating to Political Islam, the status of Lagos as a "no man's land", the Fulani herdsmen crisis, the rights of minority groups, and resource control (Nnoli, 2003).

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## THE NIGERIAN JUDICIARY

In any democracy, the Judiciary is the arm of government saddled with the task of interpreting the constitution and adjudicating in disputes involving civil or criminal offenses. In this regard, the Nigerian Judiciary has done well as the last of hope of the common man, especially in settling electoral disputes. For example, during the Obasanjo administration which was widely perceived as authoritarian with scant regard for the 'Rule of Law', the Judiciary intervened on several occasions to rule against Executive lawlessness. One prime example that comes to mind is the landmark pronouncement by the Nigerian Supreme Court on April 16, 2007 that only a court of competent jurisdiction could bar an electoral candidate from contesting in an election, and not a Commission of Enquiry or an Executive Panel. The case was instituted by Obasanjo's estranged Vice President Atiku Abubakar who was the candidate of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) in the 2007 Presidential Election. Also, several other such landmarks judgment against the Executive and members of the Legislative arm have been delivered by the Judiciary to show its relative independence and professionalism in discharging its duties. Among other things, the Judiciary has overturned tens of fraudulent electoral victories in Ondo, Anambra, Osun, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Lagos, Kwara, Delta, Kogi, and many other states of the Federation, much to the jubilation of the masses. At one time or the other, Nigerian state governors like Rauf Aregbesola of Osun State, Peter Obi of Anambra, Rasheed Ladoja of Oyo State, Rotimi Amaechi of Rivers State, and several others including lawmakers could only realize their mandates through the instrumentality of election tribunals.

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## THE INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)



INEC is the Nigerian government agency mandated with the task of conducting free and fair elections (every four years) into the nation's executive and legislative arms. The Chairman of INEC is an appointee of the Executive President through the approval of the National Assembly. In theory, the body is supposed to be independent and impartial in discharging its duties. In reality, however, INEC has often seen itself as an appendage of the executive arm with a duty to do its biddings. This unprofessional conduct was seen in the way and manner the Professor Maurice Iwu-led INEC barred Alhaji Atiku Abubajar, the then candidate of the ACN, from contesting the 2007 Presidential Election based on a flimsy excuse of indictment by an illegal Executive Panel instigated by Atiku's estranged boss in the person of fmr. President Olusegun Obasanjo. Further, INEC officials have also been held culpable as colluding with Nigerian politicians to rig elections as witnessed on many occasions all over the country. According to Babalola (2013), the reform of INEC, more than any other constitutional reform, is critical to the development of democracy in Nigeria.

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#### THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIMES COMMISSION (EFCC)

The EFCC is a Nigerian government agency created by the EFCC Act of 2003 with the mandate to investigate cases of financial crimes in the country. According to the current Acting Chairman Mallam Magu, the EFCC has succeeded in prosecuting and securing judgment against offenders in 79 high profile cases since its inception in 2003. To say the truth, the EFCC has done a commendable job in fighting corruption among Nigerian public officeholders. A couple of past and serving governors including some prominent businessmen and fraudsters have been successfully prosecuted and convicted over the years. The snag in these cases is the issue of selective prosecution of corrupt individuals as the agency often tend to go after only the political opponents of the ruling party and

people openly joke that anybody accused of fraud could escape prosecution by defecting to the ruling APC.

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## THE MASS MEDIA

The mass media in Nigeria include all platforms for information dissemination to the public, such as radio, TV, newspapers, social media, phones, etc. As the 4th Estate of the realm, journalists are very critical to the success or otherwise of any democratic experiment since they are responsible for informing the people about government policies and mobilizing them for social causes when the need arises. In Nigeria, the media have operated with a great level of professionalism as they consistently tackle political officeholders on their performance and their social responsibilities. On many occasions, the mass media have played key roles in alerting and mobilizing the general public against government policies perceived to be inimical to the progress of the country, such as the former President Obasanjo's 3rd-Term agenda in 2005, the removal of subsidy by former President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011, the fuel price hikes during the Obasanjo administration from 1999-2007, the protests against the Yar'adua cabal in 2009.

## NIGERIAN POLITICAL TERRAIN SINCE INDEPENDENCE

Nigeria has experimented with different political systems of government since the Independence of 1960, including:

1. **The Parliamentary System:** This system was inherited from the British colonial masters and it lasted till January 15, 1966 when the then Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa was killed by a group of army officers who toppled the government in a bid to restore normalcy to

the system. One major feature of the parliamentary system is that the Prime Minister, who is the head of government, is chosen among the elected representatives from the party with the highest majority, while the President only performs ceremonial functions. In the First Republic, Tafawa Balewa from the majority NPC was selected as the Prime Minister, while Nnamdi Azikwe of the NCNC (the other major partner in a national alliance) became the ceremonial head of government as the President. It must be noted that no party had the required majority to form government on its own. Thus, it took the alliance between the NPC (which had the highest number of parliamentary seats) and the NCNC to form the government. The two parties also shared the Federal cabinet posts among their members with names like Richard Akinjide, Mbazulike Amaechi, Olorunnimbe Mamora, Okotie Eboh, T. O. S. Benson and others from the NCNC holding federal commissioner posts, while the NPC had commissioners such as Mohammed Ribadu, Shehu Shagari, Inuwa Wada, and Yar'adua from their ranks. On the other side was Chief Obafemi Awolowo as the official leader of the Opposition ably supported by notable names like Anthony Enahoro, Adekunle Ajasin, and others.

Each of the regional governments in the East, Mid-West, North, and West also had its own legislative houses where the Premier was selected from the party with the majority of seats.

**2. Presidential System:** This system features the clear separation of legislative and executive powers and it was first adopted in the Second Republic and later in this current 4th Republic to provide 'Checks and Balance' in order to curtail the excesses of the Prime Minister which led to the collapse of the First Republic. In the presidential system, the president and his cabinet including other government agencies are regarded as the

Executive Arm, a bicameral legislature with the National Assembly comprising of the Senate (with elected Senators from each Senatorial Constituency) and the House of Representatives, and the Judiciary which consists judges, grand khadis, and other judicial officers. In the order of protocol, the President and his vice are the two senior officials of government, the Senate President comes next followed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, while the Chief Justice of the Federation is the fifth most senior government official. Each of the federating units or states also has its own elected governor with his/her cabinet members called commissioners, state house of assembly, and state judiciary. One common feature of this system of government is that it is very expensive to practise as government revenue is used to maintain all the three arms of government.

**3. Military Regime:** Military governments are characterized by the rule of army officers through military edicts and decrees. In this system of government, the constitution of the country is suspended and the will of the people subsumed under military dictatorship. To capture power, soldiers plan coups and impose themselves on the country as seen in Nigeria from 1966 to 1979 and from 1983 to 1999. The military regimes of Aguiyi Ironsi, Gowon, Murtala Mohammed, Obasanjo, Buhari, Babangida, Abacha, and Abdusalami were characterized by widespread human right abuses, clampdown on civil society organizations and journalists, corruption, nepotism, cronyism, and sundry retrogressive policies which inhibited the nation's drive towards economic transformation.

However, one major advantage of military rule is that its nature allows for a mass mobilization of the people for national causes without undue bureaucracy or delay. It must be noted that notable achievements in provision of infrastructural facilities to Nigerians were recorded during the military regimes with such landmark projects as the Kainji Dam

in Niger State where the bulk of the country's electricity supply is generated, 3rd Mainland Bridge connecting Lagos Island to the mainland in Lagos State, the Ajaokuta Steel Complex in Kogi State, the Petroleum refinery complexes at Port Harcourt and Kaduna, the Nigerian Defense Academy in Kaduna, the National Stadium in Lagos, the Nigerian Sea Ports at Port Harcourt and Lagos, among other projects.

## CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN NIGERIAN POLITICS

### POLITICAL CROSS-CARPETING:

A key feature of Nigerian political terrain is the issue of defection of political officeholders from one party to the other when it seems that the system is not favorable to them. In Nigeria, it is common to see a governor elected on the platform of party A today defecting to party B tomorrow on flimsy excuses without considering the implication on the political system. This phenomenon has often pitched the political class against one another with much energy dissipated in pursuing their own personal interest rather than serving the electorates. In this current dispensation, the first of such defections occurred at the National Assembly in 2000 when Senator Wahab Dosunmu of the Alliance for Democracy defected to the ruling People's Democratic Party. All efforts of his former party and constituency to have him recalled proved abortive as he was ably protected from prosecution by the PDP-led Federal Government which frustrated every effort in that regard. That singular event opened the floodgate of defections which would, albeit ironically, contributed to the defeat of the PDP government at the Centre when five governors with several senators and honorable members of the House of Representatives elected on its platform chose to defect to the opposition APC in 2014. Scholars have

identified the plausible cause for these defections to be the lack of ideology in the existing Nigerian political parties whereby all parties tend to have similar manifestoes which make it easier for politicians to leave one platform for the other without feeling remorseful (Dauda, 2012; Ancä & Odukoya, 2016).

## GODFATHERISM

Another dimension to the Nigerian political conundrum is the phenomenon of godfatherism by which some powerful individuals decide who gets what and try to achieve their intentions by manipulating the system to favor their anointed candidates or political sons. These men are often celebrated as messiahs by their followers as they have a firm grip on the pool of poor, ignorant and economically repressed electorates. In states with powerful godfathers, politicians seeking public posts must pay homage to the 'powers that be' or face being humiliated at the polls. In Anambra, a state that used to be notorious for having a history of political godfathers, Chief Emeka Offor was alleged to be the de facto governor throughout the four years of the Mbadinuju administration from 1999 to 2003 and he was said to have had juicy government contracts awarded to his companies. During the succeeding administration of Dr. Chris Ngige in the same state, Dr. Andy Uba was alleged to have been the godfather who ensured that the elected governor was harangued to the point of getting him to swear an oath of allegiance at the famous Okija Shrine. At a point, Governor Chris Ngige was kidnapped and humiliated to bent his will and have him sign a pre-dated letter of resignation which could be used against him in case he decided not to pander to their whims. The ugly trend of godfatherism has also be witnessed in Oyo, Lagos, Osun, Rivers, Delta, Jigawa, Niger, and several other Nigerian states (Ishaku et al., 2014; Tell Magazine, 2003, July 28; Isaac, 2005).

One major drawback of this political phenomenon is that it tends to entrench the culture of impunity among the political class as many of the alleged godsons see themselves as not being accountable to the people but to their godfathers who in turn see themselves as lords of the manor, who are free to do anything without fear of prosecution. In cases where the godsons decide to do away with the overbearing influence of their godfathers, we have seen a general break down in law and order, as witnessed in Kwara State in 2002-2003 during the tail end of Late Governor Mohammed Lawal's administration when the Saraki family tried to prevent the governor from securing a second term in office. Similar scenarios were also witnessed in Oyo State during the political feud between former Governor Rasheed Ladoja and his estranged godfather Chief Lamidi Adedibu in 2005-2006.

According to Isaac (2005), this phenomenon of godfatherism fits into the predatory instincts theory that godfathers manipulate the electoral process to have their anointed godsons in elective public offices in exchange for political patronage and the spoils of office. These godfathers in their selfish ambition entrench corruption as they are compensated from the public till with juicy government contracts often awarded without due process. No wonder that the African Union (AU) declared that a quarter of Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was lost to corruption.

## IMPEACHMENTS

As stipulated in Section 14 (2b) of the Nigerian Constitution (1999), an impeachable offence is a gross misconduct which according to subsection 11, "Is a grave violation of the provision of this Constitution or a misconduct of such nature as amount in the opinion of the National Assembly or the State House of Assembly to gross misconduct". In subsequent

paragraphs of this section of the Constitution, the processes for impeachment of the President and/or his vice and state governors and/or their deputies are clearly outlined. Despite those unambiguous stipulations, Nigerian lawmakers tend to observe the constitutional provisions in the breach. In the 2nd Republic, Governor Balarabe Musa of Kaduna State became the first political officeholder to be impeached in Nigerian history. In the current dispensation, the deputy governors of Lagos and Osun states, namely Iyiola Omisore and Bucknor Akerele were also impeached in 2001 in circumstances deemed controversial. Similarly, the Late Governor Diepreye Alaimaeyesigha of Bayelsa State was also impeached in 2005 by the State House of Assembly members over his corruption allegations. In January 2006, Governor Rasheed Ladoja of Oyo State was impeached by 18 out of the 32 members of the State House of Assembly in a process which was later deemed illegal by the Supreme Court of Nigeria. Later during the year, Governor Peter Obi was impeached by a faction of the State House of Assembly members in an exercise which was also pronounced illegal by the Supreme Court. Other dramatic cases of impeachments include:

- The impeachment of Governor Peter Ayodele Fayose of Ekiti State in October 2006 by an overwhelming majority of the state House of Assembly members.
- The impeachment of Governor Joshua Dariye by 6 out of the 24 state legislators as a fallout of his indictment by the EFCC. It must be noted that Dariye's case was carried out by a minority of lawmakers with full support of the law enforcement agents as provided by the Federal Government.

Many political analysts have argued that these spate of impeachments were political ploys deployed by the ruling parties to deal with recalcitrant members as seen in Lagos and Osun



states, and by the Obasanjo government to get rid of governors who were perceived to be against his 3rd term ambition as seen in other cases when governors were illegally impeached without due recourse to the Constitution.

## **INSURGENCY AND NIGERIAN POLITICS**

As discussed in previous sections, several militant groups were formed by the youths of the Niger Delta in protest against the perceived marginalization of their region where the bulk of Nigerian revenue is generated. The failure of the Federal Government to tackle the root cause of militancy led to attacks on oil installations and kidnapping of oil workers across the region, even with pockets of armed confrontations with the security forces during which several losses of lives were recorded on both sides until the launching of the Amnesty Programme by Late President Umar Yar'Adua in 2009 to pacify the militants and encourage them to embrace peace. However, in a study conducted by the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Port-Harcourt tagged, "Post-amnesty Conflict Management Framework in Conflict Management in the Niger Delta", scholars warned that the removal of the 10 percent equity share for the oil producing areas would further aggravate the conflict situation in the oil rich region". According Professor Okey Onuchukwu, the Dean of the Faculty, the aim of the Amnesty Programme was targeted at making the region stable economically, socially, and politically, and to also address the issues that led to militancy among the youths in the first instance. The university don further explained that if those issues were not urgently addressed, it could encourage the formation of new militancy groups deadlier than the previous ones which would further affect the dwindling revenue base of the country.

## DEMAND FOR BIAFRA

In recent times, Nigeria has witnessed renewed calls for the actualization of Biafra by sections of the Igbo ethnic nationality due to their perceived political and economic marginalization by the Federal Government. This agitation has given rise to the creation of the Independent People of Biafra (IPOB) led by Nnamdi Kanu, a sociopolitical organization seen by several Igbo sons and daughters as a vehicle for actualizing their long-held ambition of exiting the Nigerian state. Though the group has chosen the path of peaceful resistance, IPOB members have continued to face serious clampdowns from Nigerian security forces who were fully mobilized against the agitators with 'shoot at sight' orders reminiscent of earlier events when the Nigerian Army were deployed against the Igbos for demanding their safety in Nigeria after the break down of the Aburi Accords in 1967. To add salt to injury, several unarmed members of IPOB have been killed by Nigerian security agents and the group declared a "terrorist" group by the Nigerian government, with the founder Kanu hounded out of the country in 2017 after a much-publicized confrontation with Nigerian soldiers.

## SHIITES AND NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT

The Shiites together with the Sunnis make up the two main denominations of Islam in the world with the Sunnis outnumbering the Shiites by about ratio 10:1. Just like in other African countries with considerable Muslim population, the Shiites of Nigeria under El-Zak Zaky are in the minority and have always complained about their alleged marginalization in Abuja, Kaduna, Kano, and Jigawa where they have a significant numerical presence. In the same vein, the Sunni Muslims of these Northern states often express dismay at the

lawlessness of the Shiites and their disruption of vehicular movements during the annual Al Qud's day observed by Shiites throughout the world. The Shiite have always called for an Islamic revolution to end Western influence in Nigeria and the adoption of Sharia laws in the country. This atmosphere of mutual antagonism set the stage for violent clashes between the Shiite's Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) and the security forces under a Nigerian President who is seen by many as a Sunni religious fundamentalist. The spark that ignited the current fire of Shiite protests occurred when the group were having their annual procession in 2016 and ran into the convoy of General Buratai, the Chief of Army Staff, and they were alleged to have pelted the convoy of armed soldiers with stones which led to the troops firing live ammunition to break up the crowd. Subsequent events led to the invasion of the group's leader compound in Kaduna, the killing of several Shiite members, including the children of the leader, and his incarceration alongside his wife despite court pronouncements to grant him bail on personal recognition and health grounds.

In retrospect, the Shiite crisis in the Northwestern part of Nigeria perfectly mirrors the Boko Haram conundrum in the Northeast as similar preconditions existed in the two situations. For example, both are Islamic organizations founded with the aim of enthroning Islamic rule in the country. Also, both organizations were largely peaceful before embracing insurgency in the face of persecution from the Nigerian state. In addition, both organizations have allegiances to foreign Islamic bodies: Al-Queda and ISIS in the case of Boko Haram and Iran in IMN's case. Taking cognizance of these facts, several pleas have been made to the Nigerian Federal Government to treat the Shiite crisis with caution in order not to precipitate a new security crisis in the country (Cristina, 2018).

## CHAPTER 14

### POLITICS AND PARANORMAL BELIEF: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

#### Introduction

America and Europe are said to be in the post-modern age with highly advanced social institutions and separation of politics from religion to some extent. These societies are built on the solid foundation of corpuscular science and reason. Prominent Western philosophers like Rene Descartes sought knowledge through their methodic doubt in clear ideas which would later shape their societies in the way of interactions between politics and religion (Descartes, 1989). Also, Emmanuel Kant extolled reason by appealing to deep-rooted distinctions between the conceptual and the empirical in order to construct a philosophical foundation for happenings in the society. In view of this, it is unarguable that the modernist world was conceived on the thrust of reason - using reason without an appeal to another authority that sets itself as a guardian (Kant, 1990). Thus, these modernist philosophers extolled the virtue of applying reason in all endeavors, claiming

that it has the unique power to vividly capture reality and serve as the basis of enlightenment (Graham, 1997).

In contrast, the African nay Nigerian religious universe is steeped in belief in the occult and the paranormal which has negatively impacted on the region's sociopolitical life. It has been observed that the attribution of some power to some invisible being by Nigerian cultures can be traced to the belief in bureaucratic monotheism, divination, divinities, and paranormal forces. One discovers that this sort of belief system has translated itself into the observable form of political godfatherism in Nigerian politics, psychological fear of the unknown among Nigerians, social and religious confusion, as well as intellectual ineptitude and exhaustion.

Thus, we intend to adopt an analytic and descriptive method in this chapter to investigate how the belief in the paranormal has impacted the Nigerian sociopolitical experience, thereby aggravating the Nigerian crisis of self-identity or nationhood. In retrospect, it is seen that this phenomenon has also affected the capacity of Nigerians to make informed choices in voting for the right leaders during elections. Hence, we will attempt a full pathology of this social malaise in order to proffer a consistent cure to restore clarity of thought in the political sphere.

This discussion will be conducted under five broad sections, namely:

1. Nigerians quest for the paranormal in the modern age;
2. A brief discussion of the Nigerian traditional belief system and its inherent problems;
3. Problems of the Nigerian social amidst divinities and community;

4. The consequences and problems of the Nigerian belief system on the political life; and
5. Recommendations.

## NIGERIANS QUEST FOR THE PARANORMAL IN THE MODERN AGE

The belief in the paranormal involves the acceptance of supernatural activities, which was defined by The Reader's Digest Oxford Wordfinder as, "a system of belief beyond the scope of normal objective explanation or investigation." Here we intend to engage in a phenomenological assessment of this belief system in the Nigeria experience, and how it has impacted or shaped the country's sociopolitical life. Nigeria's present problem of obsession with the paranormal urgently needs some sort of diagnosis, if suitable solutions are to be found. Hence, the identification of the problem with its subsequent investigation must be situated where it belongs in the many layers of Nigerian life: traditional belief systems and the community-individual identity. The suggested solutions will find expression in addressing the culture of mediocrity and impunity among Nigerian political leadership, including solution to the attendant poverty of opportunity and poverty of aspiration.

Whereas America and Europe are lapsing into a modernist crisis created by an industrial culture that seems to have eroded the belief in some Supreme Being, and must still look for some immateriality in dealing with the excesses of technological advancement, Africa nay Nigeria is still grappling with the destruction of its traditional culture by colonial rule, waging a tough battle against ignorance and poverty, struggling to provide the basic necessities of life (clothing, food and shelter) and so on, as it is preoccupied with the quest

for divine revelation with a divided cultural and religious heritage (Traditional, Christian, and Islam) to which it has no complete allegiance. Therefore, we can say that Nigeria is caught in the quest for the paranormal experience into the theological stage, so to say. Thus, Nigeria is experiencing its own period of fragmentation, with cultural and religious distortions, although it is still living at the same time with those advanced societies, but definitely not in the same time with them. In other words, we see the basic nonscientific characteristics of the Nigerian traditional thought as representing traditional thought in Nigeria in general. In essence, Nigerians see the paranormal phenomenon as means to not only possess matter, but also to control and manipulate their environment. So, if modernism is a way of living with the plurality of thought consisting of multiple images of religious and social reality, then we can also talk about a Nigerian modernist culture in the quest for the paranormal.

## A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE NIGERIAN TRADITIONAL BELIEF SYSTEM AND ITS INHERENT PROBLEMS

### BELIEF IN DIVINITIES AND DIVINATION

The terms 'divinities' and 'divination' broadly cover various attempts to personify God's activities and manifestations, the so-called 'nature spirits', defied heroes, and mythological figures (Mbiti, 1975). Scholars agree that the belief in divinities or deities is a common feature of life in West African countries including Nigeria. There are several divinities recognised among the various cultural groups in Nigeria. For example, the Yorubas of Southwestern part of the country are said to have 401 or more deities, each of who is believed to have control over specific aspects of communal life: Sango|thunder or lightening; Ogun|iron; Osun|river; Obatala|creativity; Esu| supplication; Orunmila|

divination; etc. However, a distinction needs to be made between principal and minor divinities. The principal divinities are part of the natural order of things or what is called Community Deities. This is because of each community's attachment to them: "This category of deities was conceived as naturally disembodied divinities that were dedicated to particular communities as their patron saints or guardian angels. In most cases, they were associated with some form of divine power that they were said to always deploy to the advantage of the members of their adopted community" (Ihenacho, 2012).

The principal deities among Nigerian ethnic nationalities include the Ala among the Igbo, Aje in Idoma, Obatala in Yorubaland, Alagemo in Ijebu, Ogun among the Ondos, and the cult of thunder divinities in Southern Nigeria. These deities are said to have come into existence with the creation of the universe. In contrast, the minor deities are no more than the spirits of ancestors and ancient heroes who have been subsequently deified. The Idoma and Tiv people of the River Benue basin have innumerable minor deities. According to Mbiti (1975), the Edo people of Midwestern Nigeria possess several deities in relation to their societal needs, social activities, and experiences, and their cults are so recognisable as such; for one is connected with human fertility, supply of children, and wealth (oluku); another with medicine (Osu); another of iron (Ogun); another with death (Ogiuwu). As mentioned earlier, the Yoruba Pantheon of deities contain 401 recognizable divinities, with some scholars even claiming that it could be contracted or expanded to 201, 600, or 1700 as the case may be. Similarly, the Igalas classify their deities according to their lived experiences as two kinds of free and clan divinities. The free deities include those associated with rain, fertility, wealth, and so on. On the other hand, the clan deities represent ideal values of clan inter-relations expressed in symbolic form of totem, living or non-living.



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## DIVINITIES, DIVINERS AND MEDIATION

The human effort to search for critical information in the domain of the paranormal is the province of divination. As defined by (Beatie, 1987), divination is the endeavor to obtain information about future things or events otherwise removed from ordinary perception by consulting informants other than human. In this respect, the diviner is a human medium who receives and decodes information and signs from the supernatural world and also interprets these to his clients. With this spiritual foresight, the diviner is able to reconnect the past to the present, foretell the future, and also interact with the physical as well as the spirit world. In a wider context, divination is a means of discovering things to come and is used to uncover past secrets, or smell out witches and evil doers. However, it must be noted that Nigerians believe that though divinities have no physical existence to enable them contend with man in flesh, these spirit beings can still force themselves on man as spiritual forces. For instance, some believe that Agwu (the tormenting spirit among Igbos) has both a physical and nonphysical means of tormenting his possessed victims of mental problem. It is said to have the power to torment a person for good or bad; that is, it can enrich the person or make him poor, but it is entirely left for the afflicted to seek spiritual help from the diviner who will decode the oracle for the 'onye-agwu na-eme' (the one possessed by Agwu's spirit).

Mediation is the process of consulting the Supreme God through the deities to enquire about a person's predicament and possibly produce a reconciliation between the person and order of existence. The fact of deities as mediators or intercessors between the physical and the spiritual worlds is very common in the Nigerian traditional belief system.

As Shorter (1975) puts it, "The idea of mediation in the African traditional concept is dynamic. The intermediary is not seen to be a barrier to communication, but rather as a vital channel of communication at solemn moments of sociopolitical life". This observation implies that deities are intermediaries, in the true sense of it, rather than mere disinterested informants or messengers. Apart from deities, some spiritually mature humans can also act as mediators.

In summary, ancestors, deities, and community spirits are regarded as mediators between man and the Supreme Being - who is recognized as the ultimate source of good things of life including blessings, fertility, good harvests, good health, wealth, peace of mind, peace and progress in the society, and victory in war. Granted this perceived role of mediation in physical well-being and values of life, it is quite logical that deities are regarded as sources of power (force) that control life activities. Nevertheless, these intermediaries can be barriers since the channels of mediation can be manipulated by evil-minded folks.

#### DEITIES AND THEIR ACTIVITIES: INHERENT PROBLEMS WITH FUNCTION OF DEITIES

In the Nigerian traditional belief system that we have been considering, deities are ministers in the theocratic government of the Supreme God. As intermediaries between the physical and the spiritual worlds, they are entrusted with certain roles and power over the natural phenomenon. Eri, in Nri Igbo myth of creation, is said to organize for Awka blacksmiths to use bellows to dry the flooded land. Among the Yorubas, it is held that when Olodumare wanted to transform the marshy empty space below the sky heavens into a solid earth, he commissioned Obatala (Orisa-nla) to perform the task and equipped him with the required materials.

Also, among the Igbos, it is said that when Edo, a female deity, went on an errand to survey the firmament, she lost her way, and spraying away the lumps of white chalk given to her by the Supreme Being as markers, she made the earth (Awolalu & Dopemu, 1987). Thus, these deities play important roles in the creation and governance of the cosmos. However, this membership in the cosmological government attracts the allegation that the Supreme Being and his divine messengers are worshipped together, hence the problem with traditional belief in divinities among Nigerians (Shorter, 1975).

#### PROBLEMS WITH THE BELIEF IN DEITIES

Despite the explanation given in the preceding session, we must take cognizance of the fact that there are many other hurdles to the theocratic conception of deities as mediators between man and God. To start with, a deep reflection reveals that such belief in supernatural deities could lend itself to mental creation of objects of worship, which can become elaborated by priest-craft. Again, the Nigerian needs to conduct more research on their divinity belief system. This phenomenon is largely opaque and still steeped in obscurity. For example, that there are many mediators in the Nigerian traditional belief system is unquestionable, but after the Supreme God (Chukwu in Igbo, Ubangiji in Hausa and Olodumare in Yoruba), which deity ranks next in the order of hierarchy? Is it Obatala (creativity), Ale or Ala (the mother earth), Sango or amuma (lightening), Ori or chi (personal guardian angel)? Worshippers of these deities do not agree on the order of power yet. Therefore, the Nigerian traditional system is still enmeshed in controversies of hierarchy between the divinities. At this junction, it is pertinent for us to briefly examine the concept of 'power' or 'force' as applied to the Nigerian belief in the paranormal.

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#### BELIEF IN PARANORMAL FORCES

Behind Nigerian belief system is a concept of an inanimate force or power which is tagged 'dynamism' by Edwin Smith as "the belief in and the practices associated with the belief in hidden, mysterious, super-sensible, pervading energy, powers, potencies, or forces". Whether it is referred to as animism or dynamism, it is reasonable to say that *edumare* (Supreme Being among the Yorubas) is a psychic element or force, which people such as blacksmiths, hunters, farmers, chiefs, priests, wood carvers, traders, as well as witches and wizards have in different degrees, which enable them to perform their life functions. The force, power, or the psychic element (translated variously in different Nigerian tribes as *Ire*, *Ashe*, *ike*, or *Ori*) can be positively or negatively applied for or by people to bless or curse others (Parrinder, 1975). In Yoruba tradition, magicians (*pidanpidan*), sorcerers and priests (*oso ati adahunse*), medicine men (*onisegun*), and diviners (*babalawo*) are believed to possess *ashe* (psychic power or force) which can be invoked to influence targeted individuals from a distance. Deities also have power and they can manipulate people either for good or bad, spiritually or otherwise. Also, most Nigerian cultures believe that there is dynamism in charms and psychic forces in physical creatures like rivers, trees, animals, birds, mountains, and humans which can be tapped.

#### A DISPLACED GOD: THE PROBLEM WITH BUREAUCRATIC MONOTHEISM

The deities arguably engage in creative activities that portray the eruption of the divine into the physical world, which occasions the popular charge that because of the enormous power of the deities, the Supreme God *HSS* abdicated His throne for them both in creative activities and in interactions with worshippers. Idowu (1975) succinctly explained this objection against the Nigerian traditional belief system that, " the Supreme Being is never approached directly by worshipers or that, when He is called upon directly, it is only in

moments of crises or desperation when all other avenues have been exhausted". Thus, it can be said that the Supreme Being in the Nigerian belief system is a hidden personality and people have had to settle for effects of His powers than the source or consult with some hideous mediums to seek His favor. As a consequence of the seeming displacement of God in the affairs of the Nigerian, deities, both human and divine, occupy everywhere and the implication is that a society replaced by deities is a capricious society full of magic, superstition, mediocrity, and other retrogressive tendencies.

#### SUPERSTITIOUS AND MAGICAL TENDENCIES AMONG NIGERIANS

Magic and superstition are manifestations of attitudes that could be directed to something beyond one's human capacity. Magical rites are not part of the organized religious order, hence they are often regarded to as illicit, although beliefs in such tendencies might satisfy human psychological needs. In addition, when applying magic, the perceived source of supernatural power is forced for selfish purposes. As Wilson (1979) puts it, "And what is, in fact, the source of philosophy - or, for that matter, of any knowledge? It is fundamentally the need of power. You have only to watch the face of a baby who has just learned how to open a door by turning the knob, to understand what knowledge is for. In the twentieth century, magic has become a suspect word, because it has become associated with the idea of power over people. But that is its least important application. One of the fundamental myths of magic concerns the magician who seeks political power, he receives a number of warnings, and if he persists, he is destroyed. Political power strengthens the ego; magical power rises from the subconscious, from the non-personal urge".

In fact, the search for magical power by the Nigerian people can be described as a quest for the miraculous or paranormal experience, which represents a sudden sense of

meanings, far greater than oneself, which makes all other personal experiences seem trivial. In this search for paranormal experience, both the sacred and the profane tend to converge; magic and politics converge, and can be presented as a divine manifestation by political or religious demagogues. As a result, everyone in Nigeria now appear so religious and never in the political history of this country have so many religious slogans come into the lexicon of political leaders: 'Power belongs to God/ Allah and He gives and takes', 'Redemption Agenda 2019', 'Divine Change 2021', 'Anointed by God', 'The Political Messiah', 'Allah's Will', 'Divine Mandate', 'Revival of the Nation', 'To God be the Glory' and so on. To canonize this new trend of religiocised attitude to politics or a politicized attitude to religion, Nigerian religious leaders have become political soothsayers or visionaries who are variously consulted by the politicians before and after elections, hence, they forecast or tell people that God has already revealed who will be the country's next president or who will win the next governorship election in a certain state. It is not unusual to see many of these religious leaders issuing annual prophecies at the beginning of every year, detailing revelations about future happenings. So, people beseech and pray, everyone attends religious functions. Every available space has been converted to worship centers, with both Nigerian leaders and the masses hypocritically wearing the toga of religion around themselves. Yet, the people remain as gullible as ever and all conduct their affairs, and that of the entire country, in a garb of religious or political manipulation and deception, where hypocrisy is propagated with some brainwashing religious fervent. One popular prophet in Lagos once prophesied, albeit falsely, that the Super Eagles of Nigeria would reach the semifinal stage of the 2014 World Cup tournament in Brazil. Another prophesied that God revealed to him that he would be reelected as the country's president in the 2011 presidential election. Needless to say that the popular pastor could not gather up to 10,000 votes across the nation. Okafor (2006) bluntly captured the situation of things when he

described the average Nigerian as a person with an ambiguous socio-religious outlook who graduated from the sociopolitical school of fraud and religious anarchism which assigned him to a special social status known as "Homo nigerianus". He explained his concept of Homo Nigerians as someone who is deeply superstitious but pretends to be religious.

#### THE ECLIPSE OF GOD IN NIGERIAN AFFAIRS

Magic and superstition are two aberrations of religious attitude that run contrary to reason and the application of human intellect and also trickle down to the hypocritical religiosity of the Nigerian society. 'Religiosity' in this sense refers to the hunger for something beyond the normal but with confused religious consciousness as displayed by Nigerians. And this situation produces a kind of religious and sociopolitical psychosis: religion without Godliness, humanism without depth, and political power without responsibility. Of late, we think that the Nigerian Deus obscurus (hidden God) is manifesting itself into an eclipse of God in Nigerian affairs as human right abuses resurfaces again during the present administration of President Mohammed Buhari. Thus, the Supreme Being (who is known for justice and fairness) has been relegated to the background in the Nigerian sociopolitical context because of the irreligiosity in the purported religious activities of Nigerians. People now engage in crazy deeds (armed robbery, embezzlement of public funds, arson, and terrorism) in the name of a Supreme Being, and they hold others responsible for their misfortune.

#### THE PROBLEM OF MERGING THE SACRED WITH THE PROFANE

It has been variously observed that there is no much distinction between religion sacredness and profanity in the Nigerian political space. That is, the average Nigerian is so

religious to the extent of not observing a conscious separation between the spheres of the religious and the nonreligious. As a result, there is no need to compartmentalize the Nigerian experience to see which side is political, social, religious, or philosophical. The reason for this is that religion permeates all aspects of the Nigerian life and can only be discerned in terms of religious affiliations, prayers, rituals, dressing styles, ceremonies, and sets of beliefs. This is a country where people tend to associate with only people who hold the same belief similar to theirs, and distance themselves from those belonging to different denominations of even the same religion. In essence, wherever you see a Nigerian, you see his religion as well. This is because Nigerians believe that nothing in the physical realm occurs without having being influenced by the spiritual world. Certainly, this belief system might serve as a guide to human actions and sometimes make individuals deny responsibility for their actions, while blaming the spiritual realm! But shrewd reflection on the issues at stake shows that this is an argument in support of merging the sacred with the profane for which many religious and political leaders in Nigeria continue to deceive the masses. As explained clearly by Ekwuru (2009), "The inability of Nigerians to separate the religious from the profane ...brings a lot of nonreligious elements into religion. A true religious attitude should take a distance from the political and the social, and act as a conscience. Where this is not forthcoming, the religion becomes a commercial venture, the political will go its way without fear of being reprimanded, since everything has become something else, and the societal crisis turns into religious reductionism.

PROBLEMS OF THE NIGERIAN SOCIOPOLITICAL LIFE AMIDST DIVINITIES AND THE COMMUNITY

NIGERIAN SOCIOPOLITICAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY OF DIVINITIES AND FORCES



There is a common belief that Nigerians live in a community of human beings and of unseen forces, hence the allegiance to human ideals and to obscure societies. As it is, man is a special creature with embodied spirit in the midst of his human and natural environment within which he purports to acquire his being. The 'we-identity' of the Nigerian life drives and also entangles him. As explained by Nwoko (1985), the African nay Nigerian traditional society protects its members and the individual becomes a community person when in his community. In other words, the community remains the center of gravity of the Nigerian life and the gravitational force pulls men to communal affairs. Consequently, in the Nigerian belief system, individuals are like threads which are woven tightly around the communal fabric to hold it together. A disruption in any section of the social fabric or in the collective experience creates a tear in the whole system. It is said that whenever a rung of the social ladder is displaced, the line of the societal life force is disrupted. This emphasis on the collective cause rather than the individual's as a determinant of the 'person' of an individual is an ontological idea of unity which credo is taken as 'I am because others are'. Many Nigerians at the rural level and to some extent in the cities still enjoy communal life in which everyone is cared for and people share what they have generously. Hence, in this sense of communal life, nobody is seen as poor because the community often share what they have. There is no competition, no political demagogues, no insecurity or terrorism, no big ambitions, no unemployment, and the majority of people are mentally balanced, and abnormal behavior is very rare.

## CONSEQUENCES AND PROBLEMS OF THE NIGERIAN BELIEF SYSTEM ON THE POLITICAL LIFE

### TOO MUCH ALLEGIANCE TO PARANORMAL FORCES

Forces or powers are part of the symbolic form of life information systems, alongside folklores, myths, and proverbs by which the religious worldview of the people are expressed in varied or unified forms (Ukaegbu, 2011; Ekwuru, 2009). We observe that people whose ideas reign within a specific ethnic group are the influential individuals. In almost every Nigerian community, there is an obsessive fear of the strong wrestler, the rich, the juju man, the priest, the imam, the medicine man, and the man with immense physical strength. Therefore, it will be great remiss to totally ignore the relic of priest-craft in shaping religious plus sociopolitical realities among Nigerians. While one does not seek to deny that Nigerian ethnic nationalities have their sense of justice, it should be noted that there is often a miscarriage of justice among the people since the balance of influence is tilted to suit the dictates of these influential men and women. In fact, because the intellectual ability of the Nigerian society or the elite is shortsighted and sickly, many talents have been simply ignored or suppressed in the country's sociopolitical space. Without fear of contradiction, we can conclude that Nigeria has been suffocated by the selfish ambition of its elite; their formulated social constructs, and the nation's anti-people constitution of 1999 bequeathed by the military regime of General Abdusalami Abubakar, which has been described as a document codified to safeguard their selfish interests of members of their clan. In short, one can argue that Nigeria is not a country set up in the ideals of egalitarianism, but a society of projected interests of certain individuals who could manipulate the system to impose the longings of their warped ideological conscience or superstitions on others as the national sociopolitical creed.

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DISTORTED NATIONAL IDENTITY

The average Nigerian has many taboos and superstitious beliefs to observe and, sometimes many rituals to perform daily, either to his ancestors or to the deities. If he is not an unconscious or indirect slave to these paranormal forces, he is perpetually in allegiance to one deity or the other. If he is 'free' with his fellow men, he is not free with his environment or his 'chi'. In a situation where the society and his environment allow him to live his life with fewer burdens, he will still have to pay the debts incurred by his so-called ancestors! He may still choose to observe the uncritical way of his forefathers to spare himself the agony of reevaluating his present situation. In the Nigerian society, man lives in bondage, being a slave to paranormal forces, and he only appears free by virtue of his ignorance of his prevailing condition of life. In an all-inclusive consideration of life in Nigeria, we therefore need to emphasize that even the so-called influential men of means with their education, still remain mere actors in a society dominated by natural environmental forces or paranormal influences.

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#### THE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL GODFATHERISM

The concept of political 'godfatherism' is a carry-over from the discussed worship of multiple divinities, each capable of causing harm if ignored. In a similar vein, the search for power and instant miracles in the Nigerian society is also to secure instant gratification and a firm of political power. Like the deities, there are many influential people who can facilitate or hinder matters for a person who has a political ambition in Nigeria. In the traditional belief system, certain animals and their organs are sacrificed to certain deities, so also is a considerable chunk of the Nigerian federal allocation to states is reserved for some political godfathers or influential men who must be regularly appeased or nothing will work in the particular state.

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## THE PROBLEMATIC ROLE OF SECRET SOCIETIES IN NIGERIAN POLITICS

While we do not intend to discuss Nigerian secret societies here, yet we need to mention that many Nigerian politicians belong to different groups. Any of such groups that share information and ideas only among its members can be said to be a secret society. Njoku (2006) made an extensive study of the impact of European influence on African culture which was a wide-ranging process of enculturation and he observed that institutions of power, family, kinship systems, and village life were all affected. Njoku centered his study on how the cultural background of four prominent Igbo sons shaped their political choices later in life. In his study, he devoted considerable space to the role of secret societies in politics and socialization in the pre-colonial and colonial period. From his findings, we learned that what we know about secret societies now is somewhat different from how people saw them in the pre-colonial and colonial era. Unlike in those eras, people now see secret societies as closed groups associated with private, devilish/unorthodox religious rites which are sometimes ritualized in human blood, within which members are bounded by an oath of secrecy. The initiates are alleged to indulge in human sacrifices to their blood-sucking deities to gain prosperity, protection, and political power.

In contrast to this perception, however, secret societies in the old days were part of the social groups that helped in the socialization process of individuals in many parts of Nigeria, as revealed in the case of Alvan Ikoku, a prominent Nigerian nationalist of the colonial period who hailed from Arochukwu in the heartland of Igbo nation. We also learned that as a forum for socialization in his place of birth, Ikoku retained his membership of the various secret societies or Abamaba, even after he has acquired Western education. Among the prominent secret societies he belonged to include Ekong, Akang, Obon, Okonko, and Ekpo of mostly Efik or Ibibio origin. The most important were the Ekpo and

Ekpe for men and the Iyamba (Iyambe) for women whose husbands belonged to the Ekpe society. Ekpe was an elitist social club that served as a conduit for tradition, social mobilization, social mobility, continuity, and adaptation in the colonial society (Njoku, 2006).

Going further to the East was Unwana, the village of Francis Akanu Ibiam, another prominent Nigerian nationalist of Igbo extraction. In his village, age-grade associations were social groups different from secret societies and for individuals, the initiation into the secret society comes first. In Unwana, there is a peculiar secret society which was known as the Ogo or Egbele (Village), which was the name of the society's central spirit. It must also be noted that the place had other secret societies like the Ekpo and Ekpe that people could join. These societies were avenues for socialization among the people, though membership was differentiated age-grade groups. Membership in these societies imbued the initiates with a sense of social belonging and responsibility, since they were also expected to carry themselves with dignity in the society and maintain a secrecy in all the group's activities, and the uninitiated like women, children, and strangers were barred from the Ogo secrecy. Initiation was taken as a serious prerequisite for political aspiration within the clan and to the whole range of societal functions. It must be performed before taking any non-secret title, before marriage, and before joining an age-grade group.

As shown by Njoku (2006) in his monumental study, an investigation of the background of K. O. Mbadiwe and Mbonu Ojike (two other prominent Nigerian nationalists of Igbo extraction) showed that age-grade groups were not so popular in Arondizuogu. Instead, there existed social clubs which helped maintain roads, farm paths, market places, and amenities belonging to the whole community, as supervised by the elders. An example of such clubs is the Ekeji or Ikeji. Mbadiwe and Ojike were very active in those social clubs.

We also learned that before 1920, Arondizuogu had a peculiar village secret society known as the 'Long Juju Society' into which men were initiated on attaining manhood. However, unlike the other secret societies in Igboland, such as the Ekpe or Leopard Society (for men) and the Iyama (for women), the Long Juju Society did not confer any special social privilege over the uninitiated on its members. While, Ojike accepted membership of the Ekpe and the Reformed Ogboni Fraternity (ROF) of Yoruba origin, Mbadiwe refused to join any secret society.

From the foregoing discussion of the lives of four prominent Nigerian leaders who played critical roles in the political development of the country, we can safely conclude that initiation into secret societies in the Nigerian society has always been regarded as a rite of passage necessary for ascendancy into social and political leadership. Also, we can also say that whether they were for the good or bad, there was a very thin line between membership of secret societies and social groups like age-grade groups or clubs. This confusion seems to have persisted up till the present era that to belong to a political party or a social group, one also has to belong to a secret society. And in some cases within Nigerian societies, the process of taking titles, such as the Ozo titles among the Igbos or chieftaincy titles among the Binis and the Yorubas, as a genuine case of inculturation, can be easily manipulated to exclude people of Christian or Islamic faiths by the traditional religion worshippers. The issue of who is to take chieftaincy titles within the Nigerian society has an underlying question of who should control decision-making process under the guise of religion or politics, since individuals or collective achievements may be the basis for inclusion for leadership role (Ibechukwuka, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

The modern Nigerian society must be anchored on a differentiated consciousness based on reason, since it is more accepted as a genuine desire for the paranormal and a way of living with the plurality of thought, Nigerians need to ensure that the anchor is something truly supernatural and not a mere coincidence of contingencies by which communities and individuals in all kinds of pretense idolize themselves. The kind of religion or politics we are referring to must be well defined. Therefore, Udeolisa (2011) is correct to observe that the modern Nigeria's journey into Islamic mosques and Christian churches for spiritual awakening has actually its society more rent in spirituality than before in the hands of fraudsters who are wolfs in sheep clothing, people whose quest for material things is hidden under the toga of offering spiritual guidance to the lost sheep.

A differentiated consciousness laid on the solid foundation of reason will open up the society for genuine interactions in the sociopolitical and religious arenas, and things will take their rightful places. If there is an open and free interaction of subjects in a society, the inter-subjective encounters will permit genuine aspirations which supersede the poverty of aspirations that currently permeate the Nigerian political space. Since differentiated consciousness complemented by reason will enable wise judgments about structures that will sustain genuine aspirations of the people, while poverty of opportunities will fade away, and there will emerge healing options for the battered conscience of the people and their political environment. In this way, the need for a concerted response as a step towards a healing option will eventually bring together the different bits of foresight that has been expended on conducting sociopolitical functions in terms of religion. This will clean-up the people's memory that has long been fed with spurious superstitions and magical beliefs in the name of religion, while fostering an atmosphere of society well-being of mutual understanding and trust.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### PUTTING NIGERIAN AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY IN THEIR RIGHT PERSPECTIVES

The Nigerian man has a dual religious identity of Nigerian Traditional and Islamic or Nigerian Traditional and Christian. If we have to strip the Nigerian belief system of retrogressive elements, we also need to identify the truth about these Abrahamic religions that has been confused in the chaotic environment of the country's belief system. In this confusing political cum religious inverse of the Nigerian, there is an urgent need for a giant leap forward to a more qualitative presence to meet Nigeria's contemporary political needs. This qualitative presence can only be realized by reason which arises from the process of growing up (Lonergan, 1973). It is a cognitive consciousness associated with being alert to making proper judgments about religion and politics as demanded by intelligence.

As a result, in order for Nigerians to arrive at a better judgment in choosing their political leaders, they need to judge issues based mainly on reflective insight. Otherwise, people will continue to fall into the snare of inaction, fanaticism, ignorance, and syncretism. In societies where social consciousness is well-defined and differentiated, the intellectual and political issues become clearer and the veil that blinds the senses of judgment and compassion will be lifted.

The feeling of social helplessness and inadequacy occasioned by widespread poverty has plunged Nigerian into a state of cultural ambiguity, for people are being haunted by a culture of crass opportunism, haunted by a culture of materialism, a vulnerable sense of identity, and poverty of the mind. A vulnerable sense of political identity produces an



ambiguity that wounds the imagination, the will, and a wounded memory. These three concepts of 'woundedness' have brought about cultural desolation among Nigerians with emptiness or wretchedness accompanying it. If these wounds to the Nigerian consciousness are not addressed, the people will continue to drift - praying and not praying, religious and not so religious, moving and not moving, progressive or not. No wonder that in this social confusion caused by a nonreligious in religion, some kind of disconnect confronts one on the face to the extent that it becomes more difficult to identify a single religious fellow in the mass of self-righteous seekers of paranormal experience.

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#### DEMARCATING THE LINE BETWEEN THE SACRED AND THE MUNDANE

If there is a need for the Nigerian to live with plurality and the concept of divinity in the atmosphere of personal freedom, then the society has to be urgently demythologized. That is, there should be a conceptualization to the line separating the sacred and the mundane to indicate the two concepts clearly. However, people should know that this demand for a clear-cut conceptual separation between the spheres is not a complete denial of harmony between the two if held separately. It simply means that if the separation is maintained, then the divide between them will emerge clearly for people to see; Nigerians will know where the influence of religion begins and stops, and where politics transcends.

Consequently, the divine sphere will act as a critique to sociopolitical constructs. In other words, people will be properly guided in applying the ethos of religious holiness to their secular activities without any need for hypocrisy as witnessed in contemporary Nigeria. Although there is a thin line between religious attitudes, supervision, and magic, a true

religious attitude is quite different from other dispositions. The truly religious man always seeks friendship with God and his fellow men. He will not seek to harm innocent folks in the name of propagating his brand of religion. He will not seek to enthrone a religious caliphate and he will not seek to shortchange his people as a political leader. True adherence to the dictates of religion inspires the emotion of fear in man; he feels his creature-hood, his impotence in the universal scheme of things and general nothingness against the power of his Creator (Otto, 2950). Attraction to superstition and magic only keeps one at arm's length to true religiosity, while magic manipulates the source of power.

#### A GENUINE ANALYSIS OF THE NIGERIAN

There is an urgent need to investigate and retrieve what is authentic in the rubble claimed to be moral values in Nigeria. Certain things in the country's traditional belief system are truly bad and retrogressive. So, they have to be discarded. We only need to save those elements in our culture that are worthy of intellectual reconsideration. While doing this, we can proceed to compare the different Nigerian cultures favorably. Thus, a clear distinction has to be made between parts of our culture that are retrogressive (like oppressive elements and mythologies which encourage political godfatherism) and the new Nigeria based in differentiated consciousness anchored on reason.

This rebirth of Nigerian politics and religion will be a product of cross-cultural pollination of ideas, since every culture gives and takes from the other. Therefore, the envisaged Nigeria's self-identity will be a product of intercultural encounter and on equal grounds.

Outdated cultural and religious values which have become veritable sources of political repression among the populace, should be completely discarded. People cling to these values not because they bring positive changes to their lives or are effective in solving

problems in our dynamic world, but because things have always been like this for generations. In this light, one concludes that only the application of differentiated consciousness at the societal level, anchored on empirical evidence, logic, and reason as witnessed in America and Europe could bring positive transformations to Nigerian politics

## CHAPTER 15

### THE POSSIBILITIES OF A NEW NIGERIA

#### **Introduction**

The road to the possibilities of a new Nigeria, considering the socio-political and economic maladies plaguing the county, is rather narrow. Nevertheless, to believe in the possibilities of a new Nigeria is by no means utopian: it is a realistic dream. To make Nigeria great, we cannot particularly overemphasize the need for the establishment of the right and suitable government. In fact, given her stupendous potentials, Nigeria is able to lead Africa if equipped with the right leadership. The condition of the right government is indispensable to fostering true unity despite the sharp diversity in the country. Undoubtedly, the ideal leadership is a pre-condition and a primary 'conditio-sine-quanon' for the actualization of our dream of a new Nigeria. Now, towards maximizing the general welfare of the Nigerian people, fostering development in every facet of the country and totally exterminating the plagues of corruption, disunity, injustice, etc., there is the need to earnestly begin the processes to building a new Nigeria. To this end, this chapter is a careful analysis that aims at projecting the realities of the possibilities of a new Nigeria. Consequently, the chapter will serve as a clarion call to all thoughtful Nigerians to rise up and take the required actions in addressing the negative realities that cripple our aspiration and inhibit our chances of becoming a modern attractive country.

Gleaning from the past and present state of the nation, a fact that has been lucidly projected is that the problems confronting Nigeria are largely self-induced. Given this, it is necessary for the new generation Nigeria to put hands on desk, instigate strategies that

would aid in confronting the challenges posed by the crisis of development. It will be a respected view that to build a new Nigeria, we need a new structure and mentality, a mentality of one tribe of men and women of all faiths, of all tribes, of all ethnicities committed to a country run on high values; high values of integrity, of hard work, of justice and of love of country. We should be prepared to make the sacrifices and exercise the self-constraint that is crucial for building a healthy society and should be prepaid to stick together to fight injustice; to fight corruption; to insist on the rule of law; even when our friends are the receiving end. It is on this note that Yemi Osinbajo, the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was of the view that “building a new Nigeria, we need a tribe consisting of professional, of businessmen, of politicians, of students, of religious leaders and all who believe that a new Nigeria is possible.”

Despite our cultural differences, there could still be ways through which we can exercise oneness and togetherness even in the midst of diversities. In attaining this, we need to put our ethnic differences aside. The ethnic factor in Nigerian life has been unduly politicized. The politicization of ethnicity dates back to the colonial contact situation in which the interaction of the different communal groups was played out of context to emphasize the differences rather than the similarities of the various groups. Today, the threats of ethnic factor in Nigerian politics is so frightening that if there is no urgent re-ordering of priorities, the federal structure may either disintegrate like the Soviet Union or degenerate to confederalism.

Perhaps, the most worrisome and retrogressive principle of Nigeria’s social policy, the federal character principle and the quota system which has compounded the problem of ethnicity, needs to be replaced with a new viable principle of meritocracy. There should be a fairer strategy for distributing scarce national resources, revenue, lucrative

appointments, influential offices of state, institutions of learning and parastatals. There should be equitable dispensation of facilities and development infrastructures to the various ethnic nationalities. Particularly, the minorities should be made to feel a sense of belonging to the nation by a conscious appreciation of their problems by the political administration. The mineral producing areas should be duly compensated for the environment and ecological hazards they suffer on a daily basis. The political administration should encourage conferences, talks, researches, seminars and debates on how to increase the gross national domestic product. Emphasis should be put by the political administration on what each and every ethnic nationality can and should contribute to the baking of the national cake rather than the culture of consumption which has emphasized who should get what quantity of the national cake.

For the other disturbing social problems of conjugal disruptions, armed robbery, rural-urban migration, religious strife and the phenomenon of school cultism, we ask for, in conjunction with other socio-psychological solutions, the enhancement of social security measures, improved economic conditions, the fair and equitable dispensation of modernization facilities and infrastructures to the rural communities, greater understanding and tolerance, and the inculcation of the right values and virtues in our wards and siblings.

Emphasis nowadays is put by everyone on the pecuniary culture, on lucrative money spinning professions, on the gains of modern science, on the technological-cybernetic culture with its immense and dazzling results. Man is today putting too many premiums on material things, on purely empirical beings. But this will make us become so much fools of organization, bustle and speed that are no longer able to relate to the essential, the simple and the stable.

What we need in a society threatened by human greed, ineptitude and parochialism, a society threatened by crass materialism and the empirical culture, a society threatened by insecurity as well as social and environmental pollution, is a “discipline of the passions” which would orient us towards a “right conception to the ends of life.” In other words, we need to explore the extramundane dimension of existence which would enable us to re-order the Nigerian society in which not only bankers and customs officers but also poets, engineers, academics, lawyers, teachers, artisans, thinkers, politicians, soldiers, and even those who cannot create their own work can all find their bearing.

It is important to note that in building a new Nigeria, there must be a possibility of an establishment of authentic leadership, and for there to be authentic leadership, there has to be authentic followership, and vice versa. Also, in the area of economy, there will be need for an establishment of relevant institutions. These relevant institutions will create structures and infrastructures to stimulate industrialization.

One Nigerian mystery is that the nation seems to be helpless despite the potentials available to provide the unavailable requirements for national industrialization and development. The Nigerian government must ensure the citizenry of this country gains access to quality skills and technology. We must also begin to work tenaciously towards securing sophisticated amenities or public facilities so that when the quality of skills and technology at the disposal of our national work force is decisively raised, these amenities will enhance their productivity in their various endeavors.

On account of the above, it would be advisable for the young generation Nigerians not to relax, expecting the government to come and fix Nigeria’s problems, nor expecting the government to do everything for them. They must confront and challenge the generation

of our past and in many respects, our current leaders who have transformed themselves into semi-gods and claim of doing nothing wrong. Hence, the youth of this nation must be cognizant of the fact that no one can solve Nigeria's problems, but Nigerians themselves. To this end, an affirmation of this fact would offer a leeway towards solving the problems of economic inequality, social injustice and flowing into nepotism, corruption and political lackluster.

From the foregoing, we could identify corruption, tribalism and religion as the key problems hampering Nigeria's development. In an attempt to instigate a new dimension that would eradicate the past and present socio-cultural menaces that have persistently and consistently eaten deep into our root system, the new generation of Nigeria need people of integrity, hard work, people that care and people with love for the country. Hence, the new generation Nigeria should be saddled with the total responsibility of always standing up for whatever that is deemed 'right' or 'good' and work towards the total elimination of corruption in the country.

Corruption, they say, is a symptom of a deeper malaise. Therefore, it is imperative for it to be addressed in the new generation Nigeria. Given the past and the present Nigeria, there has been a great deal wrong with the way the elites have indirectly but colossally concentrated the means of production, distribution and exchange in the hands few individuals while the greater part of the country's population languish in poverty. This goes to say that the Nigerian society is structured on an imbalanced platform. This has culminated in a series of controversies over the last few decades, yet, steps that would engender a system which will conform more to justice seems still far-fetched from what lies before us today. Considering this reality, Achebe laments:



Why is it that our corruption, gross inequities, our noisy vulgarity, our selfishness, our ineptitude seem so much stronger than the good influences at work in our society? Why do the good among us seem so helpless while the worst are full of vile energy? (Achebe, 1983)

The question that comes to our minds is this: can we expect our contemporary structures to produce a real just society where equality of all citizens should be the goal of the leaders? This is why the resources are stolen and salted away by people in power and their accomplices. Thus this makes the labor sector inefficient, hopeless and irremediable in Nigeria. This denial of merit according to Achebe is a form of social injustice which can hurt not only the individual directly concerned but ultimately the entire society.

Educational sector is another area where this idea is practiced day in day out in terms of admitting students in institutions, giving employments, passing examinations and even students' elections. Today, a candidate can score high in jamb and university aptitude test and still will not get admission while those who performed below average will secure admission, simply because they have the money to buy the admission or they have people who can use their position in power to secure them the admission even when they are not fit, suitable and qualified for the admission. This idea has affected employment opportunity, passing of examination and students' election in Nigerian universities. Some of the institutions' elections in Nigeria are determined by the wealthy and the powerful individuals not the electorate. This is not what it ought to be. The poor and powerless should be carried along at all times in the society. It is on this note that we posit that the new

generation Nigerians should be saddled with the responsibility of re-addressing the economic and political structure such that the reward system would be equitable and just.

Also important for a redress is our moral situation which has become so alarmingly depraved. This is evidenced in all sectors of life in the Nigerian society; which include politics, governance, religion, education and so on. Corruption has assumed a monumental height as the nation ranks as one of the most corrupt nations in the world. These corrupt practices stem from the various greedy, self-motivated and self-seeking attitudes of our leaders who are only interested in serving their pockets rather than serving the people. These corrupt practices have narrowed down to the average man who is eager to partake of the “national cake” if given the opportunity. Governance is now perceived as a “national cake”, and as a means of personal aggrandizement and enrichment.

The case is even worse in the civil service where morale is at its lowest ebb due to poor remunerations and un-conducive working conditions. This has inadvertently legitimized bribery and corruption among the rank and file. Those in positions of authority use this as an opportunity to amass wealth. To this end, embezzlement of public funds now becomes the order of the day.

This vicious act has generated various degrees of controversies over the years such that the existence and manifestations of corrupt and fraudulent practices have eaten so deep into the fabric of our society that a former United States of Chief of Defence Staff, General Collins Powell, had to assert that, ‘it is in the character of Nigerians to defraud.’ This assertion stands to be undeniable bearing the fact that Powell himself is not a Nigerian but has hitherto studied and researched on the social structures commonly found within the network of Nigeria’s societal gatherings. His affirmation also shows that Nigerians truly are

‘virtueless.’ Sequel to this, Alhaji Shehu Musa on his part posits that Nigeria is a country where corruption is made official. Corruption, they say, has eaten deep into the organizational structure of every facet of Nigerian communities. Hence, Alhaji Shehu observes that anyone who does not exhibit corrupt act in Nigeria is seen as a fool. Mohammadu Buhari, in his AREWA House lecture on May 15, 1998, mirrors this:

Nowhere else in the world can one find  
a society tolerating the theft of its  
precious resources in broad day light  
with nothing happening to the thieves,  
few societies seem to reward  
embezzlement with ‘honours’ as does  
our own. Instead of putting rascals on  
trial, we put them in position of  
leadership.

This clearly shows that majority of our leaders lack the practice of justice, they are not distinct in exhibiting honorary life and yet, these are the type of people we call ‘our leaders’ people that are lackadaisical and unconcerned towards the well-being of others because of their selfish interests. In such situation how then do we define justice given the circumstances surrounding Nigeria? How then do we determine an act of justice? Behold, it becomes evident that the idea of justice is of no use to Nigerians, because it has ceaselessly and constantly been impracticable over the years. For everyone seeks to strive for his or her own selfish benefit at the detriment of others. Such is the mentality of Nigerians.

In politics, the misnomer created in the country's politics spills over to governance. This is a situation where leadership is not committed to the cause of common good, Justice, but in seeking personal agendas and in the pursuance of depraved ethnic goals. Thus the leadership in government fails in providing the people their basic human needs which is the very reason for government establishment. Consequently, the moral or virtuous life that aims at arriving at the 'good' via acting justly, honestly, temperately etc is lacking in the life of the contemporary Nigerian man. It is on this note that Nwala further states:

Today, the nation is hostage to corruption. Materialism has taken charge of the nation. Corruption and materialism have become our religion and have permeated our sacred institution including the religious, educational and traditional institutions. (Nwala, 2002)

Today, various forms of fraudulent activities characterize the normal life: exploitation, extortion, embezzlement of public funds, looting of private and collective properties, awarding of false contracts and mostly the vicious culture of bribery and corruption. Even the police force which ought to be the enforcer of the law is not left out of the corruption malaise in the country.

But looking at the world environment, one could rightly claim that it is not the case that Nigerians are the most corrupt people in the world. Corruption is also endemic in other parts of the world, but the key thing is that these nations have found ways through which

their societies are structured in such a way that majority of the citizens couldn't be said to be extremely so poor as to be desperate.

In tackling corruption, we suggest that the problem of corruption in Nigeria can be tackled by the institution of a culture of public accountability. A defeatist tactic is to assume, on account of the pervasiveness of the vice, that it is a peculiarly Nigerian phenomenon. It is not. Large-scale corruption is a transitory phase in the evolution of post-colonial societies. The brief but swift crusade of General Murtala Muhammed of Nigeria against corruption, is shining indication that, sooner or later, a new wave of anti-corruption campaigns that would sanitize Nigerian society and reduce the incidence of corruption to the barest minimum, will be set in motion.

Along the line, the new Nigeria should be capable of creating jobs to fight poverty and give the ordinary citizens access to basic amenities of life. There is a need for a well-packaged welfare and social security programmes to be put in place, as obtainable in the Western countries. We should have a structured social security which involves the payment of weekly stipends to the aged and unemployed, just as it is being done in the West. This will contribute to the reduction of the causes of corruption. There is also need for a National Housing Scheme and an efficient transport system. To accomplish this, we need to first scale down family size and have a population policy to determine the number of children per family. In a new Nigeria, what is really needed therefore is a complete re-organization and restructuring of the system. Consequently, eradication of poverty and the harsh economic situation and every other thing shall fall in line.

According to Muyiwa Falaiye, the economic and social systems are such that the poor do not lack these things Bertrand Russell describes as 'primary desires' (Falaiye, 2012).

Besides, the law should be enforced in such a way that the cult of personality is not respected. Given this, it will be pertinent for all to be cognizant of the fact that no one is above the law, irrespective of the person's political status, age, religion, culture, size etc. Hence, we all should see this as a social and collective responsibility that will usher in a new Nigeria and a culture where equality holds sway. Consequently, the new generation Nigerians should be given the task of providing adequate grounds for human transaction of all types. It will be the task of the political administration to set the right kind of values and to assign everyone his rightful place in the scheme of things. And to achieve this, it will be pertinent for us to further highlight and buttress the major areas that need a redress and serious attention. Let us consider some of them below.

#### THE NEED FOR INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a very sensitive endeavor that requires wisdom. This wisdom entails the knowledge of the principles of justice and their application as tools or techniques to one's life and leadership. Vices of corruption, indiscipline, superiority complex, greed, sentimentalism, tribalism, marginalization, and unhealthy competition among others associated with political leaders which consequentially have resulted in economic, political, judicial, technological, infrastructural, educational, moral, and social inequality, marginalization, crises, and deprivation in Nigeria are predicated on their culpable deficiency and ignorance of the principles of justice. Hence, Achebe summarized that the problem with Nigeria is squarely and primarily the failure of leadership. This is the rationale why Plato in his socio-political philosophy recommends that the acquisition of the idea of justice is a necessity for any political leader.

Nigeria needs a leader, not just a leader, but an intellectual leader. In this sense, an intellectual leader could also be seen as a creative statesman. It is to the intellectual leader that the task of recruiting the group of authentic revolutionaries devolves. It is on him too that the responsibility of creating law and order and reforming the corrupt state lies. The intellectual leader is not a demi-god. He is a historical individual, who has studied and understood the actual political behavior of his people. He is a political genius and inventor, a virtuoso, a man of giant courage and great moral stamina.

Intellectual leaders are not born, but made. This is why it is recommended that anyone that aspires being a leader at all levels ought to undergo rigorous training. The importance of training cannot be overemphasized, as it has been stressed by scholars over the years. Plato, one of the foremost philosophers, is perhaps the most astute supporter who emphasized dearly on the importance of training for leadership. In his words, "ruling is a skill, just like any other skill, it requires training or tutelage to master." Going by this trend, an establishment of a center of justice and leadership training should be instigated so as to re-address the loopholes and gaps created within the domain of leaders in Nigeria. Given such establishment, the curriculum of the center should include:

- Principles of Justice
- Ethics
- Economic Theories
- Truth Telling
- The Art of public speaking
- Corruption
- Physical training

Sequel to the conclusion of the training programme, potential leaders should be identified and made to be sifted out of the group and also be made to pass through a ladder, moving upwards from lower to higher positions, depending on performance. This aim will be geared towards developing the skill and guile necessary for handling the day-to-day activities of leadership in Nigeria.

Suffice it to note that it will be necessary for Nigerian leaders to lead by example. There should be probity, transparency and integrity. There should be the will to truly fight corruption without fear, favor or reproach. There should be accountability, an effective accounting system, auditing and expenditure control. To this end, the new Nigeria should expunge protective laws, like immunity, when they have to do with corruption.

### **Need for National Orientation Programme**

A further step to be taken to make corruption difficult, inconvenient and unviable is effective education, mass enlightenment, Radio and Television jingles on the evils of corruption on nation building. So there is need for moral regeneration. A general re-orientation of our value system and a national ethics of discipline, dignity of labour, social justice, self-reliance, nationalism and patriotism are necessary. Hopefully again, this is already part of the Buhari's administration. We need to imbibe the right education by developing our skeptical and inquisitive mind creatively. To this end, it will not be too much if we can integrate the national ethics into a compulsory course, like "philosophy of Logic" in our tertiary institutions all over the country. This is to set the moral tone of the nation. The point is that we need the right education before we can effectively control the menaces that plague Nigeria. This is because an uneducated person can easily be deceived



by the corrupt class. Hence, there is the need to spread education because the more rapidly education spreads the more quickly will corruption diminish.

Also, there is need for us to re-educate the mind of people towards the acquisition of a mindset that will maintain equal social justice in the society. It is by this re-education of the mind that the individual can be able to neutralize this idea of justice which create gap between the rich and poor, the powerful and powerless, the weak and strong then try to complement each other within the society. The main objective of this is to make the masses reject the old mentality of justice and adapt and accept a new way toward promoting social justice in the society.

#### NEED FOR REJECTING THE MISAPPLICATION OF JUSTICE

The first step to tackle the idea of injustice is by rejecting the misapplication of this justice by all the groups in Nigeria both government and non-governmental organization. The public should be enlightened to know the need, value and use of social justice rather the misapplication of justice. This is because misapplication of justice allows only the influential and the strongest to dominate and exploit the country's resources and endowment at the expense of the poor, the weak and the masses. Ekei, explained that social injustice will hardly bring the needed harmony and stability in Nigeria if we continue to practice it. This misapplication of justice has resulted into low level of moral consciousness among Nigerians. Some political analysts have lamented that the low level of moral consciousness among the leaders, wealthy individual and the subject is the major cause of disorder and injustice facing our country and citizens today. This is as a result of this misapplication of justice by a man we do not know his background, knowing too well that our problem in Nigeria today is the problem of copycat mentality, our so called political leaders and

wealthy individual decided to adopt this idea of justice which has kept this country hostage from independent till now. This is why Adaramola stress that:

Justice must be done 'to all manner of men, without fear, or favour, affection or illwill' and as such, justice must always not merely be done, but be seen manifestly to have been done, not only by judges and other adjudicators, but by everyone in every act in societal relationships. (Adaramola, 2005)

Examining the idea of justice in Nigerian socialism is very necessary. We need to show how justice can contribute in reactivating the Nigerian communal system otherwise known as Nigerian socialism in order to consolidate the brotherhood of man. We should begin by taking a look at the idea of justice in African socialism described as communalism which in this sense advocates the restoration of the dignity of man. We should begin to see justice and socialism as ideals that have over the years, shaped the cause of humanism. We should attempt a reconstruction of the collapsed edifice of core values of social, political and spiritual bonds which have been the sources of unity in diversity, collective strength and solidarity in Nigerian socio-political environment. On proffering solution to an authentic Nigerian society and justice within the confined territory of the Nigerians, we need to abolish the capitalist system that is characterized by exploitation and slave labour and build a system that is grounded on a cooperative and collective ownership of means of production.

## NEED TO FORM A PRESSURE GROUP THAT CAN FIGHT FOR EQUAL JUSTICE AT ALL TIES OF GOVERNMENT

Once the re-education of the mind is achieved, it becomes imperative to establish pressure groups within the nation from the grass root society to the ruling class. The individuals that will make these groups should be the ones that have received the re-education of mind and have built their moral consciousness to fight social injustice. These pressure groups should be drawn from all fields of life especially from academia, professional groups who know their onion and will make sure that the rule of law is maintained from the grass-root level of the society.

## NEED FOR STIFF PUNISHMENT AND THE STRENGTHENING OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENTS

There is the need for stiff punishment on people who contravene the law. We should reward citizens and employees who make exemplary efforts to uphold good ethical standards and behavior, and punish those who do not. To this end, every organization or establishment should inaugurate its own annual merit award scheme, to encourage good people to continue to be good and bad ones to change their ways when they see their peers or colleagues being encouraged for good behavior.

There is also the need to strengthened and adequately equip our police force, customs, prison and judiciary, etc. There appears at present to be a great loss of faith in this apparatus of government. Efforts should be made to flush out the bad eggs to achieve better and effective law enforcement, adjudication and punishment.

## NEED FOR INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY FREE FROM CORRUPTION

In attempt to overcome the idea of injustice in Nigeria, there is need to protect the integrity of the pressure groups and their security in order for them to function effectively. One of the ways which we think it can be achieved is by empowering the judiciary and making them independent to function effectively. Hence legal justice becomes very important in the society. Legal justice is justice formulated and administered according to law, irrespective of the law's immorality or otherwise. Therefore, it is the duty of the judiciary to enforce justice and reject injustice if and only if the arm is independent and free from corrupt practices in the society.

#### EQUITABLE APPOINTMENTS

Over the years, it has been observed that the appointment of individuals into administrative or political office positions have been based on nepotism. Strengthening appointment on merit appears to be simple, powerful, yet neglected way in which government can both improve its effectiveness and reduce the incidence of corruption and patronage, nepotism. This does not augur well for the formation and transformation of an ideal society. An act of this could at the very end backfire owing to the integration of unmeritorious and incapable individuals that have suddenly found their ways into various domains of administrative and political office positions. It is on this position that a call for a new society is given impetus. In this sense, the appointment of political office holders should be based on merit as this will help the promotion of peaceful co-existence among Nigerians. In order words, in appointing political office holders, the focus should be on merit and national spread such that every part of Nigeria will have a sense of belonging. This goes to say that before appointing individuals for political office holders, instead of looking for state quotas first, we should rather begin to look at merit rather than tribe or

religion. To this end, it is advisable that the new generation Nigeria should think seriously about taking the following steps.

- Determine what merit means to them.
- Be clear about the circumstances in which it is not appropriate to use merit.
- Be clear about the nature and strength of the forces that oppose it.
- Audit existing practices to remove institutional discrimination.
- Establish good practice selection procedures.

#### DELIBERATE APPOINTMENT OF YOUTH INTO GOVERNANCE

It is obvious reality that no inclusive and sustainable development and governance can be built without involvement of youth. In today's society, we are experiencing lack of trust of youth in governing institutions and political leaders. The modern youths who are well equipped with modern technological knowhow and skills have lot of dreams to make a difference but hardly are they getting any big chance and opportunity in governance of this nation. This makes young youths to feel alienated. In the words of Kofi Anan,

No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline; it is condemned to bleed to death.

Over the years, we have come to realize that there is no reward for youth in Nigeria. Nigerian youth are facing numerous challenges which make them disinterested to take active part in the development of governance of the nation. In Nigeria, youth are often counted as a lost generation, marginalized, frustrated and suffered from decision making bodies and policy making institutions. But the government fails to understand that the absence of peace and synergistic unity in any nation entails that no significant achievements can take place. In pursuance of national synergistic unity and security, the relevance of youth needs to be reviewed. Young people in Nigeria are needed in the pursuit of national development. Disciplined and productive young people in Nigeria are capable of creating a bright future. Given an enabling environment, Nigeria can utilize the youth in the government sectors.

Successful democracy needs participation of all citizens especially the active role and participation of youth is paramount. Hence, it would be recommended that youths take active participation in the political and democratic process of their specific nations. They need to be motivated so that they could be the part and parcel of overall development and governance of this nation. Their engagement would also make governance more stable and effective in Nigeria. The nation needs to give equal opportunities and entitlements and other means of survival to young youth. The need to have active participation privileges in the governance system and overall development spheres. This will always motivate young people in Nigeria and they will use their efforts for the cause of nation building and national survival. The youth participation in governance would bring major change in our modern societies. They would help in promoting peace across the entire world if they will be given their rights and significant importance in our governance system.

## MAKING NIGERIA A FULL SECULAR COUNTRY

According to Kwasi Wiredu, “Africans are in all things religious” (Wiredu, 1996). This statement also depicts the ontological structure of the Nigerian society. Indeed, Nigerians are very religious by nature. But given the way the leaders have exhibited behaviors that do not align to with the ethics of their professed religions, one begins to wonder whether religion has no impact in their lives. In fact, their behaviors have given many the logical basis to argue that they are only playing a game of religion to deceive the masses.

Religion has engendered in Nigerians, a form of thinking that breeds conflict and wars. This is what is responsible for thoughts that classify other people who are not in agreement with one’s belief as “infidels” or “evil”. It is such an approach to religion that has resulted in the fanatical and extreme activities of terrorist organizations such as the Boko Haram in the country which has been responsible for thousands of casualties in the country. The Nigerian government has also had allegations against them for practicing a form of religious fanaticism similar by a subtle propagation of Sharia in the country. The Boko Haram menace for instance has been said to have been ignited by the relentless zeal to see to the implementation of the sharia in Nigeria. To the facilitators of the terrorist organization, any individual, thing or practice which is not in line with the sharia is demonized and should be destroyed. The same form of thinking is also found responsible for every major terror threat in the world, the Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab are relevant examples.

Given the above exposition, we are of the view that it is possible for Nigeria to develop its form of secularism that recognizes the distinction of each people, hence, promoting neutrality and freedom of worship in consideration of the pluralistic nature of the Nigerian

society. The impact of religion in a secular state seems to have played out negatively in Nigeria, as politics and religion are mixed in the attempt to gain political hold on the population. Whenever an attempt is made to explore the leadership gap created by the waning situation at curbing influential resistance of government or members of religious groups, it generates a state of insecurity. Religions were not created to cause problems, but to end them. But when religions get entangled with politics, they become like arrows that have veered off target. Once released, the path of such an arrow is very difficult to correct.

From the foregoing, we opine that religion should not be inserted into matters of state in the so-called national interest. Introducing religion into matters of state will complicate functioning of liberal democracies and deny freedoms they were designed to protect. There may be churches and mosques at every street in Nigeria, but the point we are making is that they must stay separate from the state. For religion and government will both exist in greater purity, the less they are mixed together.

#### NEED FOR THE LEADERS TO OPEN ASSET DECLARATION

Asset declaration should be done publicly, instead of the present secret way of declaring asset by public office holders. Asset declaration should be done both before and after public service. This will enhance accountability. For example, Section 3 of the 1999 Constitution makes it mandatory for a public officer to declare his or her assets before assumption of office and at the expiration of his or her tenure in office. But only the former is being pursued, declaration of assets after office is not presently being done.

#### THE NEED FOR AN INVESTMENT IN ALTERNATE ECONOMIC SECTORS



Ever since the oil boom of the 1970's, the focus of the national economy gradually shifted from agriculture into crude oil. The effect of this shift of economic priorities was a monopolization of the Nigerian economy by the oil sector and the neglect of other highly profitable sectors of the Nigerian economy. The agricultural sector, the tourism sector, the mining sector, the art and craft sector and many other sectors of the Nigerian economy have greatly suffered due to this neglect. However, if the administration focuses more attention into these sectors and properly invest in them, Nigeria could double its GDP and increase its export to other nations, therefore greatly participating in the global economy and increasing in human capital.

Nigeria urgently needs to develop a thorough action plan for its next generation. At present, policymakers are faced with the dearth of robust data on the country's future challenges. Better evidence is needed inform more far-sighted policies. Investment in people must be substantially boosted. The government should set targets for increasing expenditure on education and health, using oil revenues to fund both infrastructure and recurrent spending, while ensuring that existing funds are spent more efficiently.

#### DEVELOPMENT GEARED TOWARDS PROGRESSIVISM

Presently, Nigeria as a nation has continued to suffer the progressive ambitions of Nigeria as no clear formula has been found and adequately applied to rescue the nation from the malady of nepotism stemming from the mindless favoritism of leaders at the helm. It is on this note that we are instigated to charge Nigerian leaders to uncover a path to democratic stability and economic progress. We need to rekindle hope for radically improved governance and democratic development. Hence, the new generation Nigeria should find a lasting solution that would bring an end to Boko Haram insurgency, they should also seek

an end to social inequalities and promote social equalities, they should be saddled with the responsibilities of improving core infrastructures of electricity, water supply, public transport, drastically reducing corruption in state institutions and rapidly increasing jobs in all spheres. In the health sector, rapid improvements are possible, especially by addressing very high levels of child mortality. Regions/ places with low health standards need emergency funding to build effective primary health systems, with a focus on maternal and child health care.

In the Nigerian society where there are sharp differences in ethnicity, attempts should be made to make these differences less pronounced and to ensure that no particular group is addressed in a degrading manner. To this end, there is need to develop subjects of learning for nursery and primary school students that will help to rightly shape the minds of growing members of the society. By such, in the nearest future, we will not only raise a people with the right approach to life, but also completely eliminate the tribal mind-set and its residues in the society. By taking the right form of orientation to the elementary stages of our educational system, we aim to start early with the younger generation and help protect their minds from ideologies that might attempt to render them tools for terrorism in the future. For yet a stronger influence, this form of education should also be replicated in the tertiary education system and made available and compulsory for all students.

Through a review and restructuring of the educational system in the society, the true value of education becomes amplified. Education then helps serve its purpose as not just a tool for equipping one for specific disciplines but as a means to help refine man. While education is made to serve as a tool for peace in the society, its availability will hence be of uttermost priority. Investment in this newly restructured form of education will thus not be seen as 'business as usual' but as an investment in the security of the society. Hence,

education will not only be embraced as a top-most priority but as a fundamental tool to ensuring the safety of humanity and to see to the birth of a new generation characterized by a culture of social equalities devoid of corruption. From this indication, we will see that to achieve social justice is the sole responsible of every individual in the state even though there are sectors that should be very active in the fight for justice such as the judiciary, pressures groups, government and non-governmental organizations etc.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has suggested ways of curbing these social predicaments through an establishment of an intellectual leader, a redress on political appointment, the involvement of youth in governance, rejection of the misapplication of justice, re-education of the mind of the public, a revival of the economic sector, formation of pressure groups, making Nigeria a full secular state, etc. When these are done, the maintenance and implementation the rule of law, towards curbing the problem of corruption, underdevelopment, insecurity, poverty and social injustice Nigeria will be the order of the day. Therefore, what we need to pay our attention to is the provision of a more intellectual leadership, which with foresight, zeal and will, can gear the nation into developmental motion, equitable appointments and deliberate employment of youth into governance etc.

Given our holistic examination of the realities in the contemporary Nigeria, it is apt note that the possibilities of a new Nigeria is not exactly far-fetched if we can meticulously address the socio-political maladies in our society. As we have lucidly shown, in dealing with the problem of disunity for instance, the average man must be trained and oriented to see the unity and synthesis in differences. Tribalism and ethnic prejudices which have posed to be one of the major menaces in the Nigerian society can be duly addressed when

the average Nigerian is oriented to see his connection with other Nigerians irrespective of tribal differences. Besides, the most logical and applicable solution to the contemporary crises in Nigeria is to see to it that there is a form of education available to all men which will ensure that the synthesis in differences is beheld by all. Just as religious and tribal differences have degenerated into full blown riots, genocides and a culture of conflict in country, a novel mind-set that welcomes other religion and ethnicities will see to it that a culture of peace dominates the Nigerian society.

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## APPENDIX I: PROMINENT CASES OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

S/N	Name	Case Status	Amount Involved	Status Suspect(s)
1	Ayo Fayose (former Governor of Ekiti State)	Arraigned on 51 counts	N1.2 billion	Case pending, granted bail
2	Adenike, Grange (former Minister of Health)	Arraigned on 56 counts	N300 million	Discharged and acquitted
3	Joshua Dariye (former Governor Plateau state)	Arraigned on 23 counts	N700 million	Case pending, Granted bail since 2007
4	Saminu Turaki (former Governor Jigawa state)	Arraigned on 32 counts	N36 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2007
5	Oji Uzor Kalu (former Governor Abia state)	Arraigned on 107 state counts	N5 billion	Granted bail since 2008, but convicted in 2019.
6	James Ibori (former Governor Delta state)	Arraigned on 170 counts	N9.2 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
7	Iyabo Obasanjo (former Senator)	Arraigned on 56 state counts	N10 million	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
8	Lucky Igbinedion (former Governor of Edo state)	Arraigned on 191 state counts	N4.3 billion	Case determined, ordered to pay \$25 million as fine

## Inexistent Country

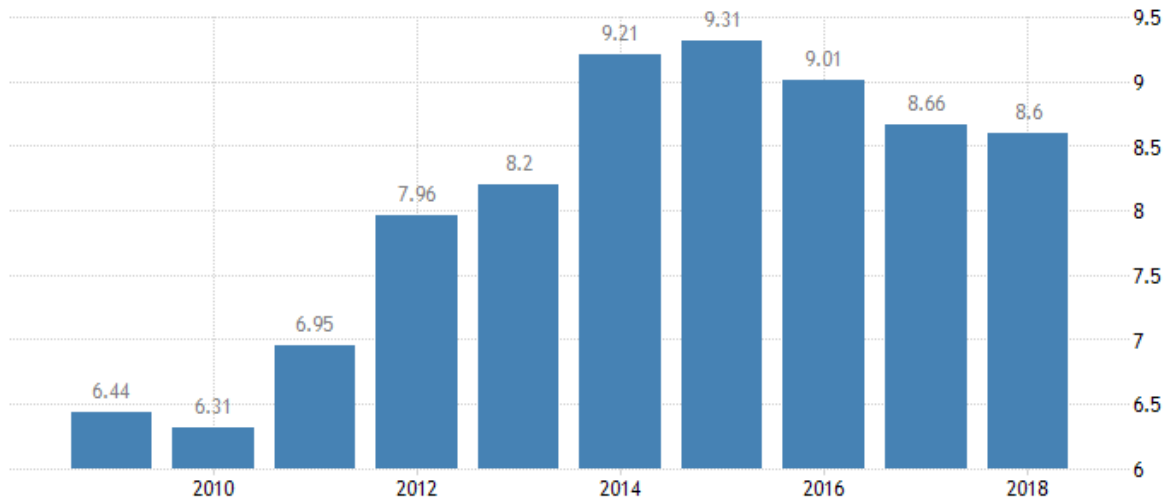
9	Gabriel Aduku (former Minister of Health)	Arrested on 56 state counts	N300 million	Discharged and acquitted
10	Jolly Nyame (former Governor of Taraba state)	Arrested on 41 state counts	N1.3 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
11	Chimaroke Nnamani (former Governor of Enugu state)	Arrested on 105 state counts	N5.3 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2007
12	Michael Botmang (former Governor of Plateau state)	Arrested on 31 state counts	N1.5 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
13	Roland Iyayi (former MD of FAAN)	Arrested on 11 state counts	N5.6 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
14	Prof. Babalola Borishade (former Minister of Aviation)	Arrested on 11 state counts	N5.6 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
15	Boni Haruna (former Governor of Adamawa state)	Arrested on 28 state counts	N254 million	Case pending, Granted bail by court since 2008
16	Femi Fanikayode (former Governor of Adamawa state)	Arrested on 47 state counts	N250 million	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
17	Bode George (PDP Chieftain)	Arrested on 68 state counts	N100 billion	Jailed in October 2009

## Inexistent Country

18	Rasheed Ladoja (former Governor of Oyo state)	Arraigned on 33 state counts	N6 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
19	Senator Nichola Ugbané; Hon. Elumelu and others	Arraigned on 158 state counts	N5.2 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2009
20	Hamman Bello Hammed (Ex CG Customs)	Arraigned on 46 state counts	N2.5 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2009
21	Adamu Abdullahi (former Governor of Nasarawa state)	Arraigned on 149 count charge	N15 billion	Case pending, Suspect on court bail
22	Attahiru Bafarawa (former Governor of Sokoto state)	Arraigned on 47 count charge	N15 billion	Case pending, Granted bail by court
23	Hassan Lawal (former Minister of Works)	Arraigned on 37 count charge	N75 billion	Case pending, Granted bail by court
24	Kenny Martins (Police Equipment Fund)	28 count charge	N7,740 billion	Case pending, Granted bail since 2008
25	Esai Dangabar, Atiku Abubakar Kigo, Ahmed Inuwa Wada, John Yakubu Yusufu, Mrs. Veronica Ulonma Onyegbula and Sani Habila Zira	16 count charge	N32.8 billion	Case pending, Granted bail by court

Source: Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) cited in Olufemi 2012:57-58

**APPENDIX II: NIGERIA'S TERRORISM INDEX**



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | INSITUTE FOR ECONOMICS AND PEACE

APPENDIX III: THE MAP OF NIGERIA



Source: Geology.com

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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