



# IMPERATIVES *of the* **NIGERIAN** REVOLUTION

**‘Dele Farotimi**

*(Author of DO NOT DIE IN THEIR WAR)*

Incorporating:

“THE CHANGE MANIFESTO” by Taiwo Wemimo Akinlami

Proposed **Constitution of the Federating States of Nigeria**



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(Author of *DO NOT DIE IN THEIR WAR*)

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# Contents

Dedication.....	vii
Acknowledgements .....	ix
Preface: The Foolish Warriors.....	xii
Introduction .....	xxi
Prologue .....	xxv
Chapter 1: Change not Violence, the need to educate .....	1
Chapter 2: The fallacy of the inevitability of a Nigerian revolution .....	21
Chapter 3: The Politics of Fractionalisation.....	29
Chapter 4: Birth of the Fulani Hegemony.....	49
Chapter 5: A foundation of Lies.....	79
Chapter 6: Sustaining the Hegemony.....	97
Chapter 7: The 4th Republic and the Consequence of Hubris.....	133
Chapter 8: The new Hegemony.....	163
Chapter 9: The perfect Storm and the inevitable Implosions.....	183
Chapter 10: The Time is Now .....	205
Chapter 11: The Pacifist Warrior .....	215
The Change Manifesto .....	223
Epilogue .....	247
The Choices before Us.....	248
Addendum: Nigeria, Nigerians, and Religiosity .....	263
Appendix: Proposed Constitution of the Federating States of Nigeria ..	287
Chapter I: Supremacy of the Constitution, Nigeria and its Territories.....	289
Chapter II: Citizenship.....	293
Chapter III: Fundamental Rights.....	298

Chapter IV: The President of the Republic .....	316
Chapter V: Parliament.....	320
Chapter VI: Executive Powers.....	337
Chapter VII: Police .....	350
Chapter VIII: Courts.....	352
Chapter IX: Finance.....	369
Chapter X: The Public Service of the Federation.....	378
Chapter XI: Transitional Provisions.....	384
Index.....	389

# Dedication

**THIS** book is dedicated to the three women that had been handed my custody at critical stages of my life, and that have loved me, in spite of my several imperfections and peccadilloes.

*Maami*, Maria Ige Olukole, the grandmother that was my mother, may we be gathered together when I sleep as is the way of all mortals. Rest on and keep taking care of Adetoun, there's hardly a day I do not remember you both. I shall yet tell the world of you.

Helen Omolara, the mother who fathered me and taught me how to be a man. I owe you more than I can ever repay, but know in the moments when you as a mother urge caution; that I learnt how to stand by the truth from the very best at standing by the truth regardless of cost: you. I never saw you settle for the choice undictated by your conscience. Thank you for the man you raised, and for being more of a man than the keyboard warriors of this age.

Olufunmilola! Olufunmilayo! The one that allows me to be me. My facilitator and co-conspirator. I am blessed to be loved by you, and I know that you have loved me more than me. The spoil *wey my mama no gree spoil me, na you kukuma dey spoil me like say i be ya only pikin*. Thank you. I might not say it often enough, I have certainly not been the best that I can be, but never be in any doubt, I'd marry you again and again, if I came back to this life, a thousand times.

Igbayilola, Ajibola, Afolarin, I do what i do because of you. I do not want to see you become refugees in another man's

land, and I do not want to see you live through unending wars. Ayaba Esteri! When am I going to practice for Igbayilola's wedding? I am getting impatient o. Never forget the daughters and sons of whom you are.

In spite of my several flaws, never forget that I love you all.

# Acknowledgements

I HAVE been blessed to have shared time and space with some men and women, and to have benefited immensely from God's orchestrated twinning with some of these persons. Taiwo Akinlami, a brother with whom I somehow avoided sharing a uterus, but a brother in every sense of the word. The Okokomaiko Brotherhood of Bayo Ayo, Afolabi Solebo, Dele Soetan, and the larger LASU family, I am grateful to you all, and i do not take your love for granted.

My partners and the entire staff of DF Legal. Abiola, the sister God gave me in place of the one that he took early, the legal owl and mother hen, Ralph, the most intelligent legal draughtsman I have ever met, and a man of uncommon integrity and fidelity. Seyi, Mobola, Maryanne our Yoruba Biafran, Funmi, and the support staff: Thank you all for your love and loyalty, I am comforted in the knowledge that the firm is in excellent hands, may God bless your endeavors. Amen.

I have the best assistant in the world. Feyisayo Olatunde, take a bow. You have made my work easier without making any fuss, and your capacity to anticipate my needs, are second to none. Honest efficiency defines you. Thank you.

*– Dele Farotimi, April 2021*

“

*The Nigeria ‘ruining crass’ does not live in the country that they have ruined. They cream the land for their all-right living, but they do not live in Nigeria. Their homes are in the Gulf Arab states, on the Potomac in Washington DC; they live in Dubai, London, Monaco; some live in Niamey, others in Niger... Their children, rarely ever born in Nigeria, do not go to schools in Nigeria, and where they do, it would mostly be the elementary schools. The Nigeria ‘ruining crass’ does not use the antediluvian healthcare facilities...*

# Preface

## The Foolish Warriors

**A**s the Buhari presidency has enabled the very worst of the Fulani Islamist agenda, and heated up the country in furtherance of these treasonous agenda, the rhetoric has become extremely violent everywhere in the country.

Only a few men have dared to speak to the unity of Nigeria, when the head of the state himself has proven to be a shameless ethnic irredentist.

In the face of the manifest failure of the Nigeria State and its security forces to protect the lives and properties of the victims of Fulani militias, and in the face of the objective realities that would suggest that the president condones the actions of these violent criminals by his inactions, considering the bewildering directive of the Defence Minister to grieving victims, to defend themselves, it is becoming increasingly difficult to speak to the unity of a country that is being killed by its RUINING CRASS.

The venal brutality of the Fulani militias operating across the length of the country, from Otuoke in the Bayelsa swamp, to Epe in Lagos, its evil excesses, and arrogant flippancy, have kindled a flame of ethnic nationalism, the like of which Nigeria has never seen before. The lines were

clear during the civil war. The borders were defined. The tribe being hunted was known. This is different, and it is dangerous. There would be no explosions; only implosions. The battlefield would not be there, it would be right here. On the victims' doorsteps... in their homes.

The Nigeria 'ruining crass' does not live in the country that they have ruined. They cream the land for their all-right living, but they do not live in Nigeria. Their homes are in the Gulf Arab states, on the Potomac in Washington DC; they live in Dubai, London, Monaco; some live in Niamey, others in Niger. The northern aristocracy has long-favoured homes in the Sudan, and a few have kept residences in Cairo. The Nigeria 'ruining crass' hates living in Nigeria.

Their children, rarely ever born in Nigeria, do not go to schools in Nigeria, and where they do, it would mostly be the elementary schools. The Nigeria 'ruining crass' does not use the antediluvian healthcare facilities. A country that once had an internationally renowned healthcare system, once good enough for Saudi royalty, has had its President travel abroad to fix his unhearing ears. I am sure that you get the point: the Nigeria 'ruinous crass', does not live in Nigeria.

Fela famously dubbed the Nigeria 'ruining crass', *Alhajis*. He lamented that we were being ruled by strangers who are untouched by the pains of our afflictions. He had no idea just how right he was, and just how bad it is. The case of Dizzy Baby, Deziani, has brought some attention to a

notorious fact that should engage the attention of the warring victims. Almost the entire 'ruining crass', political and economic, is possessed of second passports; not subject to the same travel restrictions, that affect we, the foolish warriors.

In the cauldron of the afflictions unleashed on the victims by Buhari, secessionist agitations have boiled over. Self-defence against the rampaging Fulani militias have become a fair ground upon which other ethnic warriors are being raised across the length of the country. The extremes of the Fulani herdsmen in the Oke-Ogun part of Oyo State, raised the person of Sunday Igboho as the "Yoruba freedom fighter" (apologia *Punch* newspaper).

The prevailing circumstances have led to a situation where the voices of reason have been ignored, drowned out and disparaged by the government, and reasonable men and women have been rendered impotent in the face of the rampant insecurities, and the government's failure to protect the lives and properties of the hapless victims. The violence of Igboho's response, was received with respect by the perpetrators of violence, and by the Nigeria State itself, in further validation of the extremist view, that the voices of reason, are being useless in an unreasonable place, and validation for those that have believed, that violence works with the State, and is respected by the Fulani militias that have carried on like an army of occupation.

## Variant of warriors

THE foolish warriors may be broadly divided into two categories. The chief protagonists are rarely ever resident in Nigeria. They are the ones that have escaped. They could see that the Nigeria State was failing early enough, they escaped the insanities pretty early in most cases. They have built good lives away from the Nigerian madness. They are citizens of the countries of their refuge, a privilege that is denied to them in the country of their birth and origin. But unlike the Nigeria 'ruining crass' that can hardly wait to be rid of Nigeria, these escapees have never managed to leave Nigeria behind. Take the monkey *outta* the jungle, but the jungle is inside the damn monkey, you might say.

The Nigeria Diaspora is the most homesick you'd find anywhere in sizable numbers. I have never come across a single Nigerian in my travels who wouldn't rather be in Nigeria; if the country was "working", they'd say. The Nigeria diaspora is the most patriotic layer of the Nigerian peoples, and I say this without ignoring the fact that the Nigerian is not a citizen in truth. They are the ones that consume the most news about the Nigeria State, they are extremely tuned in to the politics, and are constantly bellyaching about the country that they have been forced to flee, but which they have never desired to be separated from. These ones are the first category of foolish warriors.

The Nigeria Middle-Class, or its 'middling class' as I have sometimes been forced to label it, is the most foolish and willfully ignorant of the different layers of the Nigerian peoples. It is the class that is most incapable of identifying what is in its own best interests; the most existential of the classes, and the least reflective of all. The Nigeria middle class pays for the excesses of the 'ruining crass', but instead of seeking critical engagements with the system to make it better or to change it, the middle class is in a constant race for survival, even as the objective realities should have announced to it that it is fighting a lost battle against the forces of feudalism.

The Nigeria middle class is the fertile ground for the promotion of all of the divisions sowed by the 'ruining crass'. They are the ones that you would find on the internet fighting the battles of the 'ruining crass.' They are the ones that have embraced religiosity as a refuge from the harsh realities of their existential lives, and they are the ones that have failed to make use of their education and learning, to teach, instruct, and guide the lower classes with whom they interact daily. They are the ones with the capacity to recognise the several iniquities of the Nigeria State. They are the ones acquainted with its evil wickedness. These ones have eyes, but are willfully blind. They have failed to discern that the evil befalling them are visited on them by their own, and they have bought the hate: hook, line and sinker.

For these foolish warriors, the solution to the Nigerian problem is simple, and as simpletons they have believed: divide Nigeria, and be done with it already. The dangers of the simple solution have never been better illustrated.

*NOTE:* I understand the pains and frustrations behind these agitations, and I am not promoting or counseling inaction, but beyond people talking about war, have they factored in the fact that talks inevitably follow wars, before they might be ended? Why is it so cowardly to offer alternatives to wars, whilst everyone is demanding war, when the only way to end that war, would be to speak to each other and then work out the peace deal?

The war fronts would be our doorsteps, and most of the keyboard warriors would be in their own homes outside Nigeria, keeping scores and watching cable networks. But those of us that have either elected to stay in these blighted lands, already living as though we are in a war zone, would find ourselves truly at war, and would have stumbled into the still avoidable calamity because of our collective idiocies, and even more ironically, because of our moral cowardice.

The same Nigerians, who have refused to engage with the system to peacefully demand citizenship, but are happy with indigene-ship, whilst eyeing promotion to the 'ruining crass', are the ones promoting and demanding the break-up of the country that they wouldn't fight to birth. It is lost on them that it is easier to gain everything they have imagined

from their tribal homelands, in a restructured and equitable Nigeria State that has citizenship for all of its citizens.

The Nigeria 'ruining crass' is not going to miss the Nigeria State. As I have sought to establish, the rulers of Nigeria have committed several crimes against the Nigerian peoples, and they are afraid of the day when they might be asked to explain their crimes. They have concluded that the destruction of the country would assure that they wouldn't have to account for the evils that they have perpetrated in the land. Our ruiners are pyromaniacs; burning down the State erases the huge crime scene the country is. If Nigeria would be saved from the impending catastrophe, it would be Nigerians of all ethnicities, languages, and biases that would have to collectively save the State from itself. It is the victims of Nigeria's several afflictions that need Nigeria to survive.

Those named Nigerians have never been allowed to become citizens of Nigeria. The governance systems have been structured from its beginnings to think in terms of the tribe; the delineation of rights have been based on tribal and ethnic foundations. It is not for nothing that the Nigerian Bill of Rights, found in the 1960 Independence Constitution, arose from the agitations of the minority ethnic groups, and was a recommendation of the Willink Commission on the rights of the minorities. Nigeria was founded on indigene-ship, and Nigerians have never been citizens in the true sense of the word.

The foolish warriors have fought against each other, in the army of the evil rulers, for the benefit of the evil rulers, and in preservation of the evil rulers and governance

systems that have mutually assured their enslavement. If the foolish warriors shall incline their eyes, if they would behold the evidence of their own eyes, they would see very quickly that whilst the Fulani elites might be responsible for the architecture of their oppression, the beneficiaries are not the Fulani peoples, but a class of people drawn from every nook and cranny of the Nigeria State.

The overarching ambition of the Nigeria 'ruining crass' is to steal. The overarching ambition of the Islamist jihadists is to push their vile interpretation of Islam across the country, and the dream of the Fulani peoples across the Sahel, is to find a homeland, a place to call home, and a refuge from the hardships of being a nomadic people, in a region where they are effectively a minority. These ambitions have collided at a critical point in the history of Nigeria, and they have found oxygen in the person of a Nigerian president, whose base instincts and reflexes are nepotistic in the extreme.

### ***Do Not Die in Their War***

**THE** foolish warriors are those that would fight and die in the wars of their oppressors. The wise warriors are those that would fight for the birth of the Nigeria nation; the ones that would embrace the non-violent path to the birth of the Nigeria nation; that would speak to bridge the divides; that would act to heal the wounds; that would demand for others everything that they have desired for themselves.

History beckons the ones that would dare to desert the ranks of the foolish warriors.

“

*I spent time in the book to deal with the individuals whom I refer to as the principalities and the powers that have governed Nigeria over the years. I dealt with the systems. I treated it from a historical perspective in order to be able to situate each one of these phenomena in time and in space, so that the reader, who is observing these persons and entities today, has a clear understanding of their root and how they have grown over the years to become what they are today.*

# Introduction

**A**s I wrote out the outline for this book, I came to the reality that it was always going to be written. In fact, I came to the knowledge of the fact that the first book, *Do Not Die in their War*, was merely meant as foundation for this book. This perhaps, because it would have been incongruous to have made a call for the Nigerian revolution without having first laid the foundation for making such a radical call. So, I took a circuitous route, the intention being to ensure that a rational basis and foundation were laid for what is essentially a taboo call in Nigeria.

The central idea of a revolution has for long been linked with violence in Africa. And Nigeria with its long history of violent *coup d'état*, the civil war, and military rule, with the severally named revolutionary ruling councils, have over the years managed to create a bogey around the idea of a revolution.

But I use the word revolution advisedly. It does not in any way, shape or form, promote the interest of the poor and the disadvantaged, on whose behalf I presume to speak, to call for violence, when they are not the ones who benefit from the deployment of violence, and are neither the purveyors of violence.

We will discuss this point in detail in the later part of this book, when we begin to deal specifically with the issue of

tactics and the reasons for the adoption of non-violence, as the only way to seek the attainment of that revolution.

In writing *Do Not Die in their War*, I sought to deal specifically with the several lies, the foundational lies that have undergirded the Nigerian governance system and assured that instead of being a nation that caters to citizens who are equal, Nigeria had over the years become a feudalised democracy that caters only and solely for the interest of the rulers, whilst the ruled are perpetually kept underfoot.

I spent time in the book to deal with the individuals whom I refer to as the principalities and the powers that have governed Nigeria over the years. I dealt with the systems. I treated it from a historical perspective in order to be able to situate each one of these phenomena in time and in space, so that the reader, who is observing these persons and entities today, has a clear understanding of their root and how they have grown over the years to become what they are today.

These things I had sought to do in *Do Not Die in their War*, but I also knew, at the time of writing the book that there is a system that undergirds the totality of the evil that has overtaken Nigeria, and that is impunity; the refusal of the system to allow itself to be governed by laws and the resultant inequalities and inequities.

I have dealt with this extensively in another book, which would be released in future. But the primary intention in

that book is to show the systemic injustice; to show how the system has become inured to the idea of the rule of law and how we have systemised injustice and created the reign of impunity. How men have bent laws, how justice has been corrupted to the point where it no longer serves the purpose of the poor man, but the narrow interest of the few.

The inescapable conclusion I had come to years ago are the arguments contained in the current book, where I will endeavour to make a case for the inevitability of the inescapable conclusion, that a revolution is the only way forward for the Nigerian people.

I have taken a circuitous route to get to this point. But that route was rendered inevitable by several factors outside my immediate control. The first is the successful weaponisation of ignorance against the Nigerian people. I touched on this at great length in *Do Not Die in their War*, where I had seen that the people are constantly having their stories told to them by their oppressors and the oppressors are then the ones who set the parameters for the discussions and if you really think about it, it becomes inevitable that as long as the lions are the ones telling the stories of the hunt, it will always glorify the hunter.

The people became oblivious to the fact that the very people for whom they die, and for whom they sometimes kill, are the ones responsible for the state of their existence. Second is, I wanted to avoid a situation where the system

gets the opportunity to define me, and thereby make it impossible for the reader to hear what I have to say to them.

So, it became very important to lay the groundwork in *Do Not Die in their War*, because I found a people so cowed by poverty, which had been weaponised against them to the extent that they were completely disconnected from their own liberation and in most cases, particularly in the middle class, probably devoid of all intellectual curiosity. I found constantly that the victims were the ones who have self-abnegated, make excuses for, and, in some cases, find justifications for their ill-treatment in the hands of their oppressors.

Then it got to a point, where I realised that they had been so successfully indoctrinated and subjected to weaponised poverty and ignorance, that speaking to these people cannot be said to be unlike speaking to the deaf. With this realisation, it became apparent to me that I am not writing for this generation, but for history. Let history judge whether I be right or wrong in the choices I have made.

# Prologue

I finished writing the succeeding chapters in the months of April and May. As the COVID-19 lockdown bit and the worst effects of hunger began to manifest on the streets, I began agonising to comrades about how we were asleep whilst a revolution raged.

The book that was intended as a guide for a revolution became a redundant exercise, and I soon abandoned all attempts at concluding what I had determined to have ready for publication by the first anniversary of the publication of *Do Not Die in their War*.

I experienced a condition not unlike the writer's block. I could write, and I did write, but I simply couldn't write anything related to this book. I was convinced that I was witnessing a revolution in real time, and I was intent on studying what I was seeing instead of spending time writing about what appeared to be happening already. I was both right, and wrong. All at the same time.

The body of work derived from this season would be compiled and shared, but I shall resume the purpose of my immediate work by fast forwarding to the immediate crystallisation of the social ferment that I was observing: the #EndSARS protests.

I am not a historian, and I shall leave it for the persons better informed and interested in the history to tell the tales, but the #EndSARS protests are as historic as they are also

predictive of the future. It is for this predictive purpose that I have deemed it important to analyse what took place in that season, as a guide to the future, which lies inexorably ahead of us.

*“Ndi lazy youth, are you planning a revolution in disguise?”*

After one of the several episodic eruptions of murderous venality by the Nigerian police, this time in Delta State, blame as always on the dreaded SARS unit, which had ended with the end of another innocent life, several conditions conspired to birth a moment in time, when the Nigerian youth became engaged enough to demand answers of the Nigeria State and its evil rulers.

The youth, under the umbrella of the #EndSARS movement, demanded the end of the SARS units across the country in the immediate aftermath of the Delta murder, and they issued a raft of demands which soon enjoyed celebrity endorsements, and began to take on a life of its own. I was sufficiently bored enough to read the occasional news item about one celebrity or the other being called to the IG’s office as the state scrambled to head-off what would appear to be getting out of hand.

I soon began to see carnivals on the streets disguised as protests, *abi na* protests disguised as carnivals. *Ndi lazy youth* became engaged, and the Nigeria State became uneasy and flustered. The State began to seek whom to influence, and they began to seek the leadership of the movement for the usual compromise.

The protests were centered in Lagos, Osogbo, and Abuja.

In Lagos, there were two main protest grounds - one at Alausa, the other at the Lekki tollgate plaza by The Palms Shopping Mall.

The one in Osogbo owed its visibility and vibrance to the efforts of Comrade Mandate and other RevolutionNow elements in Osun. The Abuja end was extremely successful; it had practised activists on hand in the persons of Aisha Yesufu and the inimitable Omoyele Sowore to ginger them, if they ever required it. Not that they ever seemed tired.

As already confessed, I am not a historian; I have merely recalled what I can of the protests in order to offer context. My major preoccupation is with the relevance of the season in the quest to predict the future. I am keener on identifying the responses of the Nigeria State, its rulers, the Nigerian peoples themselves, the governance systems, and the several other actors, local and foreign, with a view to a clear understanding of what to expect, when the time shall come... As it must.

As the protests began to gain popularity and traction, the Nigeria State began to unfurl its usual tactics. In Benin, prisoners were released by the prison authorities, and cries of a jailbreak provoked by the #EndSARS protesters rent the air, at least it did until the prisoners began to tell of how they were practically chased out of their cells by the wardens.

In Abuja, there are several photographic records of state security personnel coordinating with thugs and miscreants!

The state complicity in Lagos was as brazen as it is predictable.

The relationship between the Lagos State Government, the Tinubu political family, and the organised crime syndicates in the state has always been incestuous, but the #EndSARS protests, more than anything else in recent times, have removed the veils that had concealed the truth from all but the most discerning and diligent seekers.

The protests in Lagos were the largest and most effective of the #EndSARS protests. The one in Alausa was at the seat of state power, and the one in Lekki had shut down an asset with which Tinubu has not once been known to joke: his pot of soup, the Lekki tollgate.

On the 20th of October, and in the full glare of several cameras, a notorious thug, positively identified as “Oosha” and based in the Agege axis of the Lagos metropolis, alongside his confederates ferried in state-owned buses, attacked unarmed protesters with the intention of breaking the protests at Alausa. They failed.

The Lekki protests were a different kettle of fish. The protesters were not on a piece of land, and they were not just occupying a government building; they were occupying the Lekki tollgate. The tollgate plaza had seen protests in the past, both the one at the point that became the killing field, and the toll plaza at the Lekki-Ikoyi bridge. Tinubu had never been tolerant of those that had dared to do so in the

past; Ebun Adegboruwa, who later sat on the #EndSARS panel, was a victim in the past.

The *modus operandi* of past breakup of protests at the Lekki tollgate plaza bears retelling, for it succinctly illustrates the criminal syncretism that governs the state. The oppressed residents of Lekki, who had proceeded in a peaceful manner armed with placards, were set upon by hired thugs, and after being thoroughly beaten and serially injured by the hoodlums, were arrested by the Nigerian policemen who had stood by and watched them being attacked. The hoodlums, employed by the state, and the police, worked together to put down the attempts to mobilise public opinion against the tolling.

By the time of the #EndSARS protests in October, the mammoth crowds at the Lekki tollgate, the organisation of its security arrangements, and the level of awareness and participation, made the preferred choice of the *Jagaban* franchise for dealing with Lekki protests obsolete. It is also what rendered the murderous violence unleashed, both predictable and inevitable, the moment that the protesters were not persuaded to abandon their demands by the several lying moves of the government and or its farcical gyrations.

The Nigeria State is happy to deal with mad men; it has never had any problems with the many insanities that it has birthed, nurtured, and enabled in its long history of venal bestialities, but it has never developed the capacity to

tolerate those that would dare to demand citizenship of it. The refusal of the protesters to accept the lying compromises, coupled with the absence of a leadership that might be compromised, crystallised the events of the 20th day of October, 2020.

The #EndSARS protests are the seeds of the Nigerian revolution scattered to the winds. The massacre that took place at the Lekki tollgate plaza watered the seeds, and it is the destiny of the survivors to finish what was started with the #EndSARS protests.

The #EndSARS protests were a practice run by the Nigerian youth for the revolution that must happen, if we are not to end up in an avoidable war. The Nigerian revolution is not inevitable, and neither is the smoldering ethnoreligious war that is either raging, or looming over these lands, depending on your location. How?

## **#EndSARS as a Reaction**

**THE** Nigerian youth is a citizen of the world. He is a global citizen enmeshed in the pop culture of the western world, the heady inventiveness of the Asians, the burgeoning growth of the Arab world, he sees the Americans and their many freedoms and contradictions, and he is a denizen of the global village. But at home in Nigeria, he is not a citizen.

I have spent a lot of time and effort in trying to persuade the Nigerian, by deductive analogies and logic, to see how we are all rendered serfs and slaves by the governing systems and the fraudulent 1999 constitution, but nothing that I have ever written or said in lectures and interviews, have illustrated the point, better than the entirety of the #EndSARS protests and its brutal put-down at the Lekki Massacre of 20/10/20. I shall elaborate.

The #EndSARS protests were reactionary in conception and execution. They were crystallised by the excesses of the Nigerian police, and were in direct reaction to the venal brutality of the police SARS units in particular. Having decided that they had had enough of these excesses, the conscious layers of the Nigerian youth movements, allied to some politically-conscious celebrities, organised these loosely coordinated protests with demands made on the state to reform the Nigerian police; specifically, to scrap the SARS units.

The widespread and general nature of police harassment in the economically well-off southern part of Nigeria is largely due to the fact that the richest Nigerians are to be found in these parts, but the fact that the southerners are also less respected by the law enforcement officers, who are not necessarily all of northern origin.

The poor Northern Nigerian is more likely to have a brother in the army, and or the police, that he might call if and when he is accosted by the Nigeria State and its venal

security forces, but the southerner is less likely to have a brother on whom he might call. The southern Nigerian is acculturated to paying the police, before his rights might be recognised, or respected.

The Nigerian police officer, himself a victim of the Nigeria State, is also the loyal enforcer of the impunity of the Nigerian ruling class. Paid a pittance that guarantees penury, he is rendered a disgrace to the name: police. The Nigerian police is little different from the criminals that he is pretending to catch, because in truth, that was the systemic design. The Nigeria State has ensured that the Nigerian police is kept in its current state, so that it might never be able to fulfill its declared functions, and become a law enforcement agency in a state ungoverned by laws.

The Nigerian police runs in the manner of a business entity. The DPO, as explained by the afrobeat music maverick, Fela, is the Branch Manager, the Police Commissioner might be called the General Manager... you can do the remaining approximations as your imagination sees fit; but the IGP 'Ilabe' is the Chairman and MD of the board. Whilst the upper management level might be well-fed and rotund, the lower ranks are wickedly brutalised and dehumanised. The Nigerian constabulary is one of the poorest paid and resourced in the world, and this is not by accident, but by systemic design.

Rendered vagabonds, impecunious, and serial accessories to the virulent criminalities of the Nigerian

ruling class and the immunities they enjoy from any form of lawful retribution, the Nigerian policemen have embraced their design purpose, and have become what they were intended to be: enforcers not of the law, which they quickly learnt means nothing, but of the will of the men who sit in the seats of powers, and men, who are able to pay to have the same unconscionable powers deployed in their services. The Nigerian police is criminal *ab initio*.

The Nigerian youth, as I have explained, is a global citizen, and this is more so in the cosmopolitan southern states and in the Federal Capital Territory. He has largely embraced the counter-cultures of the western world, and in some cases the outward expressions of these cultures and the totems. He is wearing his hair in dreadlocks, and he's got tattoos. He probably has a few piercings and earrings, and he is somewhat forgetful of the harsh realities of his Nigerian existence until he runs into the Nigerian police, and he is reminded that whilst he might be a global citizen, he is not a citizen in his own country.

These encounters with the Nigerian police, be that the dreaded SARS units, or any of the several other units that have become parts of the systemic terrorisation of the Nigerian peoples, have left a lot of tears, blood, and gore in its wake. Several families have been irreparably injured, lives cut short, limbs lost, freedom denied, and lives ruined.

The SARS units are not only dreaded in the southern part of the country, they are deeply hated and reviled. This is the

cauldron in which the reaction that was the #EndSARS protests was born, and these were the factors that fed its growth and popularity.

## **The response of the Nigeria State**

**THE** response of the Nigeria State to the demands of the protesters followed the usual predictable patterns, and was painfully unimaginative in the extreme. The rulers responded with the usual threats. Then they tried the carrots, and looked for the bunnies to feed. The distinct lack of a hierarchy, structure, and centralised authority, meant that the state and its rulers soon found themselves with nobody to bribe, intimidate, or otherwise browbeat into submission.

When the usual carrots and stick had failed, the government reluctantly engaged with the protesters. The Nigerian government has always had a love for renaming things, and in response to the popular demand for the mothballing of the widely criticised SARS units, it promptly and with automatic alacrity, renamed the SARS unit SWAT. What was forgotten in the haste to douse the raging fire is the rather minor fact, that the SARS unit had already been renamed SWAT, just a few months before its new christening ceremony. What was meant to pacify, only served to inflame the situation: the eagle-eyed youth pointed to this as further proof of the government's

untrustworthiness. The trust deficit became a gulf, and the Nigeria State, along with its Luddite and antediluvian rulers, were left floundering for the trusted weapons of choice; impunity and murderous force.

The demand that police brutality be ended, and that the SARS unit be scrapped is, in truth, a disguised demand for citizenship. And whilst the protesters did not appear to have made this critical connection early, they would appear to have cottoned on to this reality as the protests took hold, and the government's inability to engage honestly with the protesters became undeniable. The more resolute the protesters became, the more flummoxed the State became.

To end SARS is to end the support infrastructure that is required to scaffold the reign of impunity that has Nigeria in its stranglehold, and ultimately, end the absolute powers enjoyed by the rulers. The Nigeria State, the evil rulers, and the iniquitous governing systems responded true to type; deployed its weapon of choice, violence against the protesters.

Left without any card to play on the protesters, and without any leverage to exploit, the Nigeria State at various levels began to embrace the use of violence in its quest to break the strike and to return to some sort of normalcy. In Abuja, operatives of the DSS or some other state security forces were seen and recorded openly coordinating counter protests. These protests were initially comical and nonviolent; street urchins were handed placards declaring

love and support for the Nigerian police and the SARS unit, and as the protests gained ground, the placards carried upside down, quickly became machetes and cudgels.

The State-coordinated thugs began to attack southerners-owned businesses in the Abuja metropolis. Car lots were set on fire, the furniture market was torched, and at some point, peaceful protesters were set upon and brutally attacked by these thugs, and sometimes by the policemen themselves. Peaceful protesters became serial subjects of ferocious violence perpetrated by these State-sponsored miscreants who were themselves victims of the iniquitous State.

In Benin, the prisons were breached, and the initial attempts were to blame it on the #EndSARS protesters. The emergence of the prisoners' accounts of their escape began to emerge soon enough, and it soon became apparent that the prisoners were deliberately set free, and that the prison break had nothing to do with the protesters, but were in truth mere pawns in the government's games.

The protesters in Osun were set upon by the usual agencies and proxies of the State. Leaders of the protests were serially harassed. Olawale Mandate Bakare was targeted for special treatment by the DSS, and a series of well-coordinated attacks were mounted against the protesters. It quickly spiraled out of the control of the government that embraced it. The governor's convoy were set upon by thugs, and cars were damaged and people injured. The quick response was to blame the protesters for

the violence, but the governor himself contradicted these in the face of the clear evidence. But it was all that was required as excuse for arresting leaders of the Osun protests.

The Lagos theater of the protests was proving to be resistant to the charms of the state government. The governor oscillated between identifying with the protesters to threatening them when they wouldn't be pacified by the usual tactics, and were not amenable to state control.

The Lagos protests were largely confined to two locations: the Alausa protests, and the Lekki protests. The first protesters to be visited with violence were those located at the state secretariat in Alausa. On October 20, state-branded buses were used to convey armed thugs from the Agege axis of the state, led by one Adagun Osha, to attack the protesters. They were repelled.

The Lekki protesters were pretty well-organised, and their security consciousness and preparations for the possibilities of armed attacks by sponsored thugs were topnotch. This was a product of experience and not paranoia.

The Lekki tollgate plaza had seen protests before, and some protesters were veterans of the past skirmishes. Previous attempts by the residents of Lekki to protest the expropriation of the only road in and out of the peninsula had been met with organised violence by the state government and the owner of Lagos. The *modus operandi* was pretty basic: peaceful protesters would be attacked by State-

sponsored thugs in some sort of counter protests, and the police would set upon the protesters and arrest them for Affray and Breach of Public Peace. The State thugs get to go home, while the peaceful protesters would end up in police cells.

The Lekki protesters deployed private security personnel in securing the protest ground. The protesters were impossible to engage as had been previously done, and as preferred by the State. Lekki became a major headache for the *Jagaban* franchise, and a major bone in the throat of the Nigeria State. It was one thing to use uniformed and ununiformed thugs to break peaceful protests, and as demonstrated in Abuja and at Alausa, the Nigeria State, at all levels, is fine with employing criminalised victims, sufficiently armed to do its dirty work. But the Lagos situation demanded more; the protesters were entrenched.

### ***The Denouement***

*Oro'modie ko mo Awodi, iya eh lo mo Asa.* The chick has no knowledge of the gosling hawk but its mother knows all the raptors in the skies.

As I watched the unfolding scenarios nationwide, I became convinced that the Nigerian youth had stumbled into a revolutionary moment in the sad history of the Nigerian peoples. It became obvious to me that we were at an inflection point in the trajectories of the Nigeria State, its

rulers, and the peoples. I knew that something simply had to give. I was deeply worried and equally excited about what was unfolding before my eyes.

The protests started as a reaction against police brutality, but it quickly began to take on a life of its own. The long suppressed and unexpressed grievances of the Nigerian peoples began to emerge, and the creative energies of the Nigerian youth were unleashed. Long unheard-of faith in the Nigerian enterprise emerged as the youth began to recognise the clear commonalities of their collective afflictions.

Nigerians began to speak in nationalist tongues, and ethnoreligious divides were being rapidly bridged. The Christian protesters physically ring-fenced their Muslim comrades during Friday prayers, ensuring that they had protection as they prayed, and the Muslims stood as Christians worshipped on Sunday.

Mazi Nnamdi Kanu spoke to Nigerian unity in the wake of the protests.

The Nigeria State is happy to speak with violent terrorists, it has absolutely no problem with kidnappers, hostage-takers and militants of all sorts, but it has never had room for engagement with citizens. It has no template for such engagements because it has no room for the mutual accommodation of its rapacious rulers, bred on impunity, and the lawful demands of the citizens, and the obligations and restraints that that would place on the rulers.

When confronted by demands for citizenship rights, the Nigeria State never failed to respond with violence.

The murderous end of the #EndSARS protests were a tragedy foretold.

In November 1993, as the pro-June 12 national protests began to bite deep, the Nigeria State began to lose its fear factor. I was a student at the Lagos State University, LASU, and a participant in the revolt against military rule.

The LASU corridor, *Oyingbo* to *Okomaiko*, had a lot of military formations dotting the landscape, and military personnel were pretty ubiquitous in the neighborhood. There was the Signals Barracks at Mile 2, the Navy Town at Ojo, and the Army Cantonment, also at Ojo. Military personnel were part of our daily lives. They announced their presence as “staff” on the buses, and wouldn’t pay the fares. This changed as the rebellion took hold.

The Nigerian peoples began to realise that power did not begin and end in the barrels of guns. The labour movements shook the country to its very foundations. One of the earliest indicators of the newfound boldness of the Nigerian was the refusal of Lagos bus drivers to accept that military or police personnel ride for free as before.

The bus drivers and conductors could count on the passengers to support them in demanding that men in uniform pay their bus fares. Every bus was being powered by Black Market fuel, and these were mostly sourced from markets exclusively supplied by the security forces, which

had control of the distribution system, upon the Kokori-led NUPENG strike.

The streets became hostile towards the military, who were widely blamed for the annulment of a popular democratic mandate.

The General Sani Abacha regime was birthed in the midst of the national paralysis that followed the annulment of the election. The regime reestablished governmental authority by violent suppression of the popular will, and the peaceful protests that had ventilated same.

Soldiers were deployed to all the theaters of protests; protesters and passers-by alike were brutally attacked with deadly force. I personally witnessed the wanton killings on the length of Ikorodu Road between the November 12-16; I saw the brutal efficiency of the Nigeria State and its killing machine close-up. Memories of this season began to come to me as the #EndSARS protests took on a life of its own.

## **Unmasking the Fascist State**

**THE** refusal of the protesters to fit into any of the acceptable and known moulds endangered the Nigeria State and its evil rulers. This was also the factor that rendered the violent reactions of the State pretty much a *fait accompli*. Unable to dislodge the protesters by guile, bribery, and or the use of conventional violence, the Nigeria State became increasingly desperate. And the Lagos rulers, losing revenue

at the Lekki cashcow, became just as desperate for the protests to end. The desperation of both levels of power became the breeding ground for the evil that was unveiled at both the Lekki tollgate, and at the Alausa protest ground.

*"We did not invite the soldiers"* was retorted by *"you invited us."* *"Blanks were fired by soldiers"* soon gave way to *"the soldiers were carrying blanks and live bullets"*.

*"Nobody was killed"* soon transmuted to *"one person died"* and then it became two.

The truth of what happened that fateful evening, after the LCC had acted to remove high-resolution cameras at the tollgate, switched off the lights for the first time, and clearly coordinated itself and staff with the invading soldiers, might never be known, but the many parties to the crimes against humanity have lied enough for the truth to be apparent to all seekers of truth. The mask of democracy came off, and the beast of fascist impunity bestrode the land in the evening of 20/10/20.

## **The Shiite parallel**

IN December 2015, then newly appointed Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Tukur Yusuf Buratai was in a convoy of soldiers driving to the palace of the Emir of Zaria when he ran into a procession of *Shiite* Muslims, who were in one of the several religious processions, for which they are rather notorious.

The thing is, the *Shiite* are a religious minority, much reviled by the *Sunni* Muslims, and particularly more so by the *Wahhabis* that forms the mainstream of Islamic thoughts in the northern part of the country.

The soldiers turned their guns on the *Shiite*, and left a bloodbath in its wake.

*Shiite* sources placed the death toll close to a thousand, but the army initially denied that its men had killed anyone. Then it admitted to a couple of deaths. The panel of enquiry set up by the Kaduna State Government was to establish the death of about 347 *Shiite* men, women, and children. No soldier was ever sanctioned for these murders, and Tukur Buratai was still in office as the COAS when the army was deployed to break the #EndSARS protests! It is only the Justice Doris Okuwobi panel, that might be able to establish a figure for the casualties. But enough lies have been told to establish a semblance of truth.

The Nigerian army murdered peaceful and unarmed, flag-waving, national anthem-singing protesters. Soldiers opened fire on defenseless civilians, and the Lagos State Government, who had invited the soldiers in order to regain control of the tollgate, was an accessory before and after the serial murders that it had consciously commissioned. The LCC, actively coordinated with the soldiers, and is a major party in the serial murders and countless injuries.

The denials that followed in the wake of the evil done by the State and its evil rulers has provided a more telling

testament of the diabolical nature of all the participants, but the insidious nature of the evil does not become apparent until one considers the fact that there was a live Instagram feed of the evening's events. This was, however, not enough to deter conscious men from denying the evidence of their senses, and the truth of the evil that has befallen Nigeria.

I shall allow others to deal with the history of the #EndSARS protests. How the Doris Okuwobi panel pans out shall also be left for history to chronicle. My task and purpose are a tad too urgent to await the pens and judgment of history, for the very future of the Nigeria State and its victimised peoples might depend on the success of this and several other efforts in the same direction.

It is my purpose to draw on the lessons afforded by the #EndSARS protests, the murderous suppression of same, the several events triggered by it, and influenced by it to shape the nature of the Nigerian revolution and or liberation struggles, going forward.

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## **The Nigerian Reality**

**NIGERIANS** are locked in a feudal-fascist dictatorship. This dictatorship works on the assumption of class cohesion within the ruling class, who must not be confused with a political class, for political classes everywhere in the world

depend on the endorsement of the citizens of the country for validation and revalidation of their electoral mandates. The political class in Nigeria is unencumbered by the wishes of the Nigerian peoples, who having been denied citizenship, are not in truth or reality, the electors of the Nigerian ruling class.

The loss of citizenship and the resultant impotence of the Nigerian vote are aptly illustrated in the national election cycles. In the southern part of Nigeria, there is a gallant pretense of voting during elections, but some factors have conspired to render such efforts largely fallacious, and misleading in the extreme. In the Yoruba homelands, away from the bright lights and cameras of Lagos, the popular phrase is "*Di'bo, se'be*". This literally translates to: vote and cook stew. This is a system that exchanges the vote for a pot of soup.

The party agent would be at a vantage point, he would sight the ballot held up by the voter, and having confirmed that the electorate had voted for his party's candidate, he pays the agreed price for the exchange. The amount paid would vary from location to location, and the closer the disputation amongst the thieves is adjudged, the more expensive or relatively expensive the ballot becomes. The going rates in the 2020 Ondo election oscillated between N5,000 to N10,000. The epidemic of hunger in the land, accentuated by the weaponised poverty in the country, has

rendered the vote useless, and assured that Nigeria has a democracy that offers no right of choice.

When the people do manage to express their imperfect will, as was the case during the last gubernatorial elections in Osun State, the unbridled powers founded on impunity, assures that they are silenced. Inconclusive elections might have originated in Kogi, the maneuver was perfected in Osun State, just as 'Ade Dancer' appeared poised to defeat the incumbent governor of the state.

The near magical transformation of Iyiola Omisore from venal pirate to saint, and the immediate evaporation of his criminal charges, should engage the attention of historians in the future, but of particular importance are the words of Adams Oshiomhole; one a Freudian slip, the other, a class declaration of intent and consensus.

"Join the APC and all of your sins are forgiven" and "if you cannot bear the pains of RIGGING, get out of politics." I am not sure it is possible for the Nigerian political class to be more direct in telling us exactly where they have us.

The purpose of the fascist State is pretty simple, and its ruthless efficiency is found in the simplicity of its declared objective: retain power at all and any cost. The Nigerian ruling class is united in its determination to keep the peoples underfoot; and regardless of their private vituperations the general truth is that the peoples do not matter in the cogitations of the rulers, and are constantly discounted and dismissed when the affairs of state are being considered. The

welfare of the ruling class, and the preservation of the governing systems are the sole preoccupation of the Nigeria State.

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*The demand for a change in the way Nigeria is governed started with the Nigerian people. The need for this change had become obvious to the people much earlier and the first attempt at the expression of that desire is the botched elections of 1993. Even though most of us, at the time, did not understand the actual purports of our exertion, what was clear to all was that Nigerians were simply tired of the way the country was being governed.*

# Chapter 1

## Change not Violence, the need to educate

I am ordinarily an incredibly careful person in the manner of my use of words. I have been adjudged guilty of what some have described as linguistic exactitude, and I have been told that I can be quite argumentative about the specific definition of words. I am not one to use words lightly. I use the word revolution with clarity on the exact import of the word, in the context in which I have used it. The word revolution appears generously in this book; it is the entire preoccupation of the text. I seek to persuade the people to accept that the only way to save our country is by endorsing a revolution.

The experience of the orange revolution called by Omoyele Sowore has brought home for me the very idea that had led me to originally decide to write this book, and the others I am writing. Because I realise that if you do not carefully define the content of the revolution you seek, you leave it to the system to define it in the term that suits the system. And, that term has always been to cast the revolutionary as a man of violence, who is seeking a violent overthrow of a just and lawful order and society. Contemporary usage of the word revolution would tend to

lend credence to that thinking, particularly amongst the intellectually incurious and the mentally indolent.

It is easy to forget that Gandhi led a nonviolent revolution to free the Indian sub-continent. They forget that Nelson Mandela led a non-violent revolution to shake off the apartheid system in South Africa. It is equally conveniently forgotten that there have been several peaceful movements for change all over the world that have led to revolutions.

Revolutions are not always to be confused with violent overthrow of a government by the popular revolt of the people. It is not always about violence. To buttress this point, I would refer us to the etymology of the word revolution.

Revolution derives from the Latin word *revolvere* or *revolutio*, which simply means for something to revolve, indicating a turn-around, a roll-back, which does not necessarily connote a forceful change of Government.

I doubt that there will be any Nigerian alive today who does not accept that there is a need for Nigeria to have some sort of course correction, which is essentially a revolution.

The average Nigerian has a rather fearful reaction every time the word revolution is mentioned.

It is not unlike the viscerally fearful response of the monkey anytime it comes across a snake or anything that looks like one. It naturally reacts even when it had never seen one before in its life and even when the snake is non-poisonous. The response of every monkey, hard-wired into

its DNA, is to always jump in fright once confronted by anything that looks like a snake.

Every time the average Nigerian hears the word revolution, he is already conditioned by the accident of our history to respond with fear because the word has come to conjure fear and war.

This is not without reason.

The first coup in Nigeria, the Kaduna Nzeogu coup, was announced as a revolution. In fact, a revolutionary council was announced in the immediate aftermath of that coup by Major Nzeogu himself. Consistently thereafter, every one of the successive military regimes birthed by *coup d'état* has always sought to market itself as being revolutionary. But what we must all pay attention to is the persistence with which the word revolution features in every would-be liberator's vocabulary in Nigeria. This only serves to strengthen the argument that practically every Nigerian regardless of class, tribe or religion has come to the point of understanding that we cannot make appreciable progress working within our existing system.

It is very tempting to imagine that the fear for the word revolution is peculiar to Nigeria; it is not. In fact, the entire African continent and Latin America share some commonality in this regard.

The farther you are away from the right of the people to choose for themselves how they are to be led, the more likely

that pseudo-revolutionaries would market their power-capture enterprise as revolutions.

Africa has been particularly blighted by generations of violent coup plotters who have tagged themselves revolutionaries, named their government revolutionary, whilst wrecking the people mercilessly in their self-motivated power-capture and adventure, which with scant exceptions, have been anything but revolutionary.

It is quite easy to understand the phobia of the Nigerian for the term revolution, especially once viewed through the prisms of our recent history.

The demand for a change in the way Nigeria is governed started with the Nigerian people. The need for this change had become obvious to the people much earlier and the first attempt at the expression of that desire is the botched elections of 1993. Even though most of us, at the time, did not understand the actual purports of our exertion, what was clear to all was that Nigerians were simply tired of the way the country was being governed.

Nobody had diagnosed our problems with any measure of exactitude, but the desires expressed for a break from the *status quo* were apparent. The election of 1993 was revolutionary in its scope and perhaps, if one takes a closer look, one will find that it remains till date the singular pan-Nigerian mandate, where the people openly expressed their will. But of course, we have always misinterpreted the

significance of that event and, the import of the annulment itself.

In the 1993 election, the Nigerian people found their voices. They might have been incoherent, they might have voted for different reasons, their motivations might have diverged, but they spoke. They spoke with their votes. They expressed their will. The tribes and religions didn't matter for the very first time. Abiola dared to be a Nigerian, and the Nigerian peoples, across the ethnic and religious divides, across economic and social classes, spoke. They spoke as one, and resoundingly voted for a Muslim-Muslim ticket. The differences did not matter.

But because Nigeria is not a space that was ever designed to be ruled based on equality and justice, it was dangerous to allow Abiola's mandate. To allow the mandate to stand would have been a coup against the owners of the Nigeria enterprise. Thus, the citizenship that was validated by the exercise of the electoral rights of the Nigerian on the 12th day of June 1993, was brutally abrogated by the subsequent annulment of that election. The Nigeria State has not recovered from the tragedy that the annulment is.

The Buhari project was itself a revolutionary fraud in which Buhari was sold as the change (I discussed this at great extent in *Do Not Die in their War*).

Buhari took advantage of the clamour for change and Tinubu did a fantastic job of marketing a man incapable of change as the change that was to come. But Nigerians

collectively failed to query the content of the change that was marketed to them, and the result of that failure to ask pertinent questions is why we are in the mess we are in today, because the change was never defined.

The change that I seek today is defined. I defined it in *Do Not Die in their War*. There is a 59-page constitution attached to the text, encapsulating the change that I seek.

So, this is not a call to violence, but a call to a necessary change.

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**AS** I have confessed extensively in *Do Not Die in their War*, I was once upon a time a Buharididirin... or maybe I'm a tad too hard on myself, perhaps I stopped at being a *Buharist*. I voted Buhari in every election until 2015 when I did not vote for him, and I have explained why. The fraud that he is, was already obvious the moment he found the grace to run on the platform of the APC, which, as I have already explained, is merely a conglomeration of the thinking thieves of the ACN, the rump of the old AD, the thinking thieves that were already in the PDP, who came as the new PDP led by Saraki and others.

The moment I saw the platform that was coalescing around Buhari, it was already glaring that it was going to be business as usual and it became easier to see him for exactly who he is, the ethnic irredentist who merely enjoys the idea

of power, not because he wants power for any purpose, but because he enjoys the pomp of the office.

The moment I saw that, as I have already explained in the original essay, in a democracy that is completely devoid of choice, I became so despondent, that I elected to sit out the election. I could not bring myself to vote for either Jonathan, who had been properly and very charitably defined as a clueless crook (but perhaps we have also been uncharitable because it is the system itself we all should have been focusing on) nor vote for Buhari. But the beauty of the Buhari presidency is that it finally put a lie to all the assumptions we always had that anyone could by sheer force of character change the Nigeria System.

By 2016-2017, my disillusionment with the system had become complete, and I was beginning to toy with the idea of running for the presidency, solely with the intention of seeking to change the narrative. I felt that if I ran for office, with a clear programme including the constitution that was eventually annexed to the book, it would force a change in the narrative. I was quite optimistic that this was the way to go, but events leading up to the 2019 election, began to help me to re-assess my options.

The first of these events was the emergence in the presidential race of certain eminently qualified members of my generation. I speak of Omoyele Sowore, Kingsley Moghalu, Fela Durotoye -- all of who emerged in the race and helped me to further clarify my thoughts. Fela Durotoye

is married to a lady who was my junior in the university, a cherished younger sister, Tara. I have known Fela since he was a little younger and he has always been a very precise man. Sometime in early 2018, Fela sent me a text asking for a meeting. I was not too surprised when he informed me at the meeting we eventually had, of his intention to run for president.

I recall telling Fela at the end of the meeting that, whilst I did not know exactly what I would be doing in 2019, I did know that I intended to have a role and a say in what would happen in 2019. That would eventually prove not to be the case. But I warrant that I had merely jumped ahead of myself and misplaced the context of the engagement the Nigeria State and I shall yet have.

I have a reputation for speaking with absolute certainty about events that have defined my life, long before the events themselves become reality. This book, and the cause it advances are no exception to this rule.

I lay no claim to having been handed a manual by God on some mountain somewhere, this is simply a function of my God-given capacity to know myself, and thereby predict what I would do, given a particular scenario to respond to. Knowing myself, and knowing what I'd do, knowing my environment and knowing what the different actors would do, have assured that I am able to make rational deductions, and draw logical conclusions. I always knew that the day would come when the Nigeria State and I would have

questions to ask of each other. I am blessed to have lived to see the day I have waited my entire life for this day. But I will go back in time to offer you glimpses into how my relationship with the Nigeria State was shaped.

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**MY** earliest memories were that of living with my grandmother at Inalende, Ibadan. My sojourn in my grandmother's home ended with my mother's return to Nigeria just before I was to start Primary Class 4, and I left Inalende to live with my mother in her new home at Ojoo. This movement also meant a change of school, and I was transferred to Abadina Primary School 2 in Abadina Village, within the precinct of the University of Ibadan. The University of Ibadan had a primary school for the children of the senior staff, and it was properly named the UI Staff School. There was also the Abadina Primary school, purposed for the children of the junior staff. Those living close to the university campus would seek to have their children sent to this second primary school, and my mother, or Iya Wale as I would fondly call her, ensured that I was transferred there from St. Stephen's Primary School Inalende.

The University of Ibadan campus was a whole different kettle of fish from the streets of Inalende, Ode-Olo, Oniyanrin, Mokola, and the others.

I went into Abadina in 1976/77 session and began the task of familiarising myself with my new environment. I discovered this weird collection of young men and women, who seemed to have their heads stuck in the clouds of knowledge that appeared to abound everywhere I turned. I discovered the children's library next to the International Conference Centre and became a habitu .

I was in the library when we first heard the gunshots, and then the noises. People running around and wailing about soldiers and policemen shooting at students! Then arrived the air that bit the eyes, nose, and made the senses weep uncontrollably! Afterwards, the mad rush through Olorogun Stream to get out of the campus.

I was 9 years old at the time I witnessed the "Ali Must Go" riots, and took the same bush paths with the others to escape the killing machine of the Nigeria State. The introduction I was given to the Nigeria State was further reinforced just a few years later, and it is amazing to me now, how much the episode impacted on my perspectives on the Nigeria State.

Bola Ige or Uncle Bola, as he came to be known, the popular and charismatic governor of Oyo State, and of the popular opposition party, the UPN, had just lost his bid for re-election. The thing was, so had practically all the UPN governors around the country. The UPN branded it an electoral fraud, and the populace declared it a fraud.

The citizens protested the theft with vehemence. Sunday Adewusi, the National Party of Nigeria, NPN-appointed Inspector General of Police, unveiled the Nigeria State to me, and forever defined its character indelibly. The Nigerian Police was brutally efficient in putting down the justified protests of the disenfranchised, but the state stamped its most important message into my consciousness: it has no respect for popular will and thinks nothing of disenfranchising the would-be citizens.

The purpose of power in Nigeria is the preservation of the State; not the protection of the citizens and, or the society.

In 1984/1985 session, I was enrolled at the Oyo State College of Arts and Sciences, otherwise known as OSCAS, in Ile-Ife. I had failed to pass enough papers in the West Africa Examinations Council-organised Ordinary Level School Certificate Examination, after two attempts, to be admitted to the university, and whilst my father reckoned that it might not be a bad idea for me to learn a trade, my mother would have none of it. OSCAS was for me, the Last Chance Salon, and I was dedicated to my studies, determined to join my childhood crush, who was by then a Part II student at the University of Ife. That dedication to my studies, earned me the lifelong anointing that clarified my views of the Nigeria State.

OSCAS was a non-residential school; we lived in the houses all around Ondo Road where it was located. Some

students were natives and lived in the town of Ife, and even back then, there were the inane arguments of the existence of another town called *Modakeke*...

I have always thought that the distinction belittles those making it on both sides. I came from the melting pot of Ibadan, and the whole place wasn't larger than a tiny piece of my childhood home.

But as usual I have digressed.

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## **Exposure to the character of Nigeria State**

ON the Lord's day in question, it must have been sometime in April or May; this I can tell because I was preparing to rewrite my WAEC for the third time, and I was the most serious and dedicated I had ever been to my profession of studentship. There had been some problems in the school earlier that morning, the University of Ife had sneezed, and OSCAS had caught a cold. You see, it wasn't enough for them to come and take any fine girl in OSCAS, they would also bring their *Aluta* to us. The scheduled lectures were cancelled, and I was walking to school to read, a decision which proved to be ill-advised.

A fresh skirmish had broken out between the students and the police, and I had walked into it close to the school gate. I ran like everyone would, when they would hear

gunshots, and sniffed teargas; I knew the neighbourhood inside out, so I used back roads, involving walking through compounds, and scaling dwarf fences.

I was about 20 meters from my hostel, when I walked into a police officer. He greeted me with a resounding slap. *Igbati olooyi!* I collapsed to the ground, dazed and confused. My books were scattered around me. I was all of 16 years old; a runt, and clearly a harmless kid to any discerning being. He stood over me with his gun in hand, but he must have been touched in some way by the spirit of God. He walked away without any word, but he had slapped my eyes open.

I was originally admitted into Lagos State University at the age of 17. Street protests by students against the excesses of the military dictatorships ruling Nigeria had defined our collective childhood, and here we were as young adolescents, battling another set of military dictatorship led by General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida. The brutality of the Nigeria State is better imagined than to be lived. The citizens' rights simply evaporated, and the inequities amplified.

I had all the precocious energies of youth, and I was a participant in every "riot" that pockmarked the IBB years. I was an adrenaline junky.

Freed from the strictures of my mother's mother-hen checks, *Arokean Bogey* with newfound freedom, finally in the university, and feeling 'amongst', I was to be found

wherever a protest was called, and excitement to be had. I had waited all of three years to enjoy the freedom that being a university student offered my generation, not the pains being endured by today's youth, where the very best of our universities are hardly worth the name, and the capacity for independent thoughts, are brutally suppressed.

It was in this season of my life that I saw the Nigeria State in its evil nudity. I could see the inequities and inequalities in a manner beyond my age, and I knew that the State had no moral integrity to speak of. But I also learnt important lessons about the citizens, which I have only begun to appreciate, as I have grown older, and hopefully wiser.

The Nigerian citizens are disconnected from the struggle for their freedom. Something has stuck with me from those years; it is the detachment of the Nigerian citizens, from the struggle for their emancipation.

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LASU in 1985 was a rather bucolic environment. Cows did compete with humanity for walking rights, and we killed snakes in some of our residences and classrooms. We were part of a thriving community of *Alaba* traders, mostly of Igbo origins. The Hausa and several people of Northern Nigerian extractions were also our neighbours. *Alaba Rago, Karambosa,* and the *Ojo* Cantonment, assured that. Proximity to the Benin borders, sprinkled in a generous mix of West Africans,

mostly from the francophone region. Whenever we would have occasion to rise against something done by the military junta (and there were several protests – the “SAP riots” – as they were called), some schools somewhere would expel some students, and LASU would be in the vanguard of the reactionary protests that the progressive movements would call. Our neighbours would look at us as though we were mad; and I rarely knew of any that believed that we were doing the right thing. They were almost always detached from the struggle. This detachment was always rationalised somehow because the same people, would complain about the same pains that had propelled the students in the first place.

By the time I returned to LASU as a law student in the 1991/92 session, I had had all the youthful exuberance and idiocies slapped out of my head, and I was unavailable as a pawn in anybody’s games. I could discern the foolishness of the Nigerian Left, the dominant tendencies in the civil rights movements, in their asinine assumption that the people would simply follow their noble leadership, and that the powers of their personal examples and sacrifices would propel the citizens into demanding their freedom. The need to educate the people was not apparent to them, perhaps because they had presumed knowledge to a people that remain unaware of their fetters. Many traders would glower at us for not allowing them to open their shops, even as we

bled and died for what we were convinced were the common good.

The Nigeria State is yoked to an evil system. Agents and agencies of State are not accountable to the people, and nothing that they would do to retain the evil integrity of the governance system is deemed criminal.

The murder of Kunle Sonowo in LASU further cemented my views as to the ruthless and murderous nature of the Nigeria State. It is one of those events that have shaped my engagements with the amoral system. I am not under any illusions about its evil, I am never surprised by its brutality, but I am not persuaded that anything would change, except the people are related to the struggle for their freedom.

Two examples would appear to validate this position, and I shall share them to allow you judge if my conclusions be right or wrong.

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### ***Lion no dey born goat...***

SEUN is the true son of his illustrious father, Fela. Fela would be proud of his son. Seun it was, that shared an insight with the Nigerian people. Something that Fela had told his son, and that the son had considered apposite to tell at the time.

After the Obasanjo-ordered invasion of Kalakuta Republic, resulting in the death of his mother, Fela had risen up and refused to be cowed, he had taken his mother's coffin in a protest march to Dodan Barracks, the then seat of the military junta led by his townsman, Obasanjo. Fela presumed that the Nigerian peoples, on whose behalf he had always acted, and for whose rights he had made several personal sacrifices, would follow his lead, and be inspired by the power of his personal example. He was to be disappointed and heartbroken by the realisation that he was literally on his own.

To understand just how much pain Fela was in at the time, listen to his song, *"Look and Laugh"*. The pains of his experiences came across as rather raw. I have had occasion to be convinced after several years of listening to the song, that Fela was weeping as he sang.

There is a more recent example, and one to which I am tangentially related. When Yele Sowore declared the Orange Revolution for August 5, 2019, I was furious. I was unsparing in my criticism of the call. I was convinced that it would fail, and I was even angrier at what I believed was his rash endangerment of the like of me, who were left with no choice, but to join the fray, once the imbecilic agents of the state responded with predictable idiocy.

I have since gained knowledge and better understanding of Yele's perspectives and intentions, as I will explain in due

course. But an episode in the legends of August 5, 2019, defines the point that I have laboured to make.

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### ***Iya Onifufu***

THE legend is often told of a revolutionary woman in Osogbo. She was arrested for her part in the protest marking the Orange Revolution in the city of Osogbo, and the uniqueness of her story is found in the details I read an interview that she had given to the press in the immediate aftermath of her release from the detention that followed her arrest.

In response to a question asking how she came to be arrested as an Orange Revolutionary, *Iya Onifufu* laid bare the errors of the would-be Nigerian liberators. She had been hawking her *fufu* on the day, and she happened upon the protesting youth made up as always of the Nigerian students of higher education. She was attracted to the turmoil, and she asked the reason for their exertions. The youthful revolutionaries offered her a crash course in political education, and *Iya onifufu* became a converted revolutionary. The tray of *fufu* was thereafter abandoned, and mama in the manner of Christ's fishermen disciples, became a soldier of the revolution.

When a person is related to the battle, they fight with no regard to their personal safety; the interests that are intrinsic

to the fight suffices as sufficient motivation. But the duty to educate and connect the people to the struggle for their freedom, is not one that has always engaged the attention of the Nigerian progressive movement. This disconnect weakens any impact on the system, and delegitimises the exertions made, devalues the sacrifices, and discounts the pains of the ones that have sought to lead the people to freedom.

These examples have taught me that you cannot revolt on a people's behalf, and that nothing will change in Nigeria, until the Nigerian peoples are connected to the battles for their own liberation.

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*The problem with Nigeria is that because we have for long misdiagnosed the problem, we have also always been left constantly reacting. So, in place of revolutions, we have had implosions, and the Nigeria State has like every repressive regime all over the world, been the ultimate beneficiary when there is a resort to violence. The Nigeria State is a purveyor of violence, until very recently, when its many lies and inconsistencies, birthed the several contradictions that have ensured that it no longer has the monopoly of violence.*

## Chapter 2

### **The fallacy of the inevitability of a Nigerian revolution**

**W**hen knowledge is coupled with intellectual arrogance, there is an abiding idiocy that results, and that is the one that presumes that every person with whom the knowledgeable comes into contact or conflict, understands and knows what the knowledgeable does.

I had touched on this subject in the foregoing section, where I explained how the Nigerian left has always presumed that the Nigerian people on whose behalf they have laboured, had understanding of the issues that agitates them, or that they appreciate the sacrifices they are making. This assumption has led to a critical disconnect between those who presume to lead the people in their liberation, and the people that they purport to lead.

This presumption of correctness combined with intellectual arrogance of the most infantile sort, has robbed the Nigerian Left of the wisdom to realise that there is an existential and important need to bridge the gap between themselves and the army by which they might ever hope, to one day, peacefully change the Nigeria State. There is a presumption in the mind of the Nigerian Left that, for an

exceedingly long time, has hampered its capacity to affect the society and this has always been the presumption of the inevitability of the Nigerian revolution. I am not sorry to say that the Nigerian Left and even every one of those that had taken time to look at the Nigerian situation, have almost always fallen into this fallacy of the inevitability of the Nigerian revolution.

The Nigerian revolution is not inevitable. I shall explain this stance to show that this is truly the case. There is a popular quote by Kwame Nkrumah that I would like to recommend to us. I would also seek to use a deconstruction of the sentence that makes the quote as a way to emphasise the lesson that I seek to drive home in this section.

Kwame Nkrumah says, *“Revolutions are brought about by men, who think as men of action and act as men of thought.”*

Revolutions are generally the result of deliberate thought through measures that had anticipated the events because of the repetitive nature of every system, and then in anticipation of the events, planned responses ahead of time. There is a critical difference between responses and reactions. Responses are the thought-through plans that were made in anticipation of events. Reactions are what we do that were not previously planned, in response to events. One is thought-through, the other is not.

Violence is the language of the ineloquent, the disenfranchised who has lost the capacity to explain his pains. Violence is either linguistic or physical. There is a

correlation between the readiness to swear and the level of a man's culture and education. When a man has sufficient words in his vocabulary with which to express himself, the chances of his being ready to resort to swear words are severely limited. It is unlikely that you would hear a man in the British parliament use a swear word or a phrase that calls a man a "fucking liar," surely not in the chamber. He will probably accuse a man of "being economical with the truth." It is the same thing that has been said in both instances, but one is said with "civility", whilst the other is said violently, a reflection almost always of the person's social standing, and/or intelligence.

The problem with Nigeria is that because we have for long misdiagnosed the problem, we have also always been left constantly reacting. So, in place of revolutions, we have had implosions, and the Nigeria State has like every repressive regime all over the world, been the ultimate beneficiary when there is a resort to violence. The Nigeria State is a purveyor of violence, until very recently, when its many lies and inconsistencies, birthed the several contradictions that have ensured that it no longer has the monopoly of violence. The Nigeria State happily deploys violence against its citizens as I had explained in the previous chapter, and almost always is happiest when it is also challenged with violence.

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## **Disunited Progressives**

**THE** language of the Nigerian progressive has always been the language of conciliation, but it has also not allowed itself to take advantage of the knowledge that it has of the system within which it functions. I have witnessed two inflection points in Nigerian history where the populace was clearly ready for a revolution, but there was no leadership to provide the alternative that would have galvanised one.

I speak specifically of the June 12, 1993 election as the first. After the election itself, which had Nigerians expressing a national will, for the first time in my lifetime, the people rose as one to demand the validation of the election results won clearly by Moshood Abiola.

The election in itself was already a revolutionary election because for the first time, you had a Yoruba Muslim running on the same ticket with a Northern Muslim, and Nigerians across all the geopolitical zones had no problem whatsoever, giving a very resounding valid mandate to this ticket. Nigerians looked beyond tribe, religion and responded to the empathy of the man, Moshood Abiola, and the sheer force of his character unified the Nigerian people. The annulment was not so much a brutal and evil action, but was also one where the powers that be in Nigeria were showing how little they thought of the sovereign will of the Nigerian people.

The events galvanised the opposition, hitherto competing forces became aligned, NADECO was formed, demands were made over time for a constitutional conference, but ultimately, the opposition lacked the will to mobilise an alternative on a nationalist platform. All that happened was as a result of the agitations for the validations of the June 12 election. The Abacha regime was birthed because of an assumption by the progressives that they could work within the system, to achieve that which they ought to have known could only have been achievable by working with the Nigerian people. The system emerged from that season, stronger and reinvented, and birthed Obasanjo.

The second opportunity came in December 2011/January 2012: the fuel subsidy protest. As I watched the emerging movement, I worried because I saw no leadership; instead, I saw forces that were already aligned to the State, forces controlled by Bola Ahmed Tinubu at the time, who were masquerading as progressives. I saw them taking active roles in the organisation and prosecution of those rallies. I saw compromised human rights activists waxing lyrical at Ojota. I realised very quickly that we had squandered yet another opportunity at building a nationalist platform for the demand of a turnaround.

The Nigeria State emerged from that season stronger. It reinvented itself and the birth of Muhammadu Buhari is directly traceable to the clamour for change that was taken

up at Ojota and all the other places where the protest rallies were held. The fraud of CHANGE in 2015 has its root in the clamour for change of January 2012.

As at 2012, what the people communicated clearly was the desire that things change and not continue the way they were. The fact that they had become fed up with Goodluck Jonathan after the euphoria of voting him in his own right into office earlier in 2011 had worn off, made it very easy for the opposition led by Bola Ahmed Tinubu at the time to deflect the criticism and make it appear as though it was Jonathan that was to blame for everything that was going wrong with Nigeria.

The blame for the security problems in the north-east were rightly laid at Jonathan's doorstep. But even the madness of Lagos, engendered by Tinubu's own corruption, was easily disguised as part of some failure on the part of the PDP. That lie has only now become obvious that the same party is in power, both at the federal and state level.

By 2012, and leading up to the 2015 election, it was quite easy to focus everybody's attention on the big federal government; Bola Tinubu thereby escaped scrutiny of his own stewardship of Lagos State.

The system simply reinvented itself, outthought the progressives, who did nothing with the opportunities presented by the manifest dissatisfaction of the people, because they simply could not and did not offer the people a viable alternative behind which to coalesce. The system

easily responded by coalescing around one of its own, which it had hitherto rejected several times, and most of those that should have known better, joined in adopting the lie and birthing Buhari.

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*There is a common thread that runs through every one of the several eruptions of violence and the different struggles for one right or the other in Nigeria. Be that the struggles in the Niger Delta, or the Boko Haram violence in the north-east, or the banditry that has ravaged not just the north-west, but the entirety of the Nigeria nation; or the gangs that we see in Lagos and other states in the south-west, banditry and kidnapping that are rampant and rife in the eastern and the south-southern parts of Nigeria; the fact of the matter is that undergirding every one of these outbreaks of violence is a demand by the disenfranchised and the lost, those who have become hopeless finding avenues to express their pain, disappointment and in most cases, their rage with the Nigeria State.*

## Chapter 3

### The Politics of Fractionalisation

**T**he Nigerian ruling class has adopted the fractionalisation of Nigeria by exploiting existing schism in the system as a tactic of subjugation. This tactic was elevated to an art form by General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida.

I'm not suggesting that we were always united before Babangida turned the fractionalisation of Nigeria into an art form. After all, we did fight a civil war after which we lied to ourselves and talked about none having been vanquished, and that nobody had lost nor won; no victor, no vanquished.

Nothing could be farther from the truth (I have discussed this extensively in *Do Not Die in their War*). But there is something unique that did evolve as a function of the deliberate exertions of Ibrahim Babangida and successive governments thereafter.

The government did not only exploit existing schisms in the system, and in the society within the nation, but began to actively exploit and promote these divisions. I'll give you an example:

The Nigerian student union movement used to be able to speak with one voice. But as I have already explained, with the fractionalisation of the student body through exploitation of existing schisms within the body itself, and

the employment of violence that was introduced to the cults coupled with the regional outlook of the northern university, where more radical Islamic groups were promoted in an attempt to create a counterbalance to the radical movements that were in control of the student body, the Nigeria student union movement lost its voice.

Nigerian students stopped speaking as one, more sectional interests were pursued and the more nationalistic interests that had hitherto united the students were left to sectional and sometimes negligible interests and groups to chase after.

There was a time in Nigeria when the radical movement was centred primarily within the university campuses, which is not exactly surprising given the trend everywhere else in the world. What used to happen was that there was an ecosystem within which radical students were mentored by radical lecturers and the interests of the students and the lecturers were generally conflated to the point where when ASUU called a strike, it could not take the support of the student bodies for granted.

During the Babangida years and thereafter, there has been an active decimation of the cooperation that used to exist between these bodies to the point where NANS was infiltrated, and within the body, there were strands acting as though they were agencies of the government. And then you have a situation where NANS has been so commercialised that it no longer really speaks for anybody but those who

occupy the offices of the student union president in the different universities and; of course, at the national level, where you have personalised number plates for functionaries of a student movement.

The students and lecturers no longer speak or sing from the same hymn books. ASUU is also locked in perpetual warfare with all the other unions within the university system. Hence, not just healthy competition has been promoted, but exceedingly unhealthy competition that tends to dissipate energy on what is patently unimportant, ignoring the common interests of the parties that should have synergised and worked together.

The Yoruba have a proverb that "*airin lowowo omo ojo lon se iku pa won*". This means that *if the snakes were to ever cooperate and work together, it is unlikely that the sons of men would find it so easy to kill them*. The refusal to synergise and work together within the university system has rendered the different sectors of that system incapable of identifying what is in their common interest, such that when the ASUU union calls its strikes or industrial actions, the other segments of the university system do not see themselves as being invested in the ASUU struggle and are in most cases antagonistic to the academic staff's demands. Well, ASUU itself does not appear to have been able to provide the required leadership to help the other unions within the system to see what is in the common interest.

Whatever the case might be, is it not much easier for the parties to have identified common interests within their common industry, rather than to be working at cross-purpose?

You might look at these lecturers, the students, the senior staff association, the non-academic staff union and the several other unions that are within the university system, and begin to wonder exactly what their problems are. But when you are done doing that, why not look at the larger society itself; where our pathetic and painful incapability to see what is in our common interests, has assured that we are all mutually fettered and hogtied. But the balkanisation of the struggles in Nigeria is essentially a function of our inability to see what should be obvious for all to see

There is a common thread that runs through every one of the several eruptions of violence and the different struggles for one right or the other in Nigeria. Be that the struggles in the Niger Delta, or the Boko Haram violence in the north-east, or the banditry that has ravaged not just the north-west, but the entirety of the Nigeria nation; or the gangs that we see in Lagos and other states in the south-west, banditry and kidnapping that are rampant and rife in the eastern and the south-southern parts of Nigeria; the fact of the matter is that undergirding every one of these outbreaks of violence is a demand by the disenfranchised and the lost, those who have become hopeless finding

avenues to express their pain, disappointment and in most cases, their rage with the Nigeria State.

Every system is designed with an end in mind, and so is every human construct. Nigeria is not an exception, and it was designed with intentions in the minds of its human designers.

If I were to go all the way back into our colonial history and the immediate times after the colonial era, I will be rehashing what I have already dealt with in my first book, *Do Not Die in their War*. So, I will limit myself for the time being, to the IBB years, which provides sufficient proof for the point I seek to make, as it relates to the complete absence of nationalistic platforms from where the Nigeria State might be engaged and where the issues might be properly addressed. I will explain.

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## **The year of the locust**

**IBRAHIM** Badamasi Babangida is one of the fathers of the Nigeria State. He, probably more than any other, laid the inequitable foundations of the modern Nigeria State. One of the first things IBB did upon coming to power after he pushed out Muhammadu Buhari in 1986, was to weaken every national platform from where Nigerians had engaged the State.

The Nigeria State has always institutionally sought to fractionalise the people. The multiplicity of citizenship levels had already ensured that the people could never speak as one. But nobody did more to institutionalise this injustice and inequality than Babangida, and he went one step further: he took an informed decision to destroy the platforms that he saw as threats to his power.

You must also understand that Babangida is particularly important in understanding Nigeria, because he was the first to begin the process of the feudalisation of the Nigeria State. Nigeria to be sure had always existed only for the privileged few. But the systematic feudalisation of the State began under Babangida's watch. I will deal with this in details as we proceed...

But it is of utmost importance that attention be paid to the fact that it was under Babangida that the Nigeria Bar Association that had hitherto been a very powerful voice and a check on the excesses of successive military government and even the civilian government of Shehu Shagari, was emasculated.

The politicisation of the presidency of the NBA was given impetus during the reign of Babangida, when whoever occupied that office automatically became the attorney-general of the federation. Babangida corrupted the NBA to render it ineffectual as a platform through which his power might be checked. The same thing was done to the Nigerian Medical Association, where Babangida extensively

sponsored opposition. He did the same with the Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU. But the more important organisation that he began to attack, which has, however, been perfected under subsequent governments in Nigeria, is the student union.

In the early days of his reign, Babangida organised sham commissions and public enquiries. One of them was the one where he sought to legitimise a decision he had taken, which was to seek economic relief from the IMF. There were debates held all over Nigeria, suffice to say that thereafter, he did what he had planned to do anyway, and the student populace in response to the harsh economic measures started what we called the "SAP Riots," which more than any other thing at the time, shook the government to its very root.

To be clear about what I meant by shook, there is no way the students on their own could have moved the government to any change. The disconnect between the students and the populace, which I mentioned earlier, has always ensured that the populace were disconnected from the struggles of the students and from their exertions. So, it was not like the military were worried of the likelihood of a popular uprising, but it was surely a nuisance that businesses were being disrupted all over the federation by pocket of students in almost all the universities in Nigeria.

In those days, when student protests were called, they were nationwide in nature. Every university, polytechnic,

every school above the secondary schools in Nigeria, however remote, took part. So, each time the students were on the march, the impression always given was that Nigeria was boiling, and it certainly boiled. But the disconnect between the students and the populace had always ensured the preservation of the system.

Upon the cessation of hostilities and at the end of the process where several schools were shut down and several students killed, particularly in the northern states – Kaduna, for instance, where about six students were murdered in cold blood – a novel phenomenon began to emerge within the university system.

Those of us who spent as many years as I did within the university system, could not help but have noticed this: the confraternities morphed into cults. Where young men played pranks on each other and at best had fisticuffs in the past, arms were gradually introduced into the conflicts. What used to be bruised egos soon morphed into killings. The Nigerian student movement, particularly in the southern part of Nigeria had become a target in Babangida's power games.

In dealing with the students, Babangida's security system did what most security organisations in the world would do. They looked for and exploited the existing schisms: the rivalries and differences within the students' body. In the southern parts, where students of Yoruba extractions, Igbo extractions and others were predominantly

found, fraternities had proliferated since their beginnings in the 60s and there were always rivalries between them. The history of the proliferation would even show that some people left one confraternity to found another because of some differences that arose between them and their former compadres.

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## **Deepening of feudalism**

**THESE** rivalries were always there and had spilled over into pretty tame affairs: like a bucket of crap thrown at someone or a person's hair shaved whilst they slept. But the benign nature of these adolescent skirmishes changed and hardened into something much darker and evil, because the state got involved. State security officials came into the campuses and joined confraternities, influenced their actions, guided, and nudged them into violence. They provoked it, orchestrated it, and thereby divided the students' solidarity.

In the northern part, religion was the tool employed by the State. The Muslim students' society, long a presence on every Nigerian university campus benign and mostly a very benevolent organisation, was equally infiltrated. Splinter groups were encouraged in the northern part. And it became so, that when southern universities would rise in solidarity

with a cause, religion was used as a sentiment to divide and ensure that the Nigerian students in the northern part of Nigeria would not be part of that solidarity move.

IBB perfected the art of dividing the Nigerian people to conquer them. Everything was done to make sure that the people never shared a common purpose. Nigerians became either northerners, southerners, Igbo, Kanuri, Fulani or Hausa. All these came because of the need to keep the people divided.

We were divided only because our rulers have found that their powers are guaranteed when the people do not share common purpose. Babangida more than any other, perfected this evil device, having recognised its utility in keeping the army in check and incapable of national cohesion.

With the Nigeria State infiltrating all the existing platforms through which the grievances of the people were usually ventilated, like the Nigerian Bar Association, the Nigerian Medical association, the student bodies, and the labour movements and trade unions – which have remained completely compromised to the point where it is pretty obvious that nobody is really speaking for the Nigerian worker anymore – what followed, was the institutionalisation of what I have come to refer to as grievance politics.

What I mean by this is that when reasonable voices are either killed, silenced, compromised or somehow taken out

of commission, in order to force a people to accept an injustice, or an unjust state of being, what tends to happen and has always happened across human history and civilizations, is that the system immediately enables two extremes: you either have those who will seek to profit by the repressed grievances of the people; or those who will respond with violence since that would be the only available option that would have been left to them.

Take the Biafran question for instance, the crisis of nationality of citizenship that has plagued Nigeria and assured that she will not develop to her potential, has also played itself out in full glare as the Biafran question. When you examine what is generally referred to as the Biafran question, but which I prefer to call Nigeria's Igbo question, you would come to the realisation that the actual questions are: who is a Nigerian? Why does his tribe matter? Why should his religion make any difference?

When the Igbo were marginalised to the advantage of all the people who today identify as middle belt, who were once upon a time northerners; when the Igbo challenged the inequality, inequities and injustice in the Nigerian space which were not common to the Nigerian from Kwara and Kogi states, who were equally educationally disadvantaged beneficiaries of the catchment areas; when it was fashionable to reserve advantages to some and disadvantages to many; it was easy to ignore the Igbo question and consider it an

Igbo problem. The truth is, there is no Igbo problem, it is the Nigerian problem.

What we have in Nigeria are differential levels of citizenship, the resultant effect of which is that the disadvantaged, with their legitimate grievances that have been silenced and not allowed room for ventilation become prey to extreme voices. This is what bred MASSOB and; IPOB. The rational Igbo voices are either silenced or found nobody to listen to them - none of the Igbo streets will listen to them because nobody in power would listen to the reasonable voices.

The Federal Government of Nigeria will rather talk to the Nnamdi Kanus of this world than speak to the reasonable voices in Igbo land, or it would speak to the ones that I call the beneficiaries of grievance politics, that is those who claim to speak on behalf of a people, whilst they steal off the same people.

Abia State is a good place to start. None of the governors of Abia or any of the other states in the eastern part has been Fulanis, they have been Igbo men. What does their works say about the kind of politics they play? These are men who purport to speak for a tribe, even as they have stolen them blind.

I do not dispute the fact that the Nigeria State has been extremely inequitable and unjust in its dealing with the Igbo, but at least, in the last 20 years, no Fulani man has ruled in Igbo land. A look at the exact point in history where the

entire Igbo land is at this point in time, gives you an idea of just how well the leadership that has emerged out of the grievance politics, encouraged by the Nigeria State, has delivered for the Igbo man or answered the Igbo question.

If you look at the Niger Delta, you will find clear evidence of how these two extremes have coalesced to ensure that the Nigeria State has actually lost control of vast portions of her own territories, even whilst we are not at war with any external aggressor in the Niger Delta.

It is important to understand that criminality which persists in the Niger Delta is a direct response to the criminalisation of decent voices by the Nigeria State. I recounted in *Do Not Die in their War* how I was at NNPC and had to listen to the banTERS being bandied between militants who had come to see the minister, and I wondered even back then, how the same Nigeria State that murdered Ken Saro-Wiwa, had found space and time to listen to bandits and thieves. The point is that, when decent voices are silenced as Ken's was, when the State encourages fragmentations within its own territories, it creates room for the reign of criminal elements.

There are several elements in the Niger Delta struggles who have argued with me that MOSOP was deliberately infiltrated; that the murder of the Ogoni chiefs had the hands of the Nigeria State, its agent provocateurs, and particularly the hands of Paul Okutimo. The wanton criminality we are seeing in the Niger Delta today, is a direct consequence of

the recklessness of the Nigeria State, in promoting division within its own territories, even if they be armed insurrections, in order to preserve an evil system.

The politicians in the Niger Delta are not any different from the ones you will find in other parts of Nigeria. They are beneficiaries of grievances. They employ criminals to preserve unconscionable powers that are not derived from the people. These criminals work under the cover of State impunity and therefore the likes of Tompolo, Ateke Tom and all the others have today become feudal lords. If they shut down production, it stays shut, because the Nigeria State operates in vast territories in the Delta, on the license of what are effectively crime lords and politicians who work hand in gloves with these crime lords. The poor man in the Delta is the one who loses because of the Nigeria State's deliberate fragmentation and criminalisation of fair and decent voices.

I recall when Ganiyu Adams was nominated as the *Are Ona Kankanfo* of Yorubaland, and a few friends who considered themselves learned and cultured were querying the choice. They were waxing lyrical about the pedigree of those that had occupied the office before him, and I laughed at them, because what they failed to understand is that Ganiyu Adams as *Are Ona Kankanfo* is merely a sign of the time in which we live. And a reflection of the people that the Yoruba have also become.

I pointed out to them that if there were to ever be a meeting of Yoruba elders, none of them would be asked to attend such but they are certain to find Ganiyu Adams, the *Are Ona Kankanfo* of Yoruba land, either chairing the occasion, or sat at the high table. Ganiyu Adams is the systemic reaction to the deliberate fragmentation, muscling and silencing of dissent and reasoned opposition.

The Yoruba are essentially a people ruled by reason, one of our central proverbs says that *ejo lanko, baba enikan ii koja*, which interprets as; *you learn to state your case, not how to fight*.

The Yoruba cultural demand is that before you fight, you must reason out the issue and be certain that you would be able to explain yourself by the time you are asked the reason for your anger. But the same Yoruba were provoked into extremes by the annulment of Abiola's election, and then allowed themselves to be outfoxed by the State through the agency of Uche Chukwumerije, to embrace the rebrand of what remains the only national mandate in Nigeria as though it was a tribal mandate. Abiola's national mandate became a Yoruba agenda. And becoming a Yoruba agenda meant that the voices of extreme began to speak.

The Yoruba play grievance politics better than any other Nigerian tribe that I know of, me being one after all. Yoruba have made a career out of grievance politics, and this is what has yielded us the tragedy that has befallen our land today, where we have failed to test all spirits; and we are today, enslaved even in our own land.

The sum and net effect of these fragmentations and the criminalisation of dissent voices is that, instead of an alignment of purposes, and for the Nigerian people to have come together in identification of their common interest, each aggrieved person or group or tribe act alone in protest of their conditions, thus we have had sporadic implosions all over Nigeria. And, because they are not concerted, the State has remained strong even as the nation has bled. It is in this cauldron that the seed of the feudalisation of the Nigeria State was sown.

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### **Hegemonies and nation-building**

**I HAVE** found that nations are not unlike human beings in the trajectory of their growths and or retardation. This might not be particularly surprising for those who have made it their vocation to study human constructs, but I have discovered that nations mimic men.

As humans, we are creatures of our habits. For example, a person who is habitually prudent in his spending would almost always have sufficiency for his needs; meanwhile, a person who happens to annex the capacity to create wealth ingeniously to a capacity to be prudent in his finances, almost always ends up being rich and prosperous; also, a person who is given to his base appetites, perhaps drinks,

narcotics, sex, etc., would also have these habits shape the outcome of his life because the habits shape the choices.

But just as it is for persons, so it also would appear to be for nations. I have found that in place of the habits that you look for as hallmarks of the person's likely end, in seeking to predict the trajectory of a nation, or seeking to understand where the nation is coming from, you would almost always have to look both to its history, which would have shaped its habits; in the case of nations, you must look to the hegemonies. To explain this, it is my contention that just as habits shape a man's choices and outcome, the hegemonies that control a territory equally shape what happens to that nation or state.

In examining American history, you will find that at its birth, there were clear west Anglo-Saxon protestants shaping the future of the country. Their WASP principles, religiosity outlook on life, view of the monarchy, ideas and thoughts on governance and religion, shaped the very foundations of the America State. It is the WASP hegemony that shaped the very foundations of America, guided its choices, and formed the nation America. It was founded on the racist principles of its founding fathers.

Nobody consulted the red Indians, nor asked questions of the enslaved Africans, the several Chinese and Japanese labourers, or even the Irish Catholics, who were later day comers. None of the people that later became known as Americans were involved in the formation of the America

State nor were they ever given a say as to what shape or form the State would take. That is a function of the fact that they were the dominant hegemony in the land where the State was birthed. Their past, foundations, principles, and ideals of the wasps, shaped the future of the nation.

The contradictions that we see in America today is a function of the several conflicts that have rendered America just as tribalistic as Nigerians have become, only that this time, the American tribalism coalesces around different principles and political interests that are in political parties.

But America is not my preoccupation, even though it is very necessary for you to see how hegemonies shape the future and trajectory of a nation, just as habits shape the choices and outcome of a man.

Let us look at what we know today as the United Kingdom. What was the British empire? The entirety of the British empire was birthed on the back of English bloody mindedness, the refusal to understand limits, the readiness to expand boundaries, the Viking spirit that directed English nationalism and made them begin to see themselves as being exceptional and of particular specialty. The island status of England made it begin to see itself as being separate and distinct and far better than anyone of its neighbours. That nationalism and the Viking spirit drove the expansion of the English isle until it took over first, I believe, the Welsh throne and then the throne of Scotland, and subsequently Ireland.

So, you have a situation where the English were the dominant hegemony that propelled the creation of the identity that became known as British. But it took the annexation of the ruggedness of the Irish and the work capacity of the Scots, the Welsh gentleness, all coalescing together and propelled by the English sense of adventure, birthed in the cauldron of the Viking origins to shape the trajectory of the British empire. Every State grows based on the interest that governs and propels its movements.

Nigeria is not an exception. As with every other nation or State, it has been shaped by the hegemonies that have prevailed over Nigeria. It is of critical importance that we track the origins and growth of these hegemonies.

The principal hegemony that has been attendant at the birth of Nigeria is feudalism. I have dealt with the issue of the feudalistic origins of Nigeria to an extent in *Do Not Die in their War*, but I shall now take time to point out how feudalism has overtaken the country to the point where we have become a feudalised democracy, incompatible with citizenship rights, and incapable of tolerating any expression of dissent. A system where citizens have become serfs, and the rulers, lords; masters and servants. The purpose of the State has become the preservation of its officers. The welfare of the elected has become the fulcrum of the Nigeria State. This will be the preoccupation of the following chapters.

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*The road to hell is paved with good intentions and as well intentioned as the British might have been, there was nothing altruistic about the creation of the veto that was created in Nigeria. It was done with the assumption that there would be a strong federation based on the regional system to ensure that peace would be kept and that this peace would endure regardless of the inequities of creating a lopsided system that assured the veto in the hand of one out of three regions at the point of independence. What happened subsequently was not something they could have foreseen.*

# Chapter 4

## Birth of the Fulani Hegemony

**H**egemonies are creations of history. To understand and fully appreciate the impact of the Fulani hegemony over Nigeria, it is apposite that we examine the history of Nigeria and its very foundations.

The British were the sole powers within the Nigerian space, and having assumed power by conquering ever more territory, and after the decisive victory over the Sultan in 1904, the British took over complete control of what became known as the Nigeria State. I have skimmed on several boring details including how the Niger Company had sold its possessions to the British crown and how much of the Nigeria State was fraudulently acquired by the British.

What we must understand is that the British developed a system by which they governed the vast territories that they had acquired. This was the indirect rule system, which meant that the British adopted the existing systems of governance in the different parts of the territories and in so doing, they ruled by proxy. Of particular interest to any discerning student of history, is the fact that the easiest of all the territories to rule was the northern part of Nigeria.

I will confine myself to that, but there is a need to revisit history even though I strived to do exactly that in *Do Not Die*

*in their War*, where I dealt with the multiple layers of citizenship. But it bears retelling.

In the northern part of Nigeria, before the coming of the white man, before the Europeans ever blighted this land, there were two Islamic empires. There was the Kanem Bornu empire, which had existed long before Usman Dan Fodio came with his Fulani jihadists. There was a brand of Islam that had been in that territory long before the coming of Usman Dan Fodio with his jihad, which was meant to cleanse Islam in the Hausa states of certain heretical practices.

The two empires co-existed side by side with occasional hostility, but the principles of Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb, which means that the land of the Muslim and the land of the pagan, ensured that strives were kept limited between the two empires before the coming of the British.

It should be known that before the British came, the major export product for both Islamic empires were slave raiding and slave trading. They had established the Trans-Saharan trade route, which traded essentially in slaves as well as other products, but the principal product were slaves.

Vast parts of Northern Nigeria, especially those close to the southern part of the country, became the exclusive preserve of the Fulani because they were the ones with the expansionist ambition towards the ocean. It is important to keep in mind that by the time the British came, they simply

helped the Fulani to extend their influence to areas they had hitherto left unconquered. If they had conquered those areas, they would have had to convert the people as a religious obligation, but if the people had been converted, they could not have been enslaved, and the Fulani Caliphate would have lost its economic power.

There were also parts that they had been unable to conquer simply because those people were too strong to be brought under rule: the Plateau, and vast parts of the Benue.

The Benue trough generally, were unconquered and unruled by the Fulani, but were mostly brought under Fulani rule by the British. Thus, Fulani hegemony was extended to parts of Northern Nigeria that they had never managed to conquer before the coming of the British or areas they had deliberately left unconquered because they viewed those tribes as their slave stock.

To have a clearer understanding of the situation and how the British created the country called Nigeria, it is best to treat the British as though they were a polygamous man with several wives and several children. This is what I mean: the British man might be said to have been married to several women, one of them is the Fulani and the other being the Fulani twin sister, the Kanuri. But these two had several slaves whom they gave as *Keturahs* to their husband, the British. These concubines also had children but in the treatment of the children of this wedlock, those of the Fulani

wife and her Kanuri sister were always preferred, while those of the slave concubines also knew their places.

The children of the *Keturahs* are also children nonetheless but they were of the concubines and they knew their place within that family. But the rest of Nigeria, the other wives in their own homes did not get to understand this until much too late in the day.

Most people have continued to be unaware of these rather important facts until date, and have continued to indolently speak as though the northern part of Nigeria is one homogeneous entity. The assumption of the British was that the northern ruling elements would be able to manage the many differences within the northern part of Nigeria, and avoid the rancour and divisions that were already evident in the southern part.

Ahmadu Bello had the right policy: "One North." Where even though the children of the concubines knew their status and their place within the *Arewa* pecking order in relation to the rest of Nigeria, they were always treated as though they are northerners, and they took primacy over anyone from the southern part, unless the southern would happen to have been sponsored by a child of one of the favoured wives.

As the Nigeria State was being crafted in the late 1940s and before the 1951 parliament was declared, there was a veto that was handed to the Northern Nigerian elements by the British. It was deliberate and by design.

Akin Osuntokun has in his paper, dealt with this extensively; I have also dealt with it to an extent in my treatment of the subject in *Do Not Die in Their War*. But I will provide Osuntokun's account to explain the reality of the Fulani veto over Nigeria.

Osuntokun's account is not inclusive of the historical account of how that came about, so, I will attempt to add this only to extend what he has said without necessarily disagreeing with him, even though I will end up disagreeing with his conclusion.

Nevertheless, I must also note that the disagreement might be a function of ideological differences, arising from the way we would necessarily interpret the same phenomenon. We are entitled to our opinions, it is the facts that we are not entitled to, and I agree with the facts as enunciated by him.

If we look at page 168 of *But Always as Friends* by Sharwood Smith, we will see very clearly, the level of British complicity in the creation of the hegemonies. The British had prior to the inauguration of the 1951 parliament, agreed with the northern ruling class that they would be handed a veto in any arrangement that would create a single country, and not allow them to go on their own, as it would be economically ruinous. The articulated desire of the northern ruling class was, however, to be left out of Nigeria.

In order to assure this, the structure of the Government to come was clearly agreed with the British. This is

documented by Sharwood Smith in 2nd paragraph of page 221 of *But Always as Friends*, where he stated that “half of the members of the house of representatives was to come from the north.

There were 136 members – 68 from the northern part, 68 from the two southern regions combined. This will mean that each region had 34 members. Hence the north had 68 and the western region had 34 and the east, 34.

This was the beginning of the institution of the Fulani hegemony over Nigeria. It is also the beginning of the problems that have plagued Nigeria from the dawn of its birth.

The British have a long history of creating royal messes wherever they ruled even though with the very best of intentions as they would always protest. The same thing was done in Nigeria where they handed a veto with the best of intentions to Northern Nigeria. Every nation develops with some sort of hegemony or the other propelling its development.

Given the fact that the British found it much easier to work with the Fulani, it was to be expected that they would favour them above any other as a people unto whom to hand power.

But in giving this power over, the British created a problem that I have dealt with to an extent in *Do Not Die in their War*. Akin Osuntokun touched on it in his treatise but I have gained a little better understanding of the subject. I

would want to extend this a little further to expose the misapplication of the veto thus given to Ahmadu Bello and the northern political establishment.

For reasons I have never bothered to research, but by which I have recently become rather curious, the British have always referred to their homeland as blighty, and; if the truth be told, whilst Britain was once great and was indeed Great Britain, the reality would suggest that it is no longer great but has actually shrank and become little England.

However, in the days of its greatness, Britain did do a lot to blight several lands. The blight of Britain ripped apart the Indian subcontinent; birthed in blood, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Burma; and of course, the Rohingya problem in Myanmar. The one thing that the British have done in all their overseas inheritances, is that despite the best of intentions, they have always managed to leave their blight behind. Nigeria is not an exception.

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**THE** road to hell is paved with good intentions and as well intentioned as the British might have been, there was nothing altruistic about the creation of the veto that was created in Nigeria. It was done with the assumption that there would be a strong federation based on the regional system to ensure that peace would be kept and that this

peace would endure regardless of the inequities of creating a lopsided system that assured the veto in the hand of one out of three regions at the point of independence.

What happened subsequently was not something they could have foreseen. The feudalistic democracy that the British presumed to have left behind, was soon lost to Nzeogwu's attempt to correct the injustice which only paused it but never solved the problem.

It is critical at this point to address the nature of the veto and the way it was used and abused; those who have inherited the veto and how the same veto had been passed down overtime. This becomes important because the hegemony exercising this veto has evolved over time; and whilst the veto has remained in the hand of the hegemony, the hegemony itself has not remained the same, or impervious to change.

I believe that the people of both the Eastern and Western Regions, and their leaders Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo, must have seen this not too subtle veto that the British were handing to their favourite son. But they must have been persuaded by their erroneous belief that the federation being created was one that was strong enough to allow them develop at their own pace and to have reasonable control over the resources of their regions, and that if it ever came to it, they would have been able to go their separate ways because all three regions had rather

strong secessionist instincts at the dawn of the Nigerian Independence.

The North was always happy to go on its own, as were the Igbo and to a lesser extent, the Yoruba. Hence, it was a situation in which for various reasons, the strong federation made the veto a lot less difficult to accept. The veto could not have been missed by anyone looking at it, but it was accepted, and it became an integral part of Nigeria, but it was the misuse of this veto that led to both the first and the second coups of 1966. In the immediate aftermath of the second coup, the express demand of the principal conspirators, particularly Murtala Mohammed, was for the northern part of Nigeria to go its separate ways.

There are several historical accounts of how they were persuaded to stay within the Nigerian federation. It was pointed out to them that it was more beneficial for them to stay than to go away. However, the hegemony that was created at the dawn of Nigeria's birth remained in place and was further affirmed in the attempt at secession in the immediate aftermath of the second coup.

The first thing that happened after the second coup was that, in so far as it related to the rest of Nigeria, the army hierarchy no longer followed seniority. Northern Non-Commissioned Officers were refusing to take orders from southern officers, including Yoruba officers. They would only take orders from their fellow northerners. It is also instructive to note that when the decision was taken to stay,

the choice of Gowon was one that was more or less forced on the Murtala Mohammed faction of the coup plotters, who originally preferred Murtala Mohammed.

To them, Gowon was always a child of the concubine and not one of them, but it was impolitic at that point to argue this, because the bulk of the officer corps of the Nigerian army at the time were drawn from the middle belt as were the men of the lower ranks.

In the fourth paragraph of page 365 of his book *But Always as Friends*, in describing the composition of the Nigerian army at the dawn of independence in 1957, Sharwood Smith said "at the moment in the army, men and the fighting units were predominantly northerners. Not northern Muslims as in the past, but pagans and Christianised pagans from Tiv, Zuru and the hills and valleys of Bauchi and Adamawa".

These were the words of Sharwood Smith and this was the reality at the dawn of the coup, even though a lot of aggressive recruitment and promotion had been done in the immediate aftermath of independence, when unqualified persons such as our present president Muhammadu Buhari, were recruited into the army based on enforced quotas. These persons were the ones who at the dawn of the second coup, were more or less forced to accept Gowon as a compromise candidate, in order to ensure that northern unity was preserved, but no pretense was made at Nigerian unity.

The veto that had been threatened by the first coup was preserved, but under a new hegemony. The hegemony had begun to change, because the original veto that used to reside in the hands of the sultan and the emirs, moved with political independence into the hand of a new political class led by the Saradauna. When that class was decimated in 1966, the new class of power holders comprised boys recruited, mostly promoted by the NPC elements, who in actual fact instigated the second coup and who continued to exert powers behind the thrones, loosely known in later years as the 'Kaduna Mafia.'

Hence the powers moved, first from the political leadership in the emirs to the elected politicians who worked in consonance with the emirs and traditional rulership, which then evolved over time into the military political class of the north, to which was aligned to a very large extent, particularly for reasons of street legitimacy, to the traditional rulership system. But the essential nature of the hegemony began to change at this point, because the hegemony was not created to accommodate the rulership of the children of the concubines. It was a veto that was reserved for the children of the favourite wives.

But the Fulani is patient if nothing else. Murtala Mohammed always saw himself as the president-in-waiting, thus the coup of 29 July 29, 1975, that brought him to power, was a self-fulfilling prophecy. Accounts of the Murtala coup would leave anyone clear that even Gowon was aware that

he was going to be toppled; he also knew that he had lost control of the officer corps because by this time, key officers of the army had become disenchanted with him.

Murtala Muhammed was charismatic. He waited and bided his time, probably to avoid bloodshed, until a perfect opportunity presented itself. And with Gowon out of the country attending the 12th summit of the Organisation of African Unity in Kampala Uganda, Murtala Mohammed executed his plan and took over. But this is not what is important.

What is important was what came in the immediate aftermath of Murtala Mohammed's murder in the coup that brought Obasanjo to power.

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## **Masters of the Veto**

**THIS** hegemony is what has always propelled Nigeria. Nigeria was designed with the hegemony in mind. The character and shape of the hegemony has changed over time. Its own internal struggles have also meant that its principal characters have equally evolved. But the most important thing to be noted is that the principal characteristic of the hegemony, which is feudalism, has morphed over the years and it is no longer the traditional

emir or sultan sitting in some corner somewhere with a turban that is calling the shot.

In seeking to understand this, it is important to understand that one of the first things that Ahmadu Bello did after independence, was to assert his powers over the traditional institution in a manner not unlike the way the British themselves asserted powers.

He saw himself more as the holder of the powers that had been bequeathed by the British than a trustee of power on behalf of the emirs and sultan. The Sardauna was a master in the art of the deployment of power, and he owned the political powers that he wielded. Subsequent inheritors of these powers have also seen themselves essentially as political overlords of the emirs. And as the military, which was essentially at this time of northern extraction, became ever more influential, the traditional power basis became less important.

When Ahmadu Bello was at the peak of his powers, he deposed the emir of Kano, Sanusi Lamido, grandfather of the recently deposed emir of Kano, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi.

When Babangida was at the peak of his powers, he declined to make Maccido the sultan of Sokoto; he instead, thrust his friend, Dasuki into the office.

When Abacha came to power, one of the ways in which he sought to curtail the influences of Babangida over his government and to assert himself as the *de-facto* ruler of Nigeria, was when he removed the Sultan of Sokoto,

banished him eventually to Kaduna, and then brought Maccido, who had been overlooked when Dasuki was favoured by Babangida, as the Sultan of Sokoto.

The thing to note is that, at all point in time, the hegemony did not change, the real power levers as it relates to the rest of Nigeria, remained the same. And over the years and as the military and its influence over Nigeria had grown, what has happened is that in consonance with the command structure of the Nigerian military and also as a consequence of the grievance politics that the State had promoted over the years, beneficiaries of the powers (gained by grievance politics) became more or less a new feudal class across the length and breadth of Nigeria, and they have collaborated with the holders of the veto in a pan-Nigeria consensus arrangement to ruin the country for their own benefit.

This has become particularly necessary under the civilian government of the last 21 years. But it has also been the reason why we are back where we were, at the dawn or shall I say just before nightfall in the First Republic. The veto is again being misused simply because an alliance has been found outside of the north.

Buhari's worst instinct has again been unleashed and the worst of northern instincts has been unleashed not only against the possibilities of the Nigeria nation, but against the already fragile State, and even within the northern part itself.

## **Feudalism... the malignant cancer**

TO be sure, feudalism in its classic form has only ever been known to the north, and it is through this region that the concept of feudalism has spread to every other part of Nigeria. It is important to trace this spread, what has propelled it, and exactly how it is linked to the issue of the ruling hegemonies in Nigeria.

We have explored how the inability to manage the veto had led to the first coup and how the failure to manage the crisis arising from that eventually led to the civil war.

Before the civil war, in the immediate aftermath of the first coup, the orphans of power, the Northern Peoples Congress, NPC politicians who had lost power and out in the cold, were the ones who actively promoted the notion of an Igbo coup, instigated the second coup and directed events from behind the scenes.

It is interesting to note that by all accounts of history, the federal civil service was already top heavy with northern permanent secretaries in strategic places, and this continued to be the case, up until the point the First Republic ended.

With the outbreak of the civil war, the old positions filled by the Igbos, now cut off in Biafra, were rapidly filled up mostly with Hausa-Fulani appointees aggressively recruited in droves to take up these vacancies. By the end of the war, things became even more glaring.

The structures of today's iniquities were erected in these days.

Yakubu Gowon could mouth his "no victor no vanquished" mantra all he wanted, but the fact that it took years before an Igbo general would emerge out of the Nigerian army gives clear evidence of the decision that was taken at the end of the war to exclude the Southeasterners from all positions of power. Elections have consequences, and so do wars: *Ndigbo* lost the Nigerian civil war, and *two generations* have been brutally suppressed by the ones that have won. But the third generation is demanding freedom.

There were other collaborators, but hegemonies have always required collaborators for their survival. For the Fulani to maintain their hegemony in Hausa land, they became part and parcel of that system. Much the same thing has happened; the Fulani hegemony with its route in feudalism began to cross its natural boundaries the moment the strong regions were removed at the end of the second coup.

Nigeria became a unitarised country with a centralised system of government. The people directing public affairs and policy were mostly of Hausa-Fulani extraction, and they were directing affairs with their eyes on the preservation of the veto that they have always held.

Nigeria was restructured along unitary lines, there was centralisation of all powers, the regional system that had acted as a counterweight to the veto was wiped out, and

Nigeria became a centralised system where the centre now dictates what happens in the federating units. These were then increased exponentially based on the narrow interests of key participants in the military government. Looking at the politics of state creation in Nigeria, you will begin to understand how we came to the point where we moved from three regions; the consensus that we should be increased to six that has always existed and have today become 36 states and the federal capital territory that is also essentially a state on its own to all intent and purpose.

We moved from having three federating regions, which had reasonable control over their own affairs to a 36-state structure where states are incapable of paying their own salaries without going back to Abuja, cap in hand. And the fiat and approval of the federal government in Abuja must be sought before a state, the federating unit in a federal system, might be allowed to create local government councils!

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## **The clientele politicians**

ONE of the enduring effects of military rule and the need to preserve the unjust Nigerian governance system is that a second class of politicians began to develop, and these are the clientele class.

I have already identified the 'grievance politicians', who, all they do, is create divisions because they have to exist in the niche where the grievances of the people that have been suppressed by the system must find ventilation. So, they are perpetually angry and constantly whipping up disunity and one problem or the other in the system, because they profit by it.

The second group are the clientele politicians. These are the ones whom the system supports because they exist to give support to the system as well, hence it is a symbiotic relationship.

These politicians are always for the existence of the *status quo*. Obasanjo is a classic example of that. He is the archetypical clientele politician in Nigeria.

The totality of their existence is devoted to rationalising why the system that has sustained them in power and granted them advantages should be inviolate, regardless of whether common sense should dictate that there is a need to look and tweak. They do not want to hear at any point in time that there is anything wrong with that system. They feed, breathe, are fed fat on the system, and have become exceedingly wealthy by the system.

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**THERE** has always been a consensus that governs the hegemony. The central hegemony at the federal level has

always operated on the consensus that there was either always going to be an agreement to maintain the illusion of one north in which case it becomes easier to find an alliance outside of the north with either the west, the east or the southern minorities and an alliance with the Igbo. But over time, and with the centralised form of government and the almost completely unchallenged capacity to write the constitution of Nigeria in its own image, what we then have is that every constitution that had been written for Nigeria, since after the First Republic, have essentially been products of military fiats.

The 1979 constitution was one, and the 1999 constitution is no exception. It might declare that “we the people”, but it never consulted any Nigerian. It is the expressed will of the military lords of the Nigeria State.

It is important to conclude this section by pointing out a fact that I have laid bare in the book on the judiciary, and it is the fact that this veto is incompatible with the notion of justice and equity and with the very idea of the rule of law. Because the existence of those principles, directly threatens the integrity of the veto, what has happened invariably all the time is that whenever the veto has been threatened, there have been systemic shutdowns with the system reinventing itself always in a more virulent form.

I am compelled by a predilection for linguistic exactitude to again attempt to perhaps explain the nature and the make-up of the new feudal class.

I have attempted in the preceding chapters to draw a link between the feudal nature of Northern Nigeria, the relationship it enjoyed with the British and the preference of the British for that feudal influence to be the hegemony that will govern the nation they were seeking to build. But this feudal hegemony was essentially confined to the affairs of Northern Nigeria and to the areas where it had influence over the federal governance.

I have explained in the preceding chapters how the strength of the federating regions as negotiated before independence, had mitigated against the worst instincts of this feudal hegemony that had been created. So even though it had a veto over what would happen at the federal level, to a very large extent, it was not in control of what the regions will do with pretty much everything that dealt with the day-to-day life and livelihood of the people who live in those regions.

However, at the end of the civil war and with the loss of any check and balance on the capacity of the military, which was largely in the hand of the northern part of Nigeria to direct and dictate policies, the hegemony that was governing only the northern part of Nigeria and certainly things that had to do at the national level with defense, now began to govern the regions.

It must be understood that one of the first things that happened at the dawn of the civil war was that states were created. Hence, what used to be four regions at the

beginning of the war became 12 states. If you examine the history of state creations in Nigeria, you will find very quickly that they were never influenced by any altruistic motive or by any grand ambition. It has always been essentially one of the ways in which hegemonies were created and persons rewarded for their services to the system. Generals who were deemed influential enough in the army had states created for them. The story of how Asaba became the capital of Delta State is in the public domain for everyone to educate themselves. There are several instances where the influence of persons or groups of persons have been the determinant factor in the creation of a state.

But in all this process of state creation, the balance of 1951 remained untouched. At all point in time, the numbers of seats in any central body remained in the same ratio as had been agreed prior to the 1951 inauguration of the house of representatives. Hence, by the time states were being created in multiples, the number of states in the north remained equal only to the totality of states in the southern part of Nigeria. So, this delicate balance was always kept. By the time the military came into power, even though there might be Fulani administrators or in some cases, administrators of the state origin, they were taking directives through the unitary structure of the Nigerian military.

In doing this, one of the things that began to happen is the fact that there was the creation of what I would like to

refer to as modern day warrant chiefs. Just as the British created chiefdoms in Igbo land, these warrant chiefs were created by the military to be able to govern the country effectively. In administering a state like Lagos, for instance, Buba Marwa might have been the governor of the state, but he worked with indigenes of the state, whom he appointed without recourse to any parliament or to the citizens of the state. Hence, these were always persons acceptable to the military and who were promoted into offices by the grace of the military and they served at the pleasure of the military super complex.

This process was replicated all over Nigeria and in each locality. What the military sought to do was to equally rule as unobtrusively as the British had done using the indirect system. No culture in Nigeria is better suited for this than the Fulani culture of governance (which is inherently feudalistic in nature). The fact that the military industrial complex and the civil service where policy was shaped, were largely in the hand of the north, encouraged the feudalisation of the systems.

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## **Re-characterisation of the Progressives**

AS I had pointed out in the preceding chapters, two forms of politics developed during this season: the first is grievance politics, the second was clientele politics.

Grievance politics was essentially the exclusive preserve of the Yoruba. The mainstream politics of the Yoruba throughout this season was to complain about the state of affairs in the Nigerian federation. And by reason of their control of the media in this season, the Yoruba shaped the narrative and the political direction of Nigeria, because they automatically assumed the position of the opposition to the feudal system ruling Nigeria. It is not surprising that this was the case.

Obafemi Awolowo, the political leader of the Yoruba, had engaged this feudal system from the beginning. Clearly understanding what he was dealing with, he had as a response, empowered his people by making sure that education was widely available to all who would seek it. In gaining that knowledge, he had prepared and mobilised his people as a counter-force against the forces of feudalism that was already rampant in Nigeria in his time. So, it was quite easy for the Yoruba in the year of the military era, to retain their consciousness enough to constantly rebel against the feudalistic instinct of the military class. The Yoruba became essentially the conscience of the Nigeria nation, not necessarily as a preserve but as a people. Yoruba politics was

shaped by grievance politics, and dissatisfaction with the existing governance systems.

When you leave the western part of Nigeria however, you will find that clientele politics developed, and by this I speak specifically to the class of politicians that developed in the eastern, south-southern, middle belt parts, and practically everywhere outside of Yoruba land in that season.

In that season, what simply happened was that men who were deemed loyal to the system or amenable to its demand were promoted in the different parts of Nigeria where the military administration had to work. There were pockets of resistance to the feudalisation, but more generally, the politics of grievance was only rewarded in the western part of the country given the nature of its politics.

In other parts of Nigeria, to gain political prominence, you almost always had to be in the good books of the military. This became the only path to political advancement for a lot of politicians in those parts of the country. In fact, during the Babangida years, to talk of a diarchy, a fusion of the military and the politicians in the governance of Nigeria was common political discourse. Such was the level of acceptance of the centralised authority that governed Nigeria and the compatibility of the unified command system of the military to the governance of the country that it was normal to begin to talk about a fusion of the two in order to have stability of the system.

You will find that during this season, the likes of Arthur Nzeribe, Orji Kalu, Arisekola Alao, Lamidi Adedibu, and so many others who were beneficiaries of the powers that were conferred on them, not by the people but by the military, became the apostles of diarchy.

This was the season when the spread of feudalism and the development of the new feudal class gathered pace in Nigeria.

After the death of Abacha came the Abdulsalami transition programme. Anyone who is truly interested in understanding the phenomenon of grievance politics, clientele politics and how these two combined to shape the proliferation of the feudal system that exercises the Nigerian veto in the form of the creation of feudal hegemonies in each of the new states; anyone who is genuinely interested in that history should become a student of the political history of Abdulsalami's transition. I will explain.

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## **Disrobement of the Progressives**

**AT** the dawn of this republic, the political parties that emerged, totalling three, in the history of their trajectory and formation, hold particularly important lessons for any would-be student of Nigerian feudalism. The *Afenifere* intellectually led at the time by the late Chief Bola Ige as

deputy to Chief Abraham Adesanya, having received assurances from the mainstream after Abiola's murder, sought to be as close to the mainstream as they could possibly be and their original party of choice was the PDP. Indeed, Chief Bola Ige it was, that wrote the constitution of the PDP.

But they found out very quickly, that grievance politics, which is the hallmark of Yoruba politics as exemplified by the *Afenifere*, could not find accommodation within the conservative conclave that the PDP truly represented. So, they came out of the PDP and became part of the APP.

I have recounted in *Do Not Die in their War*, the formation of both the PDP and APP, all of which I was witness to. I have equally gone further to explain the ringside seat afforded me by my chairmanship of what was known as *Binokonu*, a Yoruba irredentist group that was affiliated to *Afenifere*, and my relationship with the current Attorney-General of Osun State, Mr. Femi Akande, the son of Chief Bisi Akande, who was my friend and a member of the *Binokonu*, whilst we were in law school.

I knew and could see how the ideological purity of the AD made it impossible for them to either find a home with the military establishment that was the then owner of the Nigerian veto power. They could not find room in that party and came out seeking to find alliance with the Shinkafi faction of that hegemony. A failure to find that accommodation, led them into branding certain classes of

politicians as 'Abacha politicians.' These were the beneficiaries of the clientele politics that developed during the years of the military and who did not join the principled boycott of the grievance politicians during the Abacha years.

The tensions between these groups ensured that at the formation of political parties, at the dawn of this republic, the grievance politicians essentially marooned themselves into the AD, and the establishment politicians who were past masters in the art of clientele politics were bunched together in the PDP. On the other hand, was the traditional party of the old guards who had lost powers in the years that the military had had to develop their own power structure and who eventually fused, for lack of ideological backbone, into the PDP and had never managed to create an identity separate and distinct from that of the clientele politicians.

It is instructive to note that at the beginning of Buhari's presidential ambition, he could never find any accommodation with elements of the core PDP but he was always at home within the ANPP, which was the party of the religious and tribal irredentists who did not understand the way the Nigerian game was meant to be played and were never willing to play by those rules. The PDP never found room for Buhari and neither did the AD because he was identified as who he was by both. Buhari became the beneficiary of the splinter groups of the conservative north that could not find accommodation within the PDP.

By the time, the election of 2003 was to come around, the AD which had been registered, bending the clear published rules governing the Abdulsalami transition, was to suffer recompense for the compromises it made in 1999. What Obasanjo did was to unleash what was known as the tsunami of 2003, sweeping out the AD almost without exception. Perhaps, it should be said without exception because the only survivor of the 2003 PDP tsunami that tripped over Yoruba land, was Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who in truth was never a part of the *Afenifere* conclave, but was merely a beneficiary of the grievance politics of the *Afenifere*, which he played in the realisation that they were the only viable political platform in Yoruba land in 1999.

With the decimation of the AD and every one of its princes in 2003, feudalism was introduced full-fledged into the innermost part of the Yoruba land, and men who were not responsible to the populace, but held their power by virtue of the alliance they had formed with the owners of the Nigerian veto, became beneficiaries of power in Yoruba Land, just as they had been in other parts of Nigeria. And the feudalisation of Nigeria was finally completed in that season.

In place of the *Awoists*, who had been the primary beneficiary of the grievance politics of the South-Western part of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu became the new centre of power, around whom all pretenses of progressive politics began to coalesce. The past 18 years of Tinubu's

uninterrupted and unfettered control of Lagos State and to some extent Yoruba politics, would suggest that there is absolutely nothing progressive about his politics and that he is a student of power who is completely at home however his need is met.

Whatever doubt ever existed as to the conservative credentials of Bola Ahmed Tinubu, disappeared and vapourised upon the creation of the APC; his support for Muhammadu Buhari and the capacity to find explanations and rationalisations for his worst instinct. The forces of feudalism, the same that sought out Ladoke Akintola (in the First Republic), found their perfect match and partner in Bola Ahmed Tinubu, and history would recall that with the creation of the APC, full-fledged feudalism overtook every part of the Nigeria nation.

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*Nigerians have seen constant agitations to succeed to office but there has never been any constant agitation to change the society for the better or to change the trajectory of the nation itself and prepare it for life in the new age. The rather unfortunate consequence of this constant power plays has been the liberalisation of corrupt practices in Nigeria, the normalisation of the same practices and the complete subjectivisation of the truth. To be sure, corruption in Nigeria must be understood as being completely different in meaning from that in any other country in the world.*

# Chapter 5

## A foundation of Lies

Lies have a way of multiplying. It gives birth rather rapidly. The easiest way to illustrate the prolific nature of lies is to consider the fact that for every lie that a man tells, there would have to be other lies to scaffold and maintain the lie that had been told. The lies that were told to scaffold the original lie usually end up as it is in the very nature of lies, to further multiply. A person caught up in the web of lies, however good he might be, eventually trips himself up with his lies.

When you construct anything on a foundation of lies such as an edifice like Nigeria, you may then liken this to a building that has a defective foundation.

Nobody better illustrates the tragedy, paradoxes, and ironies of the Nigeria State than the person of Obasanjo. For evidence of how horrible and dire our situation has become, I will turn to him and will be citing, copiously, paragraph 62-65 of the address he gave at Oleh during the Diocesan Conference of 2019. I will further be looking to reproduce in its entirety at this point, Alhaji Baba Ahmed Joda's letter to Lamido Sanusi upon his removal from the Emir of Kano throne. I had earlier cited this letter, but I am particularly interested in the portion that relates to the evil of feudalism

as enunciated by Ahmed Joda, who, as I have said earlier, cannot be said to be anything but a blue-blooded beneficiary of the same feudal system that he presumed to rail against, in his letter to his son.

When I speak of the original lie, it is tempting to believe it is the inequitable distribution of power that attended the birth of the Nigeria nation. That is not the original lie. The original lie is the one the British told themselves as they superintended the affairs of the northern part of Nigeria. They had viewed it as a monolithic whole because it suited their purposes at the dawn of Nigeria's creation to strengthen the existing system for ease of administration. And over the years, their presence was sufficient to keep the worst instinct of the Fulani irredentists who are traditionally slavers of the minorities, over which they were given powers by the British.

There is an anecdote that has been shared by no less than Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah. He explained that in his younger days, when he was found eating too hurriedly, his grandmother would turn to him and ask, "Are the Fulani coming?" For those who do not understand the context of this joke, I shall do my best to explain even though I had touched on it in *Do Not Die in their War*.

The Fulani principally raided all the minority tribes in the northern part of Nigeria, coming down towards the Benue trough for slaves. Traditionally, the Kanem Bornu empire expanded further towards the Sahel and the

Cameroon mountains and did its own slave raiding amongst the tribes that were to be found in these mountains. These tribes would come into the plain to plant and retreat into the mountains in order to avoid the marauding slave traders.

The British presumed to think that with the introduction of western education and values and their own governance systems to tame the worst instincts of the Muhammedans, there was going to be a united one singular north, driven by the principle of one North. But even as they did this, they were equally undermining the very thing that was required to keep the illusion real. I had earlier referred to a conversation between Sharwood Brooks and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, recounted on page 365 of *But Always as Friends*. Particularly, where he made detailed efforts to differentiate between Northerners.

I quote “at the moment in the army, men in the fighting units were predominantly Northerners, not Northern Muslims as in the past, but pagans and Christianised pagans from Tiv, Zuru and from the hills and valleys of Bauchi and Adamawa.”

It is important to note that even before the independence of Nigeria, the division amongst the tribes in the north was always evident to those from those parts, even though the lie of a monolithic Northern Nigeria was successfully sold to those in the southern parts.

In the southern part, particularly amongst the Yoruba who rarely traveled out of their tribal enclaves, everybody

from across the Niger was considered a Hausa person. The Fulani were so deeply assimilated and hidden within that Hausa catch-all phrase that for a long time, until the rise of Fulani irredentism in the 2000s, particularly with the ascendancy of Muhammadu Buhari politically, many Yoruba never really distinguished between the Fulani and the Hausa.

As far as the Yoruba man was concerned, everybody from across the River Niger was deemed a Hausa person, and was mostly dealt with on the basis of that singularity, as though the Yoruba were dealing with a monolithic North. For the Igbo and Southern minorities, the case was pretty much the same. The Igbo travelled extensively in Hausa land in the north and had for long been extremely peripatetic in their journeys across the Nigerian landscape, and so, were always aware of the differences. But these differences had never been sufficiently highlighted at any point in time to be understandable by anyone, but those who have made it their business to know.

For a long time, the North was the North and there was never any difference amongst the nationalities as far as the rest of Nigeria was concerned. But as the British planned their veto for their favourite children, historical realities would always suggest that this could not work: the fact that Buhari has today done a lot to polarise the North along tribal and ethnic lines, reopening old divides; the fact that Boko Haram, essentially a Kanuri construct, has begun the

process of reconquering territories that they had traditionally subjugated before the coming of the British, have meant that the north is today by far more fragmented than any other part of the Nigeria State.

The occasional inability to exercise this veto unchallenged, has never stopped its inheritors from finding other ways to exercise it. Whatever system of government was in place in the immediate aftermath of the second coup, Northern unity was kept intact by a deliberate fostering of solidarity amongst the governors. In the military era, careful attention was paid to the nurturing of the Northern Governors' Forum, which ensured that regional issues were kept on the front burner and the region spoke with one voice and had political guidance from those who knew what they were doing, and who acted in concert with each other.

The common interests of the supposedly monolithic North were identified and pursued with single-minded seriousness. The same was not the case in the other parts of Nigeria. At the dawn of the Nigerian civil war, when states were being created, attention was always paid to the maintenance of the power structure. Every state creation, regardless of who was in power – be it under Gowon, Murtala, Obasanjo, Ibrahim Babangida or Abacha – one thing was constant: the same power balance assuring that half of the number of states being created remained in the north. Also, the number of constituencies and seats in the

legislative houses have been carefully preserved over the years.

However, note that in the exercise of this veto powers, attention was always paid over the years to maintaining a healthy balance between the children of the favoured wives and those of the slave. Enough states were created for the Northern minorities to balance out the generals who were of minority extraction. Sharwood Smith spoke about the *Zuru*, who ended up having a state created for them in Kebbi because of the *Bamaiyi* brothers. It is a state in the North all the same, and the share from the federation account that used to only go for one state, now had to go to two. Hence, at every point in time, even when the interest of the Northern minority groups and their sponsors in government were taken care of, the overall interest of those who deemed themselves the owner of the veto were never forgotten.

The tension created by the need to balance this equation, has constantly shaped the trajectory of Nigerian politics.

The first coup arose out of a failure to manage the veto in an equitable manner. The second coup rose out of the need of those who believed themselves to have been dispossessed of a right to address what they considered wrong. The coup that removed Gowon from office was intended to place the right person on the throne believed to have been reserved for a particular people. The coup that removed Murtala Muhammed was itself a response and a reaction by factors

in the Middle Belt who believed themselves to have been wrongly dispossessed of power and victimised by the hegemony, against which their ancestors had always fought.

There have always been an unhealthy competition for power and need to re-equate and balance power because that power had never been amendable to any peaceful change over the years. In the course of these conflicts, there have been accidental beneficiaries of the power being exercised by whoever is in control of the hegemony that controls Nigeria.

It must be understood very clearly that, given the nature of the powers that go with being in control of the Nigerian space, an unhealthy competition has developed around the power structure, and what happens is that there is a constant conflict for power within the power elite itself.

Nigerians have seen constant agitations to succeed to office but there has never been any constant agitation to change the society for the better or to change the trajectory of the nation itself and prepare it for life in the new age. The rather unfortunate consequence of this constant power plays has been the liberalisation of corrupt practices in Nigeria, the normalisation of the same practices and the complete subjectivisation of the truth. To be sure, corruption in Nigeria must be understood as being completely different in meaning from that in any other country in the world.

In Nigeria, what is called corruption is a catch-all phrase for class impunity. In other countries, these are clearly

crimes and would be charged as such, but in Nigeria, corruption is a special class of offence that covers the dealings of the ruling class that they euphemistically refer to as corruption, when in reality, they are nothing but class stealing and outright brigandage. But these have become inevitable in an atmosphere where corruption has been normalised on account of the fact that the law does not rule, but the discretion of human beings is allowed and necessary in order to assure that some people remain above the law.

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### **The curse from 1947**

**WITH** the spread of feudalism due to years of military rule and the subsequent introduction of the 1999 constitution, which more or less democratised it, there has been a rise in the class of clientele politics. The economy itself has taken a rental form, where real productivity has been stifled and men of ideas are incapable of playing in the political space. Political parties have become power platforms merely for seeking office, completely bereft of ideology and empty of any pretensions of being visionary.

Every seed reproduces after its kind and every system produces exactly what it was designed to produce. For instance, if you design a plant to produce PET bottles, it would be asinine to expect porcelain plates. It would

produce what it was designed to produce. That is in the normal course of everyday business. A state is not any different.

When its users and administrators follow the design template it would always produce exactly what it was designed to produce. There might be times when you have systemic errors, which we shall discuss later, but every system produces exactly what it was designed to produce for as long as it continues to work as it was designed.

The Nigeria State has remained faithful to the design of 1947. I have shown this by the evidence of state creation and the faithfulness with which it had adhered to the agreements of 1947. You will also agree when you realise that it has never been possible for Nigeria as a nation to hold a credible census. Such exercise would have undermined the lies that were told in 1947 and that we have continued to honour with more lies and the scaffolding of lies even in 2020.

The system around which Nigeria was designed in 1947, and subsequently, was extremely feudalistic in nature. The British were looking to build upon an existing system as earlier explained, and in building upon this system, they had to work with what they found on ground: the feudalistic empires upon which they presumed to layer their own modern sophistication.

The rise of this feudalistic system during the military years with its own command structure, which turned Nigeria into a unitary state, brought real consequences. The

first of these is that to maintain a feudal system, which necessitates multiple layers of citizenship whilst pretending that these do not exist because they were not justifiable, Nigeria has institutionalised madness, and Nigerians have learnt to embrace madness as though normalcies. I will explain. What is called corruption in Nigeria, in my own view, is not corruption, but mere attempts at equalisation of unjust rights by the victims. One ready example comes to mind. Despite the announced lockdown in Nigeria during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government at various levels went out of their way to announce exceptions for Dangote trucks.

In *Do Not Die in their War*, I alluded to a conversation I had with a police officer about how Dangote trucks were exempt from any roadblocks and checkpoints, which should be the case for all genuine businesses, such as Dangote's, but because the system is dysfunctional, special exceptions must be made for a special class of corporate citizen. The same special exception has equally been extended in this season of the pandemic to a corporate citizen, which created the room for the administrators of the exception to make money by using their own discretion. But the need to relax rules for one would allow several others pass once they are able to pay the bills.

The readiness to pay is created by necessity and exception. Hence, we see a situation where in relation to certain corporate citizens, a clear dichotomy in rights have

been created, which is subject to somebody's discretion. But this has birthed brand-new toll gates administered by different agencies. As it is for corporate citizens, so it would also appear to be for private citizens. The brazen hypocrisy displayed and highlighted during the sickness, and later burial of the former chief of staff to the president shows clearly that some people are more equal than the others.

The temptation is always to assume that when we talk about some people being more equal than the others, then the discussion is centred around tribes. This is what makes it easy for feudalism to hide in plain sight and for Nigerians not to see it.

But this is the part where we need to begin to ask questions that even when the primary requirement for entry into that feuded class might, for the simple-minded, be tribe or religion, how does Obasanjo qualify? He is neither Fulani nor Muslim; a Christian who has even gone further to take degrees in Christian Studies; he has never stopped preaching and preachifying. But he has been one of the greatest beneficiaries of the Nigerian system.

If it were to be about ethnic nationality, Bola Ahmed Tinubu is not Fulani, and no one of Fulani extraction has ever posted to rule in Abia State. Oyo State has not been ruled by anyone outside of Ibadan origin for over the last 21 years, except Alao-Akala, but this has not turned Ibadan into *Eldorado*. They might be on the way there if the gentleman in office now is to be believed, but they certainly have not been

there, and that is before looking at Oke-Ogun and other forsaken parts of Oyo State.

The reality that must be dawning on every Nigerian is the fact that the country has become a feudal state where the care of the people in power has become the *raison d'être* of the State, and not care of the citizens who have actually been rendered serfs. The entire purpose of the State has become the maintenance of the ruling class in style and in power.

The most difficult things to find are usually hidden in plain sight. Not that they are hidden, but sometimes, we do not see the forest because of the trees; we become so focused on one thing that we are tragically distracted away from the other.

In the case of Nigerian feudalism, I believe the inability to diagnose the problem as early as we should have been able to, arises perhaps from firstly, the fact that it has been in plain sight; secondly, the preoccupation with a search for the solution to corruption, which led us for a long time to mis-diagnose our problem and to focus on an anti-corruption crusade as though that was the very problem of the Nigeria State. This wrong focus, more than anything else, led to the ascendancy of Muhammadu Buhari, particularly in 2015, when he was juxtaposed against Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.

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## **Building a Nation on crooked legs**

IN seeking to explain the role of hegemonies in shaping the trajectories of a nation, I have earlier sought to draw a parallel between human habits and national hegemonies as propellant for the development of either a person or a nation.

Take for instance, a man who is a smoker is compelled by his habits to have ash trays, lighters and matches, and if he is conscious of his hygiene, he would probably have deodorants. The smoking man is constrained by his habits to do certain things and to acquire certain peccadillos. So, it is with a nation as well.

The hegemonies that rule a nation shape its habit, its proclivities, determine what it prioritises, frames the way it presumes to respond to phenomenon, how it envisions and shapes its future. What the British left behind, as I had already laboured to explain, was a feudal system. Although an attempt was made to correct the worst instinct of that feudal system, the attempt only served to bring out even the worst of what survived. The original issues raised by the first coup were never addressed by General Aguiyi Ironsi who inherited the power that was left in the vacuum occasioned by the murders of the first set of coup plotters in the immediate aftermath of the second coup.

Yakubu Gowon did try at the urging of the British to make peace with the Igbo. One of such attempts was made

at what became known as the Aburi Conference, where Ojukwu repeated much the same demands as the original coup plotters: a weaker central government, much more powerful regions. These were agreed to at Aburi but were later dishonoured and impudently disclaimed by the Gowon government.

A lot of commentators have argued, or rather placed the blame for the rejection of what had earlier been agreed in Aburi at the doorstep of the late Oba of Benin, Akenzua II, who was the Permanent Secretary at the Presidency at the time. I think this would be a rather simplistic conclusion to draw, given the fact that Sharwood Smith appears to have made clear that even at this point in Nigerian history pre-Independent, the North was already prepared to take power through the Military, if that was the option left to preserve the inherited veto.

With Gowon reneging on the Aburi Accord, the civil war became unavoidable; it was largely forced on the Igbo. But the civil war resolved nothing; if anything, it compounded the spread of feudalism in Nigeria.

By the end of the civil war, with the military firmly in control of governance, the unitary system of government with its centralised authority took full charge, and regardless of the best efforts of federalist such as Obafemi Awolowo, feudalism took hold, and it was formalised in the 1979 constitution. That document imported the presidential system of governance with its winner takes all proposition,

which presumes the homogeneity of the people and de-emphasises the strength of the old regions by breaking the country into a 19-state structure with nine firmly in the north.

Just as Nigeria was being broken into states based on inequitable parameters, other things were happening structurally, reflective of the hegemony that was in control of the country. As men became like gods, and systems that had existed before Independence were subverted because they were incompatible with the new military rule, the shape of a new nation was taking place but it was happening without the consent of the people and their unwary acquiescence.

Ten years in the life of a nation is as a day in the life of a man. What cannot be wished away are the effects of the unitary system that came with the military in shaping the cultures and the governance systems of the State. It must be said that the dominant instinct that has shaped Nigeria's trajectory from its birth, and particularly more so, since after the civil war, has been a most rapaciously feudalistic one.

As a man's habits shape his trajectory, as I have said *ad nauseam*, a nation's hegemony shapes its trajectory; it determines its choices and informs its decisions.

The feudalistic nature of the State that emerged from the civil war years meant that the law could not possibly apply to all the citizens in the same way. It is instructive that one of the first actions of successive military governments has

always been the suspension of the Nigerian constitution. And, after having suspended the constitution, the powers of the courts are further ousted in relation to actions of the government or its agencies, whilst the same laws are allowed to apply in some form or the other to the individual members of the State as far as the powers that be would allow its applications. So, it became the norms that the State began to decide what laws to obey and which not to obey, to whom the laws apply, and to whom it does not apply.

Nigeria became a case study in how not to build a nation.

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**THE** Nigerian judiciary was lost before the Nigeria nation was lost. This is more visible when you examine the appointive processes into the judicial offices.

Judges and magistrates are appointed at the mercy and behest of the governors; for the Federal High Court, the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, it is at the sole discretion of Mr. President. At no time has any governor or the presidency been shy of showing that such appointments are completely dependent on the appointees' readiness to do exactly as they are told.

The fact that in all the years of military rule, the legislative branch of governance was completely side-lined and unavailable has meant that whilst the executive has grown increasingly feudalistic in its instincts, the judiciary

whose officers it appoints has also learnt to stay in its lane and do exactly as it is directed. The fact that it is just as corrupt as every other facet of the Nigeria State has only rendered it much more susceptible to the control of the executive branch of government.

With the adoption of the presidential system under the 1979 constitution, a complete departure from everything that was ever agreed either by the British or even the owners of the hegemonies themselves, emirates were effectively created all over Nigeria and these became points from where patronages were dispensed.

The centre became exceedingly powerful. And at the end of the Second Republic with the first coming of Buhari and the subsequent locusts that succeeded him, the emirate system was further strengthened, and the patronage system was institutionalised.

The differential levels of citizenship became even more obvious and entrenched during these years.

The president became like a sultan with the powers to do exactly as he pleases. The Nigerian president is literally more powerful than the American president, at least it was, until the coming of Donald Trump. The Nigerian president essentially operates at the top of a gangster empire; is completely above the law; operates above the cult; is unrestrained and unfettered in his dealings and actions by any law that will bind every other citizen.

When the law does not bind a man and the morals of the people have become as compromised as that of Nigeria; impunity becomes the order of the day and the society itself begins to implode from within.

Nigeria became a mad house during the successive years of military rule.

When the system became scandalously unsustainable in the dying days of Sani Abacha, the system coalesced, and the different factions produced the Abacha solution: the Indian apple.

The consensus that has always governed the Nigerian space operates at best when it is working with the assumption of Northern unity. And when this is in any way, shape or form, undermined, be that as a result of some disunity within the conservative class in the North itself as became the case under Abacha; a disequilibrium is always thrown into the system, demanding some resolution or the other.

The Abacha apple episode was the resolution of that chapter. But these resolutions happen almost always with consequences. The emergence of Obasanjo was also a consequence of other things that had happened within the hegemony.

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## Chapter 6

### Sustaining the Hegemony

The creation of the first and original veto that was part of the foundation of the Nigeria State before its Independence has been well-documented. Sharwood Smith's book, particularly pages 216-221, dealt exhaustively with how the foundation was laid in 1947 to ensure that the North always held its veto. The debate also featured in *Do Not Die in their War* and in the earlier part of the current effort. But whilst it is rather easy to provide evidence of the existence of the original veto, it is not as apparent because of the opaque nature of the evolution of the feudal system that came after the death of Sardauna.

It is therefore necessary to trace the origin, character and metamorphoses of the feudal hegemony that has held sway over Nigeria from the inception.

I have relied extensively on several historical accounts of the period, particularly, the works of Sharwood Smith and other colonial officials, works of contemporary writers such as Akin Osuntokun and; of course, the scholarship of several Nigerian commentators and writers who were around at the time. But in seeking to understand the character of the Nigeria State, the tendencies and hegemonies that attended its birth, I have also taken care to listen to the disputations

amongst those who were there, taking care to understand the motivation behind their assertions so that I might better filter out the less reliable part of the stories they have told.

In seeking to understand Nigeria in the immediate aftermath of the first coup, it has proven important to read the works of the likes of Max Silhoun. Even the self-serving biographies of the likes of Olusegun Obasanjo, the works of Chris Ali and several other writers have provided windows at various times into the history of Nigeria.

What I have done is to piece together the history as best as I can, working hard to ensure that my personal opinions do not matter, but that the facts lead me to the interpretation of the events.

In the immediate aftermath of the first coup, with Ironsi as the most senior military officer taking power, his failure to punish those deemed the proponents of the coup, became a cause célèbre for the rump of the Northern People's Congress, NPC, who had been routed out of office in the coup and decapitated. They rallied around what was perceived as Ironsi's softness on the coup plotters. This became a rallying point for building what might best be interpreted as Northern solidarity and opposition to the Ironsi's government.

The Ironsi government issued Decree 1, which was more or less a suspension of the constitution and a unitarisation of the Nigeria State. This was in effect a reflection of the fact, given the military command structure of the army, which

was suddenly thrust into the position of leadership. But although this was an enforced choice, it became a rallying point for building opposition to the Ironsi government. To understand this, it is necessary to have historical perspective of Nigeria, at the point in time. Prior to Independence, the two other regions, and the two other major tribes, both the Hausa-Fulani, and the Yoruba, had deep-seated resentment for what was considered Igbo domination of the Nigerian federation.

The Igbo have always been by far more adventurous than all the other tribes in Nigeria. And by reason of their early embrace of western education, as well as their collaborative stance in colonial governance, the Igbo had taken lofty command positions in both the army and police. They equally staffed the upper echelon of the civil service and were to be found in almost every significant town and provinces in Nigeria. The affluence of the Igbo had made them ready preys whenever there had been combustion in the north. The Yoruba equally viewed the Igbo with distrust because of what was considered their overambitious and expansionist tendencies.

The southern minorities, part of whom had been placed in the newly created Mid-West Region, also had deep fears of Igbo hegemonic dominion ruling their consciousness, hence it was pretty easy to find a national consensus around which to coalesce. This was particularly more so in the

north, which had lost not only political leadership but also prominence in the army.

The original celebration that greeted the first coup, particularly in Kaduna and in most parts of north, was soon replaced by a deep resentment for what was soon rebranded as an 'Igbo coup'. This was the ferment that was rendered even more volatile by Ironsi's indecisiveness.

Had Ironsi moved to punish the original coup plotters, perhaps the excuses that were offered and provided to those who instigated the second coup would have been unavailable to them. But Ironsi by his indecisiveness, sealed his own fate.

Every historical account of that season in the aftermath of the second coup of 1966, would suggest that the band of coup plotters had no intention of taking over the reign of federal power. The primary motivation was to exert vengeance against Ironsi and officers of Igbo extraction. The secondary objective was the not too well- thoughtout reaction to the first, which was secession of the northern part of Nigeria.

These issues were later to be resolved with the British High Commission and the American Consul in attendance at Ikeja Cantonment in 1966, after the second coup. The immediate cry was one of *Arewa*, which translates to let each person go their way.

It took persuasion to create the second phase of the Nigerian veto and to begin the real feudalisation of the

Nigeria State. This was because of the success of the second coup.

The second coup was always inevitable. It could not, with the benefit of hindsight, have ever been prevented. There was no way Aguiyi Ironsi could have stayed in power unchallenged by those who had been dispossessed of the same.

To come to this conclusion, I have gone back in time extensively and read up on the factors that made the first coup inevitable, the second predictable, and the civil war, almost unavoidable.

As I had alluded to before, the two regions of the North and the West were in fear of Igbo domination at the dawn of the Nigerian Independence.

In fact, long before Independence, there had been latent anti-Igbo sentiment in the northern part. The Igbo are the most widely dispersed of Nigerians, extremely mercantile in their outlook and tailor-made to succeed in a country as vast as Nigeria, whose other inhabitants were almost always completely happy to stay in their own part of the country. The enterprising spirit of the Igbo is such that long before any of the other tribes began to venture out of their regions, the Igbo had travelled far and wide in Nigeria.

By the time politics began in earnest, and the great Azikiwe began to mobilise under the NCNC for what seemed a pan-Nigerian mandate, resistance to his course came from within the two other regions; and, since the shape

of politics in Nigeria developed along tribal lines, the country itself was balkanised into three regions, each dominated by distinct ethnic and linguistic groups.

At the dawn of Independence, the reality was that the Igbo, while not hated by the Yoruba were generally feared by them. It is almost impossible to divorce fear and its uterine twin, hatred. Though this fear did not snowball into the hatred that was manifest and easy to see in the north, it was nonetheless the national posture. The Igbo were the one that everybody loved to hate.

The minorities trapped in the Eastern region had their catalogue of woes, and tales of marginalisation in the hands of the Igbo majority. And as the happiness of minorities goes, those in the Eastern Region looked to the West as the model of what they'd prefer. Ndigbo were never much beloved in Nigeria, or by Nigerians.

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**AS** far back as 1957, the North had a contingency plan in place in the event that it were to ever lose power that was ceded to it within the Nigerian Federation preparatory to Independence. On page 365 of his book, Sharwood Smith recalled a letter he received from Tafawa Balewa, wherein he was charged specifically with two tasks: the most important led to the recommendation that the North should

accelerate its enlistment in the officer corps of the Nigerian army.

Smith made sure to make a distinction between what he termed the paganised and Christianised Northerners of the Middle-belt, the Plateau hills and Adamawa hills and the Hausa-Fulani of the core North. Beginning from early 50s, the North had rapidly sought to northernise the officer corps of the Nigerian army, largely using a variety of quota systems to ensure and enforce their will.

At the time of the first coup, the Nigerian army had a sizeable population of Hausa-Fulani officers, particularly within the junior corps, the lieutenants, captains, and majors. Quite a number of them were of Northern extraction.

Of particular interest should be Murtala Muhammed whose grandfather was the Grand-Alkali of the Kano Emirate, just as his father was. He had graduated from Barewa College and joined the army at age 20. He was just one of the crops of aristocratic Fulani men, who were steered into the army through the agency of the likes of Mamalari and the several other officers of Northern extraction who were used extensively in recruitment drives.

In the West on the other hand, this was the time when it was only those considered failures were enlisting in the army. The Yoruba would rather pursue careers in professions such as medicine, law and engineering. It was only the lowly, pursued by extreme poverty as have been

variously confessed by Obasanjo, or the mentally incapable, that were deemed good enough to be sent to the military.

The North was to reap a bountiful harvest because immediately after the first coup, with the mobilising work of the rump of the NPC, the latent hatred that had always existed for the Igbo based on the jealousies of their commercial success in far-flung part of Northern Nigeria; the incapacity of the Igbo to be assimilated into the societies where they found themselves trading; made them easy targets. And at the instigation of the rump of the NPC, a new consciousness began to spread in the north, which was bound by a common hatred for the Igbo man. The hatred of the ubiquitous Igbo nation became the binding glue for the northern hordes.

After successfully decapitating the government and killing Aguiyi Ironsi and Adekunle Fajuyi in Ibadan, embarking on the orgies of violence that had NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officers) turning their guns on their Igbo and Mid-Western officers, and in some cases the Yoruba officers, it dawned on the Fulani arrowheads of the coup that if they were to stay within the Nigerian Federation as they were being persuaded to do, they would have to revert to type and begin their centuries-old system of indirect rule once again.

The Fulani minority rulers needed to create and craft together a new hegemony in place of the one that had died. This was the hegemony they had refused to leave in the

hand of Ironsi, that they had not planned for when they killed him since they had not thought beyond revenge and at best secession until they were dissuaded by the British envoy and the American consul.

*“At the moment in the army, men in the fighting unit were predominantly Northerners. Not Northern Muslims as in the past, but pagans and Christianised pagans from Tiv, Zuru and from the hills and valleys of Bauchi and Adamawa. The technicians on the other hand and the men in the supply and transport unit, came almost entirely from the South. Equally, the Northern police, because of superior educational standards were mostly recruited from the non-Muslim middle belt provinces, while for different reasons, a high proportion of the police in the South were Igbo with officers. The position was largely reversed, there were I thought, far too few northern officers. A situation which under stress might have awkward consequences as could imbalance amongst other ranks. Much as one might dislike the thought, tribalism would be a potentially explosive factor in Nigerian politics for some time to come.”*

– **Sharwood Smith** (Page 365 – 366)

This was Sharwood Smith's position as at 1957, but it must be remembered that the Fulani rulers had now had nine years to correct the imbalance identified by Smith, in

his position paper to Tafawa Balewa back in 1957. Hence you had a situation where the officer corps had become better balanced in terms of the Fulani to Middle-belt officer ratio, it was now a better balance as far as the Fulani were concerned. But the fighting men in the units themselves, the regimental sergeant majors, the sergeants, the core of the fighting men remained essentially people of the Middle-belt and those generally referred to as the pagans and Christianised pagans.

These were the objective realities on the ground in July 1966.

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**THE** insistence of the North on retaking the veto that it had lost when its leadership was decapitated in the first coup had to be balanced against the need to preserve the illusion of a singular North. So, while it was okay to overlook Brig.Gen Babafemi Ogundipe, (the second in command to General Aguiyi Ironsi at the time of the July 1966 coup), and impose a Lt.Col. Yakubu Gowon as the head of the new government, it was only so because Murtala Muhammed was left with no choice but to accept the order of seniority, at least as far as it concerns the Northern Region, in order to preserve the illusion of a monolithic northern bloc.

To do this, realpolitik demanded that power must then be shared in an uneasy relationship with the other part of

the North that had never traditionally held these powers. This meant that the Zuru who were always the marginalised, the Borno and Kanuri, who were never quite at home with the British had to be brought into a new power concentric that was to administer the veto that had been retaken.

Having dealt with the enforced recalibration of what the North meant, the next thing that was done in order not to have too many warfronts, was to make the strategic move of removing the unjustly incarcerated Obafemi Awolowo from prison, in a move that was calculated to win the support of the Yoruba in the campaign against the Igbo. The Yoruba support was won as envisaged, but there was another critical support that was secured at the same time.

Each party to the new hegemony that was being crafted joined in for reasons best known to each. The benefit of history means that one has a rear-view mirror from whence to look. But one critical part of the hegemony were the Nigerian ethnic and religious minorities. Taken together as a group, the minorities are actually numerically superior in number to any of the three major ethnic groups. But given their balkanisation in the three original regions – which became four at the dawn of the second coup – simply meant that their fear of ethnic domination and injustice which had always coloured their relationship with every one of the majority, it was better to be a part of a united Nigeria. In a

balkanised Nigeria their minority status would guarantee their marginalisation.

It then meant that at every point in time when anyone of the three major ethnic groups sought to break away from the Nigerian federation, it had to fall on the ethnic minorities, acting in concert without consultation, responding to their own fears, to act as a check on every secessionist tendency.

There is nothing for the ethnic minorities in a breakdown of the Nigerian Federation. Those in the northern part have centuries-old memories of Fulani or Borno domination.

I have dealt extensively with the history of Fulani slave trading and how long it persisted; how it shaped the tone of their relationship with every one of the other tribes, trapped in what had for so long been erroneously referred to as northern Nigeria, as though it is one homogenous whole for whom the Hausa-Fulani speaks.

In the South East, the Igbo are the single largest ethnic group. Given the regions as set up by the British for the benefit of their own administrative convenience -- as with the Igbo, the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba -- numerically, the Igbo will always form the government. This is not unlike the Ibadan vote in Oyo politics, every other part of the state ends up as minorities, and this is a purely Yoruba state. So, the refusal to ensure justice amongst all has created minorities, even within a tribe and a sub-group.

It is not my purpose to examine who was right or wrong, or what the role of each of the tribes might have been in the

prosecution of the Nigerian civil war. But what one can see clearly in the rear-view mirror of time is that even though Gowon might have trumpeted "no victor, no vanquished," the reality was that the Igbo were thoroughly vanquished.

In the apportionment of rights and privileges in the new Nigeria, there was an active policy that sought to discriminate against the Igbo. But this policy was equally balanced against one that sought to advantage the North. The North this time being the new coalition of powers between the old slaves and the old masters, in an alliance that created a super class of citizens in their dealings with the rest of Nigeria.

For this to work, the Yoruba were equally complicit in the sense that they competed against the Igbo on an uneven scale, but never on an equal scale with the Hausa-Fulani and the remaining part of what was known as the North. The like of Obasanjo recognised where the real power laid, and he was the token that was favoured as a rebuke to other Yoruba that would complain of marginalisation.

The infrastructure of inequality was strengthened in this season, and the character of the hegemony and the broad agreements and assumptions governing it were equally established. In this season, the Fulani reserved for themselves the positions of power and they also allotted to trusted members of the Northern minorities, positions of power.

There was the emergence at this time, the fruit of the long foresight of the Sardauna in his protestation of the One North policy. Chris Ali in his account of how he sought favours under the illusion of the one North policy, shows clearly that even within the one North policy, there were classes of membership.

But be that as it may, a class of Northern aristocrats had been sent overseas in the 50s, and this group of intellectuals, well-trained abroad, some of them went to the finest of Ivy league colleges in America and Oxbridge Universities in the UK, had returned to form part of what became known as the Kaduna Mafia.

Other writers and historians have dissected the phenomenon of what became known as the Kaduna Mafia. But suffice to say that after the decapitation of the Northern aristocracy in the political leadership of the North at the end of the first coup, this crop of leaders emerged, and they were mostly to be found in Kaduna, which was the administrative headquarters of the old Northern Region. This conglomeration of Northern intelligentsia, aristocrats, politicians, bureaucrats, police and military officers, were mostly people who had attended the famous Barewa College. They were not exclusively of Hausa-Fulani stock, but that was certain to gain one admission at that level.

There are several dissertations that have been written concerning these gentlemen, but it should be understood that the new power concentric after the civil war during the

Gowon years, came fully into its own during the Murtala Mohammed and Obasanjo years. These were men who were of conservative Fulani stock, and they shaped the policies of Nigeria from behind the scenes.

The north generally benefitted extensively from the new power arrangement because it simply meant that the Fulani who have now retained control of the veto only needed to assuage the feelings of every one of the minority groups (within the region) that truly mattered. The Yoruba were left largely to their own devices, but they became complicit in what became the Igbo marginalisation agenda. As I have said before, every marginalisation agenda has beneficiaries, the Yoruba were marginal beneficiaries of the systemic wickedness towards Ndigbo.

The lessons imbibed by leaders of the North pre-independence and particularly as revealed by the position paper prepared for Abubakar Tafawa Balewa by Sharwood Smith, had led them to a clear understanding of the need to preserve the North, as though it were a single entity in all of its dealings with Nigeria. This was in order to be able to retain the veto that was conferred in 1947.

To keep this up, the new crop of leaders, who as mentioned, were mostly centred around the Kaduna axis, resourced mostly by the old NPC cadres and the younger elements they had sent to schools abroad, well-trained but nevertheless, extremely conservative in their view of the

world, were the ones who extended the concept of one North, as originally propagated by the Sardauna.

They understood the need to preserve that unity, but their readiness to be more progressive in their thinking and quite pragmatic in understanding the need to make concessions to the Middle Belt, meant that they created the myth of the Northern Governors Forum. There was also an attempt to create a very clear Northern identity which discounted in its dealing with other Nigerians, the differences between the different components of the north. Within the north itself, there were active concessions, nothing of consequence, but certainly tokenist gestures that led other parts of the North to begin to feel as though they be one. The old master-slave relationship that goes back into historic times and exists between the Northern tribes and the Fulani overlord began to recede into a past, and a new synergy emerged.

So, the way politics was determined, for instance, was that for Murtala Mohammed to fulfil his destiny as it were, he had to have the backing of a Joseph Garba. But, across the broad spectrum of the North, whilst there were momentous shifts in terms of the relationship dynamics, the fact remains that the actual powers remained in the hand of the institutional hegemony that have always existed in the northern part of Nigeria. So yes, the Kaduna Mafia existed, not so much as a body that took formal decision, but as a coalition of interests, mostly Northern interest being the

primary interest, and they had men in all parts of Nigerian life.

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## **The scheming Prince of the Mafia**

**MURTALA** Mohammed himself was believed to have been a core member of what was generally referred to as the Kaduna Mafia. And, generally, the North at this time was better prepared for the challenges of power that came with the loss of the republic after the second coup, and the structure that emerged after the civil war.

At the time of the Murtala Mohammed coup, another disruption happened within the system. Every system that is predicated on injustice is bound to breed grievances, and when the avenues for such diiscontent to be ventilated are shut off, they almost always resort in outburst of violence. When a system is inherently unjust, and when advantages are deemed inherited, implosions are unavoidable.

The Murtala coup that ousted Gowon must be understood within the context of historical realities. Gowon was never the choice of the Nigerian prerogative; he was merely a trustee.

By 1976, Murtala Mohammed, having lost patience with the direction of the government, and having built enough consensus, moved in at a time when it was easy to assure

that there would be no bloodshed. This is because there was the need to keep the illusion of one North and to ensure that Middle Belt sensibilities were not going to be bruised. A palace coup was his choice, but he ensured that there were sufficient Middle-belt officers on board.

Murtala Mohammed took the office he had sought since that day in Ikeja cantonment. But this was to have consequences, which was not to be long in coming. The consequences came in the form of the Middle Belt reaction, known as the Dimka coup of 1976. The unique character of each one of the two coups is that even though the beneficiary of the first was the Fulani man, Ramat, the reality is that the casualty of the coup had been the Middle Belt officer corps, who were caught up in the politics that had necessitated the coup and the counter coup. The sacrifice of the Middle Belt will come to define the coups of that era up until the coming of Ibrahim Babangida.

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### **Aremu the grateful beneficiary**

**WITH** the passage of Murtala Mohammed, the nature of the Nigerian governing hegemony was further defined. In fact, that will probably be the time when it had been most open in showing its hand in how it came about. There are sufficient accounts in the public domain – from Obasanjo

himself and other participants in the politics of the age. It is revealing that shortly after the coup that killed Murtala Mohammed, Obasanjo went cowering under the bed in Chief S. B. Bakare's house! He was fearful for his life because he remembered exactly what had happened in the past when the North had lost its leaders. Obasanjo could not have forgotten so quickly the events of 1966 that led to the civil war; and he was not interested in being caught in the crossfire.

If we admit to Obasanjo's cowardice, what is to be said about TY Danjuma's "diplomacy"? It has been variously reported that being the most senior officer of Northern extraction at that point, and being the Chief of Army Staff, and having repeatedly put down coup, he was asked to declare himself the Head of State. But TY Danjuma turned down the poison chalice, he insisted on Obasanjo being sworn into power since he was the second in command to the deceased Head of State, and the one in the line of succession. And in a show of realpolitik and a clear understanding of the power dynamics, the North had to choose between Shehu Musa Yar'Adua and Muhammadu Buhari to fill in the position of deputy to Obasanjo. Yar'Adua was promoted above his rank, I believe two ranks, so that he might become Obasanjo's deputy.

Yar'Adua's promotion into that office consolidated the powers of the traditional Northern oligarchy. His father had been a minister in the First Republic NPC's government; and

he was from a Fulani aristocracy, hence he effectively became the voice and the face and representative of the owners of the Nigerian veto in the new power concentric formed after the murder of Murtala Mohammed.

The Obasanjo government was promptly rebranded the Murtala-Obasanjo government. The reality of the season was that Obasanjo ruled in a collegiate manner. The SMC met and took all the critical decisions. Obasanjo knew his place in the pecking order. He had no grand ambitions beyond feathering his nest and escaping to enjoy his loot.

Obasanjo never ruled in the form in which he ruled in the second term as a democratically elected president, even as a military dictator. He reigned understanding clearly that he was a regent in power; conscious of the need to constantly reassure the real powers that he was loyal to them. There are several accounts by other Yoruba generals of how they were sold out to the Fulani and the powers that be by Olusegun Obasanjo.

He was a loyal servant of the feudal system that he has begun to rail against in the twilight of his years.

The new power concentric was clearly in the hand of the Fulani, and Obasanjo understood the need to show his loyalty in every way, shape or form, as a way of guaranteeing his own life, and also as a way of ensuring that he was allowed to be practically anything he cared to be, for as long as he knew his station in life. Hence, while Obasanjo might turn around today and be one of the loudest voices in

criticism of the Fulani hegemony, he was one of the builders and architects of that same hegemony, even as he was also a principal beneficiary of the hegemony.

The feudal hegemony reached the height of its powers during the Obasanjo years. The Kaduna Mafia, as it came to be known, set the agenda for governance. They had a clear understanding of exactly what was required, and they set about executing it ruthlessly and brutally. The Igbo were completely marginalised. The infrastructure for their marginalisation was fully set in place during these years: Quota system; educationally disadvantaged states.

The totality of the infrastructure of preservation of feudal advantages were institutionalised in the years of the Obasanjo regime. The systematic apportionment of Nigeria was also done at this time. The Northern minorities were mostly given whatever it took to keep them restrained and happy, but power was consolidated in the Obasanjo years.

It was easy for a lot of things that might have been difficult for even the Murtala Mohammed government to do or accomplish, as it would have been easy to brand those things as being feudalist and pro-North, to be done under the Obasanjo Government. But this were mostly done in the years of Obasanjo with Yoruba complicity, not necessarily because there was any real trade off, but because of the fact that the Yoruba were largely left to their own devices and ignored in the moment. Obafemi Awolowo's mass literacy campaign had ensured that to a very large extent, the

Yoruba were capable of creating a new middle class, that left them completely inured to the shenanigans of government, even as real power was consolidated in hands that had always had design from the dawn of time.

The Obasanjo regime committed to a return to democracy that was birthed by a widely applauded timetable, contrary to what Gowon before them had done. This was quickly embraced by the political class who saw it as an opportunity to retake what had been lost after the second coup.

But there is an interesting phenomenon that must be observed here again.

As it was at the time of Nigeria's Independence, so it was again when it came to time for the return to democratic rule.

The North protested its unreadiness, but quickly gathered a coalition that coalesced around the former minister in Balewa's government, the old schoolteacher, Shehu Shagari and; contrary to the expectation that the likes of Adamu Ciroma were going to emerge as NPN candidate, Shehu Shagari became the anointed candidate of the Northern oligarchy.

With Shagari's emergence in office, and by consensus, what became known as the Kaduna Mafia, was again expanded as the exigencies of the moment demanded. They took enough from the East but could never penetrate effectively in Yoruba land. So, the need to put together a coalition for whom Obasanjo was to pass power necessitated

broad coalitions, which brought about further changes to the synergy governing the hegemony ruling Nigeria. The realpolitik of the moment meant that alliances had to be formed with critical parts of the middle belt once again, and yet again, with the Igbo as it was in the First Republic.

The Yoruba again were the main opposition. So, a new power concentric came out of the Obasanjo transition, retaining much the same coalition that had held power after the Murtala coup, and assuring as always, that the Igbo were again marginalised.

The position of the Yoruba as the opposition was cemented in this season, under the able leadership of Obafemi Awolowo and the Unity Party of Nigeria.

The ineptitude of the Shagari regime, the contradictions engendered by the need to service the alliances ensured that the government failed spectacularly.

By around 1982, there were schisms even within what was known as the Kaduna Mafia. A faction of the mafia aligned with Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, went into an alliance with Obafemi Awolowo, who felt that working with this body might make him more acceptable to the hub of the northern part of Nigeria. Their 'altruistic intentions' led enough of the northern intelligentsia to adopt his candidacy, and to actually have one of their members run as his vice-presidential candidate. Alas, this handshake across the Niger was not to be. A moonslide election victory was

declared for the NPN, not unlike Buhari's landslide re-election result. The rest as they say is history.

The contradictions and controversies arising out of that election, led to the end of the Second Republic.

The coalition of forces that plotted that coup had no choice after the death of Brigadier Ibrahim Bako, who was intended candidate for Head of State, but to adopt Muhammadu Buhari, who had been overlooked in the power reshuffle of 1976. The factors that disqualified him in 1976 were still there, but the expediency of the moment demanded that the person who must replace the Fulani man that was being removed, had to be another Fulani.

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### **The unfit inheritor**

IT should be noted that the system that undergirds the Nigeria State is not amenable to law and cannot be submitted to law. It is incompatible with democracy. These were the contradictions that led to the end of the Second Republic. It had become unsustainable, and the government had lost legitimacy. But the military, as had always been the design, was available and ready as an alternative to the failed political experiment, to take over power on behalf of the north, yet again.

So, out goes Shagari and in comes Buhari. But with his ascension to power, came a further evolution of the hegemony that has governed Nigeria from birth.

The same reasons that rendered Buhari unsuitable for consideration at the time of Shehu Musa Yar'Adua's ascension soon reared its heads; it became obvious at his first coming. These were his inability to understand that he needs to carry along other interests, his refusal to countenance the need to build the coalition that accepts the illusion of a homogeneous North. His prebendal instincts and nepotistic posture became evident very quickly, and key officers of Middle Belt extraction, including Babangida, who felt themselves marginalised and threatened by his Fulani irredentist posture, and his readiness to lend himself to the worst of extreme religious instincts.

A combination of all these meant that his days were quickly numbered. And the hegemony that had brought him to power, in the understanding of the need for the collegiate governance of Nigeria, quickly coalesced to evict him from power. He was realised to have been a system error, and was treated as one and removed in a palace coup. He was promptly arrested and kept away.

Babangida had a profound effect on the shape of the hegemony that was to follow, and it was shaped in his character and likeness. He is the mother, or shall I say, one of the fathers of modern Nigeria.

## **Enter the power-gamer**

**BABANGIDA** is from one of the minority tribes in the Middle Belt, a Gwari by origin, a minority from amongst the minorities. He is from one of the tribes in the long history of Hausa-Fulani subjugation and slave raiding and trading. But he was also one of a generation of military officers who grew up in the early days of one North. He bought into the illusion of one North, but was also quite politically savvy and sophisticated. He was to be found wherever power was tilting at any point in time. Babangida has always been a consummate player in the power game.

On assuming power, Babangida elevated the politics of one North even higher. He built a consensus in government as far as the northern part of Nigeria was concerned. He saw his primary constituency as being the North and in consolidating his powers, he made sure to appease the Fulani and not do anything remotely against their interest. In fact, it is arguable that asides from the Obasanjo years, Babangida's were years during which the Fulani hegemony truly had the opportunity to spread its wings and tentacles. In the Babangida years, the inherent veto of the North became an institutionalised commodity.

Babangida worked from the concept of a clear understanding of power. He understood how much power he could wield and the limitations of such powers. He had Abacha, the Kanuri general as his Minister of Defence, he

had select-officers of the mid-cadre level who he had promoted to choice offices and promoted over and above their mates, with whom he created a clique that was particularly instrumental to the retention of power. Amongst these were the likes of Gwadabe Aliyu, Major Umar and quite a number of young officers whom he cultivated.

Babangida was quite good at playing the power game and he created a new hegemony, which whilst essentially Hausa-Fulani centric, was also instrumental in the proliferation of the feudal system. He created the prebendal reward system that has come to normalise Nigerian politics.

To fully understand Babangida's power plays and the way he structured his government and built his hegemony, one needs to pay particular attention to the Vatsa coup.

The people who suffered the most through every one of the coup plots of the Babangida years were always of Middle Belt extraction. These were the people he got rid of, solely so that he might consolidate power, and in order to rid the army of those he considered inimical to his interest.

Babangida's interest was the primary motivation for his exertions. But the closest Nigeria has come to diarchy was witnessed in those years, when military intervention and participation in politics was all but normalized. A pseudointellectual basis was also laid for the future involvement of the military in Nigerian politics.

## **The June 12 debacles**

**THOSE** for whom the June 12 election represents important landmark in the consideration of their own thesis have done a good job of defining the importance of the election in the trajectory of Nigeria's politics. It is, however, important to point out that at the end of Babangida's transition programme, and with the truncation of June 12 elections, and the refusal to swear in Abiola – the winner of that election – a schism developed within the ruling hegemony, which made sure that whilst Babangida could no longer stay in office, Abiola who had won the election, could also not be sworn in. As much as people might wish to forget history, the reality is that Abiola himself was instrumental in the enthronement of the Abacha regime. He had the mistaken belief that he had an agreement that would have Abacha swearing him in and vacating power, whilst recognising the validity of the election that had been annulled.

These negotiations were not held in the open, none of us was privy to the terms. But that the negotiations were being held on the basis of a mandate that had been given by the people would suggest that there were/are powers in Nigeria, whose voices and will speak louder than that of the Nigerian people.

The tragedy of the June 12 election is not really to be found in the refusal to swear in the winner of the election and the several tragic events that followed that unfortunate

happenstance. The real tragedy is to be found in the willful subversion of the will of the people and the refusal of the system to allow that singular opportunity offered for the system to correct itself. allow

The opportunity to allow people transit from being serfs into citizens was summarily truncated!

Needless to say, the hegemony that birthed the Babangida regime practically ground to a halt and died after June 12 election. It could not birth a democracy, but it did birth a dictatorship.

And with Abacha came the dawn of another hegemony.

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## **The rude, brutal intrusion of Abacha**

**WHERE** Babangida was urbane, diplomatic and perhaps charming in enforcing his will, and where he was smooth in seeking to get the consent of other players in the power concentric, Abacha did not pretend to care about such finesses. He introduced himself quickly and brutally and the hegemony that was built around his rule had room for only himself. He ruled maximally and with fear. Abacha's maximum powers meant that he never could find the grace to play the consensual games that would have seen the order of the veto; ensuring that the southern minorities continued to stay on the side of the political North.

By the years of Abacha's coming, the Niger Delta had become restive from long years of ecological rights devastation. Ken Saro-Wiwa who had once found common cause with the Federal Government during the civil war, became the focal point of agitation in the Niger Delta, and the Abacha hegemony, finding no patience for him or any agitation that does not countenance the fact that Nigeria was an estate to be administered as they cared, brutally put him down. The same was done to the Yoruba. The June 12 mandate was quickly branded a Yoruba agenda – with the help of Chukwumerije and most of the mercantile Igbo commentators.

The age-old rivalry between the Yoruba and Igbo became a ready tool in the hand of those who will divide them to conquer them. The hegemony that was built around the Abacha regime was truly pan-Nigerian in nature, in terms of the personalities that sat therein. It was extremely irredentist in its alignments. Abacha, the same man that announced the ouster of the Fulani general, also brought Buhari out of his political exile, and consequently made him the head of the PTF.

Babangida had built a hegemony that operated on a system that allowed a class to be enriched if it was not in opposition to his rule. He had democratised corruption within the critical sectors and, particularly within the military. To be a Babangida boy simply meant that you had access to every wealth that Nigeria had to offer anybody. So,

when Abacha inherited power from Babangida, all he did was to continue servicing the existing structures. By this time, however, Babangida had weakened the military super structure with the purges that took place after the Vatsa coup and the subsequent Gideon Okah's.

All Abacha had to do was to deal with the restiveness in the Niger Delta which was the cashcow, and he did so brutally with the instrumentality of Major Paul Okuntimo and the eventual murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni 9.

But there was to be no significant change to the existing hegemony under Abacha. All he did was to remove one clientele, Sultan Dasuki, who was crowned by Babangida and replace him with his own suppliant Fulani ruler, Maccido. Though the power structure remained constant, every Fulani of significance, who might have represented a threat to Abacha within the military super structure was either hounded out, retired, rendered client, or in some ways, made completely incapable of striking against the dictator.

Abacha did a fantastic job of consolidating power in a sense that he became more or less a champion of the Northern hegemony and a beneficiary of the barely concealed hatred of the Yoruba and their grievance politics. So, the resentment that the North had always had for the Yoruba grievance politics reached its apogee in the years of Abacha. His treatment of the Yoruba at the time was not

considered anything special, it was just the Yoruba getting their just dessert, but this time around, it was the Igbo and the North against the truculent Yoruba.

Abacha ruled maximally without recourse to anybody, he was truly a dictator. Perhaps, the only true dictator that ever emerged in the Nigerian pantheon of crooked, bloody, and brutal rulers.

For Abacha to leave office, given the fact that he was a man without lieutenants, no loyalists outside of his own immediate circle, the old gang found a final solution. The facts of that solution remain known only to those who were direct participants, but that final solution saw to the death of Abacha in the hands of supposed Indian prostitutes, *vide* the agency of apples, not *agbalumo*, apples. He was fed his apples, and his reign came to an end.

Abacha was the sole hegemon, even though he ruled with the North as his base, and taking care of the clients that he had either created or inherited from the Babangida regime. He was the maximum ruler and with his death came the end of his hegemony.

In the aftermath of Abacha's death, the Babangida hegemony aligned with the old Obasanjo hegemony, given their common origin and root, which is to be clearly understood more or less as a reaffirmation of the old Kaduna Mafia view of the exercise of the power that was given. This has the North as the central beneficiary, but was consistent in making sure that the concept of a single monolithic North

was always preserved in order to ensure that at a minimum, the amoral rights enforced against the rest of the country are generally done with the acquiescence and, never to their exclusion of the minority tribes in the North.

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### **The Abdulsalami Abubakar-Obasanjo cojoined hegemony**

THE Abdulsalami regime that came into power Abacha's death, by some magic, managed to coincidentally preside over the death of Moshood Abiola who was completely unacceptable to the hegemony that had equally rejected him after the June 12 elections. The rest as they say is history.

Obasanjo who was imprisoned by Abacha, was promptly released, rehabilitated, and the new hegemony coalesced around him, recruiting the likes of TY Danjuma and other faces of the old northern hegemony that had served during the Murtala-Obasanjo government, and the rump of the Babangida government – to rebuild the same hegemony.

This hegemony held sway for the bulk of Obasanjo's first term but was gradually dismantled and replaced by Obasanjo dictating his own pace, sidelining TY Danjuma and other key actors; ensuring that Babangida did not succeed him as he had hoped and making sure that his own will reigned supreme in his second term.

For Obasanjo to achieve the dismantling of the hegemony that had brought him into office, he recognised and deemed primary the interest of the Fulani interest. He never did anything overtly against that interest because he recognised that the source of his own legitimacy and power came from his alienation from his own people and his adoption by the same hegemony that had similarly adopted him in 1976.

Obasanjo has always been at critical points in Nigeria's trajectory. He, probably more than any other person, has affected the trajectory of the Nigeria nation. His willingness to be a tool in the hand of the Fulani hegemony legitimised the bulk of the instrument of oppression that today holds Nigeria down. Laws and governance structures, that might have found resistance if they had been imposed by the Fulani or Northern ruler, were imposed during his first term in office.

Obasanjo was generally considered a friend of Northern Nigeria. But in his second term, he came into his own and became his own man. By this time, he had ruled Nigeria for a total of seven years, had seen Nigeria in all of its glories and also knew that he did not require anybody's support as long as he was the one in office to determine his re-election.

Upon getting rid of the nuisance that Abubakar Atiku represented for his re-election campaign in 2003, Obasanjo unflapped his wings.

I am not sure if any insurance company, holding a policy on the lives of either General Abacha or Chief Moshood Abiola would have paid out on such a policy. Even though both were deemed to have died of cardiac arrest, it was always very clear that they were the sacrificial lambs on top of whom the hegemony that brought Obasanjo into power in 1999 steeped its feet.

By the time of Abacha's murder, it was already clear that Nigeria had reached an impasse.

The international community was unable to deal with Nigeria as a rogue State and Abacha was unwilling to democratise or to free his prisoners.

A plot to which western intelligence agencies must have been privy and of which the *Afenifere* itself must have later become briefed, if it was not originally complicit, is that in which this hegemony decided that the Yoruba needed to be appeased as a tribe in Nigeria. This further reinforced the tribe as the basis for rights within the Nigeria State, rather than citizenship. The fruit of this plot for the appeasement of the Yoruba was the murder of Abacha.

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*On gaining his second term, an internecine war began between himself and Atiku. This was a civil war with consequences, part of which was that powers that might have been restrained in their attack on Obasanjo became emboldened in his second term. The politics of his stay in office and the second term as well, birthed insanities such as of Boko Haram -- which found legitimacy on the streets of Arewa – mostly because he was a Southern Christian president who had to deal with a problem rooted in political Islam. He lacked the legitimacy to deal decisively with the problem.*

## Chapter 7

### The 4th Republic and the Consequence of Hubris

The first of the parties was the People's Democratic Party, PDP, which by its make-up, ideology and later persuasions was obviously the party that the military under General Abdulsalami had decided it was going to hand power over to.

The *Afenifere* realising this quickly, pulled out of the PDP to go into the All Nigeria Peoples Party, ANPP, and from there, into the Alliance for Democracy, AD. The fact of their complicity, before or after Abiola's murder is best reinforced by the fact that they were registered for participation in the Third Republic, although they were unqualified.

The new party, the PDP, had zoning as a major plank for all its doings. All offices were duly zoned. Consensus was rebuilt in this period.

Consensus was the basis for the exercise of the powers and the primacy of the North as the next in line to what was meant to be a single term for Obasanjo. It was the glue that brought the PDP together, unified the entire north with significant support in the East and South and; ensured that Obasanjo, an orphan even from his own people – who lost his own very polling booth – was the one that became the

president. The Yoruba were to be appeased, but it was not to be a candidate of their choice. The veto was effectively displayed in its full flow.

TY Danjuma was Obasanjo's chaperone as he had been in the days of old. He came in as Defence Minister, and made sure to purge the Armed Forces of all the officers who had ever held political posts in the past. An entire generation of Army officers above the rank of Colonel, and every officer who had ever held a political post outside of their professional calling became casualties of the hegemony that brought Obasanjo to power.

TY Danjuma and Colonel Kayode Are, then head of the DSS, did a fantastic job of weeding out an entire class of politicised officers who might have proven to be dangerous to the democratic experiment. TY Danjuma stabilised Obasanjo's government in power, until Obasanjo became quite used to power, and had no need for a chaperone beyond the first term.

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### **Game of the wily fox, the real 'evil genius'**

**THERE** is an importance to Obasanjo that is often overlooked. This is the fact that he represents two different phases of the same hegemony and he also shows the way it has morphed over the years.

The same hegemony that brought him to power the first time as a military officer and sustained him in power was also instrumental to his re-emergence as president in 1999. That same hegemony continued to hold sway almost for the entirety of his first term in office. Even on coming into the second term in office, with all his power drunkenness and the extreme use of power, even against people who used to be his allies, he was always careful to be protective of the interests of the hegemonies that brought him into power. He was only ever in conflict with them when it came to the exercise of his own privileges.

Obasanjo is a wily fox. He made the necessary promises to whoever he needed to make them to, in order to secure his second term in office. His face-off with his deputy, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, before he could get his second term ticket is already the stuff of legend and does not require any repeat. But suffice to say that the crisis of his second term re-election introduced a schism into the hegemony that had produced him.

It must be remembered that Atiku Abubakar had been waiting in the wings expecting to take over from Obasanjo in 2003. He believed he had been short-changed; after all, he had given up his Adamawa governorship chance to become the VP in the belief that he was the president-in-waiting, and that Obasanjo would play Mandela, serve out his term, and hand over to him.

Obasanjo went after Atiku with a vengeance during his second term, and; in his quest to ensure that Atiku did not succeed him, when he could not gain a third term, he more or less planted the seed, not only for the destruction of the hegemony that brought him into office, but of the very foundation of the iniquitous Nigeria State by his hubris.

It is rarely seen that the effect of an isolated action will reverberate down the ages as much as Obasanjo's failure to plan his own succession. The connective thread between the emergence of the blight known as Buhari goes back to Obasanjo's quest for his third term, and the hubris that followed his insistence on having his way.

Ibrahim Babangida has for long been tagged the evil genius in Nigeria, but I believe that this is a sobriquet that is best reserved for the man Obasanjo. This is not without reason.

Obasanjo is one of the architects of the moribund Nigeria State. He was always complicit at every critical point in the evolution of the State; he has been a recurrent decimal. He is a man infused with a lot of cunning and intelligence. He ruled on the back of a hegemony with which he was very familiar, not only because he had worked with it before, but because he had helped to shape its trajectory and, install it in power.

Obasanjo, more than any other Nigerian ruler, has the capacity to affect the trajectory of Nigeria in one direction or the other, at more time, than any other. It took Obasanjo's

readiness to collaborate with the Northern elements in the army to neutralise the critical Yoruba voices in the army to consolidate his own powers and be seen as the good person in the eye of the hegemony. He ingratiated himself and was deemed a son and a trustee of the hegemony. He was always trusted by the hegemony. He cemented his *bona fide* with the Fulani aristocracy by his open display of disdain for Obafemi Awolowo, a man much feared by them, for his principled opposition to forces of feudalism.

The problem, however, came with Obasanjo's first decision; his quest for a second term, which was variously challenged by several people in the know, including Atiku himself. This was contrary to the agreement reached at the time Obasanjo was invited to be the beneficiary of the hegemony that took over power after the murder of both Abacha and Abiola. But Obasanjo remained committed to his second-term pursuit, having gained power and been freed of the constraints of worries about coup because of Danjuma's steady hands as the Minister for Defence. Added to this was the earlier purge carried out by the Abdulsalami regime as part of the systemic correction, even though all those officers were given soft-landing and none ended up with a prison term. This was aside those who had personally offended Obasanjo and were held responsible for the murder of Shehu Musa Yar'Adua. I speak of none other than the Al Mustaphas of this world who never received justice for what they did.

By the time Obasanjo took the decision to take a second term, contrary to the agreement forming the foundation for his enthronement, he caused a schism within the same hegemony. But it was an intra-hegemonic warfare that did not spill over but was contained and, he gained the second term.

On gaining his second term, an internecine war began between himself and Atiku. This was a civil war with consequences, part of which was that powers that might have been restrained in their attack on Obasanjo became emboldened in his second term.

The politics of his stay in office and the second term as well, birthed insanities such as of Boko Haram -- which found legitimacy on the streets of *Arewa* -- mostly because he was a Southern Christian president who had to deal with a problem rooted in political Islam. He lacked the legitimacy to deal decisively with the problem.

(But I will deal with this in detail in the section that deals with religion and the Nigerian political hegemony).

Obasanjo's hubristic failure to plan his succession meant that he stayed beyond the point when he could reasonably plan a smooth and orderly transition, and he had to fall back on what was familiar: the choice of the two-term governor of Katsina State, Umar Musa Yar'Adua, younger brother of the man who had been promoted to be his deputy at his first coming.

Obasanjo could not have been unaware of the state of health of Musa Yar'Adua. But in order to have somebody he believed he could teleguide; who would listen to him; and allow him to remain relevant in power. Also, in order to keep his own part of the bargain, ensuring that a Northerner succeeded him in power, it became impossible for him to allow Peter Odili, who had been led to believe that he could gain power, or a Donald Duke ascend to the presidency.

Obasanjo had to pay his debt with the enthronement of Umar Musa Yar'Adua.

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### **The mis/adventure of 'Baba Oba'**

**THE** emergence of Yar'Adua contained the seed of destruction of the hegemony that had brought Obasanjo to power. Umar Shehu Yar'Adua was not as pliant and receptive to being controlled as Obasanjo had imagined. By the time his illness proved to be a major Albatross, Obasanjo, ever the wily old fox, sensed an advantage that had him controlling Yar'Adua's deputy, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan from behind the throne. He more than any other person, forced the doctrine of necessity, legitimised its application and teleguided the transition of Jonathan to becoming acting president and, eventually the president upon the death of Yar'Adua.

Obasanjo did a lot to stabilise Jonathan's government in power. In the early days of the administration, Obasanjo was seen as the father of the president, "*Baba Oba*." He was playing his favourite role. But this was not to last long. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan might have been the orphan in power, his people, the Ijaw, long kept out of the power concentric, long mere collaborators of the Fulani hegemony, came into their own with the ascension to power of their son, and without the worries of a military coup at the back of their mind. GEJ set about dismantling Obasanjo's influence on his government, became his own man, literally won his first election in his own right, and then proceeded to get rid of Obasanjo.

Obasanjo became the loser in the power game. The man he had installed in power perhaps, always knowing that Yar'Adua did not have long to live, proved to be unamenable to control once power was in his hand.

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### **GEJ riding the wily fox, ending in its tummy**

**GOODLUCK** Ebele Jonathan became the beneficiary of powers that he knew not what to do with, and the traditional owners of the powers became orphans. His ascension to office, catalysed several contradictions that had been systematically planted over the years, particularly more so

during the years of Obasanjo's presidency, when Boko Haram was seeded alongside the Fulani herdsmen crises.

Actions have consequences. I have found in the study of men, even of nations and states that at the very peak of their powers, they become susceptible to hubristic acts whose full ramifications and consequences are usually lost on the person when the actual acts themselves were undertaken.

To be sure, Obasanjo's hubristic pursuits of a third term had immediate consequences and one of these was his demystification as a democrat. But there was equally a long-term payment that Obasanjo and the system had to reckon with.

With Yar'Adua dead and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan in power, an unintended consequence of Obasanjo's hubris was revealed. The Nigeria State was found on the assumption that only three ethnic groups could aspire to power.

To be sure, there is a historical basis for the conclusion I have just drawn, and I will attempt as best as I can to explain this.

The bill of right enshrined in the Nigeria constitution at independence came out of the efforts of the southern minorities to ensure that they had constitutional protections for their rights. Therefore, whilst other nations of the world enshrined fundamental human rights in their constitutions as a response to citizens' agitation for protection, the bill of right in our constitution came as a direct response to the

demand of the minorities for protection within the Nigeria State.

Nigeria has evolved with the unique incongruity of being a State where ethnic origin is the basis of engagement, and not citizenship.

This will suggest that the Nigeria State has always been inequitable in its ramifications and the less represented tribes were always fearful for their rights within the originally negotiated Federation. Their demand for equity was what led to the insertion of the bill of rights. One of these minorities, perhaps the 4th largest ethnic tribe in Nigeria, the Ijaws, came to power, as an unintended consequence of Obasanjo's hubristic pursuits of his third term.

In the early days of the Jonathan regime, when he was spending the remaining part of Yar'Adua's tenure, Obasanjo managed the regime and helped to stabilise it to a very large extent. He interfaced on behalf of the power groups, moderated, and ensured that Jonathan was adopted and accepted by the hegemony that brought Obasanjo to power, and that he himself had marginalised in installing Yar'Adua and ensuring that Jonathan was his deputy.

Whether or not Obasanjo was aware of Yar'Adua's ill-health is known only to him and to God, but seeing that he chose Jonathan as VP to Musa Yar'Adua, it is only right and fair to conclude that upon Jonathan's ascension, Obasanjo – the "*Baba Oba*" – promptly took over management of the

day-to-day facetime with other members of the hegemony and stabilised that government through its first term in office.

Jonathan coming back in his own right in 2011, having won the election represented the longest period that the political North had been out of power; it became determined to retake power almost by any means necessary.

Goodluck Ebele Jonathan played into the hands of these hegemonies by his own inability to manage the power that he had fortuitously inherited and then won. He became estranged from his godfather Obasanjo, which is not surprising, given Obasanjo's overbearing nature. But more importantly, Jonathan's occupation of the presidential office brought the Ijaws out of the creeks into Abuja, showed them just exactly how much they had been cheated; they thus unleashed forces beyond Obasanjo's or anybody else's intentions.

Obasanjo's hatred of Atiku sealed the latter's fate in 2015. Obasanjo could not find the grace to forgive his vice president and even though he was intent on making sure that Jonathan did not come back to power. This was a position shared with other members of the hegemonies that had always propped up Obasanjo himself and a mission to which he was dedicated. He helped to destabilise the PDP that he had ridden to office himself, cannibalised the party by encouraging his own loyalists within it to pull out, ceremoniously tore up his PDP identity card and

encouraged the destruction of the party from under Jonathan's seat.

These were to have consequences. The net effect was the alignment of two hitherto irreconcilable forces and the conglomeration of very strange bed fellows. These were the circumstances in which the Buhari project was birthed; the contradictions that have finally brought the Nigerian hegemonies to a head and have now guaranteed that the days ahead are going to be indeed interesting for Nigeria if it were to ever rescue itself from the clutches of the evil system that governs it.

The same system that had always held Buhari to be an irredentist with whom it could not work found the desperation to commit an unpalatable error in 2014/2015. It coalesced around the person of Buhari whom it had already called its own error. And the system error became the President in 2015!

When Obasanjo in a show of public misalignment with GEJ tore up his PDP membership card, it was generally meant to signify that not only had he parted with the PDP, but that the party had been destroyed symbolically by his act. But that would be very far from the truth, which is the fact that Obasanjo had destroyed the PDP with his hubristic pursuit of his third term in clear breach of the agreements that had birthed him as the first president of the new Republic.

In reality, if a time must be located as the point at which the PDP was truly murdered, it would be when Obasanjo began the pursuit of his third-term agenda.

Obasanjo's hubris destroyed the hegemony that brought him to power because it effectively ended the consensus around which the old PDP was built. The consensus had always operated in the understanding that power was to be used collegiately, and that as much as possible, certain broad principles were to be adhered to. Obasanjo ran riot in his second term, effectively ran the government to the exclusion of critical members of the hegemony, antagonised quite a number of them, divided the hegemony itself by his pursuit. That effectively ensured that the hegemony died or had begun its journey to death before he left office.

With the death of the hegemony on which Obasanjo rode to office, upon assumption of Jonathan's first term in his own right and the clear indications that he would be seeking a second term in his own right, those who believed themselves to have been kept out of the power concentric because of the incomplete tenure of Yar'Adua, the many years of Obasanjo's rule and his exclusive use of power (and the fact that for a long time, the bogeyman to explain the failure and failings of Northern governors was always the exclusion of power at the central) felt themselves entitled to power and became aggrieved.

For the first time, northern Nigeria politicians began to play the exact politics of the Yoruba: politics of grievances,

which became the foundation for the birth of what became known as the APC, even though it started out essentially as the Buhari project.

With Obasanjo pulling the carpet from under GEJ's feet, the PDP essentially began to collapse right around him, and he was being stripped daily of institutional levers of support that had kept the PDP in power for 16 years.

The powers Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was wielding were never meant or intended for the likes of him. The northern governors had played all the cards they could, to find excuses for their own electorate for the serial failure of governance in their region, and Jonathan became the bogeyman and the excuse that was used to explain the serial failings by the northern leadership.

After having been effectively out of power for a total of 12 years, barring the little over two years that Yar'Adua spent in power, the one thing that practically every member of that hegemony could agree on, was the need to remove Jonathan from office. This need became an obsession, and the fertile ground on which the systemic error that Buhari is, was birthed.

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## **Enthronement of the systemic error**

**MUHAMMADU** Buhari was not the choice of those who started "the get Goodluck Ebele Jonathan out" project, or

even the person who had any effective say over whether that was going to be done. But in the lead up to the APC primaries in 2014, the deciding vote was held by Bola Ahmed Tinubu; and for reasons best known to him, he decided or perhaps felt himself unable to support Atiku; he supported the candidacy of Muhammadu Buhari instead.

The adoption of Buhari as the APC candidate in 2014 effectively meant that the hegemony that had been in power since the death of Abacha was finally being forced into embracing the very tendency, and the same person that had always been its arrowhead, whom it had been designed to reject.

Muhammadu Buhari became the beneficiary of the very system that had always worked to prevent him and his type from holding power in Nigeria. The new hegemony thereby constructed, left itself mostly in the hand of the ultra-conservative element of the same system that had hitherto been contained since Buhari's ouster in power in 1985.

But even more important and relevant to the subject at hand, a realignment of old forces that had been historically linked in the 1960s found its foot again. The historical parallels between the Sardauna of Sokoto and Muhammadu Buhari, and between SL Akintola and Bola Ahmed Tinubu played out: the west aligned with the conservative oligarchy.

The forces of feudalism finally found legitimacy in what was hitherto the most conscious part of Nigeria. It was

raised as a standard against the forces of feudalism and; the worst nightmare of Obafemi Awolowo came true for Nigeria.

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## **BAT the schemer**

**I HAVE** done sufficient work in establishing the *bona fide* of Muhammadu Buhari, his ethnic irredentist root, how his extremes rendered him useless to the hegemony that had overtaken Nigeria since the murder of Abacha and Abiola, and how they had ensured that he never gained power despite the fanatical support he had built up in the north, based on the grievance politics he had perfected.

Every hegemony, as I have explained, is the same as a man's habit. As a man's habit shapes his character and forms his trajectory, so does the sum of the hegemonies that shapes a nation's trajectory determines where it goes. And as habits are important in discerning the character of a man, so are the characters of the hegemonies, or the persons that make up a ruling hegemony. The Nigerian case is not dissimilar.

It is important that we understand clearly who Bola Ahmed Tinubu is and how he correlates historically with Ladoke Akintola.

In popular Yoruba political consciousness, Obafemi Awolowo is a god, and the Satan in that pantheon has

always been Ladoke Akintola. This is not necessarily a fact-based conclusion, but popular opinions rarely are. Every good legend comes complete with its cast of heroes and villains. Such is the legend of *The Sage of Ikenne*. Volumes and tomes have been written about the two personalities.

I was not alive at the time of Akintola's death but I believe he could not have been as evil or useless as history has sometime cast him, for he was for a long time Awolowo's trusted deputy. But I will leave history for the historians and, rather deal with the contemporary history that I witnessed.

I was there at the Eagle Square at the launch of the All Nigeria Peoples Party, ANPP and at the formation and beginning of the Alliance for Democracy, AD. I was at the Law School when the AD was birthed, and I recall specifically that on the 8th day of January, 1999, I left Abuja by overnight bus, specifically *Chisco*, because I was determined to vote in the gubernatorial elections of Saturday the 9th of January 1999.

I made my way to Lagos and went to sleep in the house of Ademola Adeniji-Adele, whose brother-in-law, Saheed Salawe is my friend, and with whom I was squatting whenever I was in Lagos, having given up my accommodation in LASU.

I came all the way from Bwari, Abuja to ensure that I cast my vote for Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the gubernatorial candidate of the AD in Lagos State.

When I woke up in the morning and was making my way to the polling booths at one of the secondary schools off 7th Avenue in FESTAC Town, Prince Adeniji-Adele (of blessed memory) stood on the balcony in front of his bedroom, and said to me, "*Man Dele, you are going to go and vote for me right?*" He was at the time the deputy governorship candidate on the PDP ticket, where he was running with Chief Dapo Sarumi. I turned around and told him jokingly: "*You know that I won't vote for you, papa, I'm going to cast my vote for the AD, there is no way I am going to cast my vote for the Abacha politician.*" This was the way we used to rib ourselves in those days.

Bola Ahmed Tinubu has never met me, but I was one of those persuaded to vote for him by the platform on which he was introduced. He came as part of the *Awoists*; he was a beneficiary of their politics. He did not waste time in getting rid of the stuffy old men of the *Afenifere* and by the end of the 2003 tsunami, which he escaped, he had come into his own, and his true character began to unfold.

As Obasanjo battled to clip Tinubu's wings, beginning after the second term for both men in 2003, Tinubu built upon the Yoruba history of grievance politics -- a very formidable opposition that grew strong on the steroids of corrupt money and a control of the streets.

He built a franchise that began to move outside of Lagos State with his pragmatic understanding of the corruption of the Nigerian judiciary and the political processes.

While he was doing this, because Obasanjo was generally reviled amongst the Yoruba, and his bullish ways had more or less united opposition to his rule, Tinubu became the focal point and, main spokesperson of the opposition forces. He also became the recipient of goodwill from all those who had been alienated by Obasanjo's excesses.

By 2014, when he was entering the alliance with the CPC that birthed the Buhari presidency, Tinubu had grown to become the main person in Nigerian politics. He did this by buying up the press; the critical press was mostly silenced, and questions that ought to have been asked have never been asked.

Nobody can swear to know exactly what the true name of Bola Ahmed Tinubu is, or his true origins. Several legends surround the man Bola Ahmed Tinubu. But the most consistent is the one that has shown that over the years, the man has evolved a most rapacious stealing machine, runs a system that is essentially a limited liability company, that is the modern face of a feudal system. Tinubu sits atop more or less as a Sultan, promoting people into the offices of governors, first in Lagos with the succession plan that had Babatunde Raji Fashola, BRF, succeeding him. He spreads his tentacles to other states in the South-West, where he had formerly been sponsoring the opposition during the Obasanjo years, to deflect their capacity to focus on him in Lagos.

### ...The making of the behemoth

IN order to explain the character of the man named Bola Ahmed Tinubu, it is necessary that I go back to the beginning, which in this case would be the Eagle Parade Ground in Abuja, where I had gone to attend the launch of the ANPP in company of Femi Akande, the current Attorney-General of Osun State and son of Chief Bisi Akande, who was to become the governor of Osun.

While we were at the parade ground, the Awolowo political clan sought to form an alliance with the *Shinkafi* elements and other conservative elements from the North, more or less a rehash of the rumoured alignment that was said to have existed between Awolowo and the Kaduna Mafia, and the one to which the Yoruba have forever hankered after even as they have sought a definition of the Nigerian federation.

Femi Akande advised that we needed to leave the Eagle Square venue of the party's inauguration and launch. When I asked why, he told me that; he had it on good information that his father and the others were at Savannah Suites; that they were not coming for the launch any longer. This is because they did not want to have anything to do with folks the *Afenifere*, generally referred to as Abacha politicians.

On hearing this, I sought out Alhaji Ladipo Kotun, a dear friend from my days at the Oyo State College of Arts and Science in Ife, and with whom I was to later attend the Lagos

State University. He was standing with the Lagos State contingent, which had amongst them Prince Ademola Adeniji-Adele, popularly known as Prince of Hope, one-time chairman of Lagos Island Local Government, who as I had earlier mentioned, was a brother-in-law to my friend Saheed Salawe. I had made acquaintance of the Prince after he left Abacha's gulag in 1994; he was to become a dear friend and a sort of godfather to me.

I gave the information I had to Alhaji Kotun and Prince Adeniji-Adele and advised that we all left together. Alhaji Kotun and Prince Adenije-Adele responded, saying they were not following these old men; that this was how they dragged them out of the PDP alliance at the last minute. They said the oldmen were doing much the same thing again with the inauguration and they were tired of being dragged around.

My advice to them at the time was that they would be making serious political miscalculations because it was already clear to me, even at that point, that it was up to the *Afenifere* to tell the Yoruba exactly who to vote for, and how to vote.

Afenifere carried the power balance in Yoruba land, and I felt that my friends were making strategic errors by refusing to see this. But the two of them were adamant, insisting that they were not going to walk away from the inauguration, but I did. This error was to cost Prince Adeniji-Adele the Deputy Governorship of Lagos State.

Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who was to become Governor of Lagos, whilst already a senator under the SDP during the Babangida transition programme, did not have the pedigree in his own right, at that point in time in Lagos State politics, to have earned him the governorship. He earned it on the back of the *Afenifere*.

*Afenifere* could have stood behind anybody, and the person would have won in 1999. The military knew it and registered their party. Tinubu knew it and he aligned with them.

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**I HAVE** dealt with the issue of Bola Ahmed Tinubu and his emergence extensively in other places, but the character of the person he became, and the hegemony that he built, that aligned with the CPC is important to an understanding of the consequence of the realignment. This realignment brought about Bola Tinubu, Muhammadu Buhari, and Obasanjo albeit reluctantly to an extent, at least in the original project that birthed the Buhari presidency and the consequences of this to the Nigeria State and what manner of hegemony was built.

You already have a situation where the unconscionable powers, the same that Obafemi Awolowo exercised with prudence and discretion, and with temperance, is the same

that Bola Ahmed Tinubu has inherited without the same restraint, discipline, or a pretense to temperance.

What was essentially a socialist ideology-based political party that governed the political and socio-economic development of Yoruba land in the Awolowo days, has been supplanted by the most modern exposition of the feudal system. It operates as I have said as a company with shareholders, and the membership levels are variable.

It is the most systematic feudal system in the Nigerian space outside the traditional Fulani feudalism. It is at its absolute best, a criminal empire that exists within the state structure. It is, to borrow the words of Pat Utomi, “the classic exposition of criminal state capture”.

Tinubu’s franchise is defined by the professionalism of its stealing. I have for long distinguished Tinubu’s imaginative stealing from the brazen thievery of the PDP. The Tinubu franchise is in truth a case study in state capture by a criminal gang, and at the apex sits the man himself, Bola Ahmed Tinubu as he is known, though nobody would swear that those are his real names.

With Obasanjo distracted by his egotistic pursuits, the danger that Tinubu represents was ignored, and he successfully managed a transition from governor, to governor-emeritus, and then began to expand his franchise aggressively, even as the PDP disintegrated.

The Tinubu template was simple. Cast yourselves as the champions of Yoruba interests, the PDP as the overbearing

federal monster that Awolowo and his political machinery had trained the Yoruba to reflexively distrust and hate. Nurture the grievance politics of the Yoruba as a tool for uniting and galvanising tribal interests, and control the public narratives at all cost.

The *Awoists* were themselves mostly marginalised and brutally expunged from influence, and divisions were promoted within their ranks. Tinubu rebranded hitherto credible voices that had spoken in the past, into men, whose words must be viewed with skepticism.

But beyond the billboards promoting the false comparisons and equivalencies with *The Sage of Ikenne*, Bola Tinubu is nothing like the revered old man. The political system that he built is a rebuke to the late sage's life's work. By their fruits, you shall know them! so declared the Holy Book.

With the late Awolowo, the fruits of his fecund mind remain for all that seeks to behold. I am a witness to his works, a beneficiary of his vision, and one of the several fruits of his benevolent leadership and exercise of the same powers that Tinubu has used to enslave the Yoruba.

It took me a while to understand the visceral hatred of *Awoists* such as Baba Adebajo until I came to the knowledge of the historical parallels between the powers Awolowo exercised collegiately, and prudently, and the one that Tinubu wields in a prebendal manner today. Tinubu's franchise talks the talk, but the reality is that the franchise is

by far more corrupt than the PDP has ever been. The Tinubu crew stole and privatised government institutions. Tinubu is the modern-day sultan of the Yorubas, and the purse of states in his franchise are his treasuries to spend at will. The Yoruba have never had power personalised and exercised solely by a man in modern time. Tinubu's true genius was the management of his succession, he has never been truly challenged on his turf since the yet unsolved murder of Funsho Williams.

Tinubu is so high on the narcotics of power that he has hubristically lost the very quality that had carried him this far: his street smarts. There are two rules that I have come to believe define the ultimate survival of every street guy in the Nigerian experience. The first is to always be aware of the street; second is to always have an exit in view. In the new hegemony created with Buhari's ascension to power, Tinubu was shown his place in the partnership; he was not to be allowed his wings back until the time came to plan and execute the Buhari re-election strategy. He was an asset to be deployed; not an ally to be trusted. He has blocked his exit to prove his loyalty, and he will pay a political price in Yorubaland, in due course.

Power corrupts? No! It is power unaligned to purpose that corrupts. Tinubu in another generation, perhaps in Awolowo's generation, with the spirituality and moral rectitude of the age, a consciousness of the importance of a man's place in history, would have been a visionary leader.

As it is, he is a visionary thief. His appetite for acquisitions is second to none, and his corruptive influence, extremely corrosive.

Tinubu had built the most efficient taxation system in the entire country, while the PDP thieves were still focused on the oil monies they were looting. Tinubu was applauded as he developed the capacity of the state government to generate hitherto unheard-of sums in tax revenues. Also, the fight against the evil, overbearing Federal Government of Obasanjo, gave him the cover to privatise the tax collection in perpetuity. The vast wealth generated has, in truth, belonged to the *Jagaban* and his court; the citizens and taxpayers of Lagos State have merely been serfs. The state belongs lock, stock, and barrel to the owners of the Lagos franchise.

But in 2014, the Tinubu franchise was in trouble. The alliance he found with the CPC was predicated on the need to preserve the hegemony he already held over the South-West.

In the countdown to the 2015 election, by early 2014, there were formidable opposition revolting against Tinubu's hegemony in the South West. In Lagos, there was Jimi Agbaje who was not an unknown quantity to Lagos voters, and who had made quite some impression in previous elections where he had run against the Tinubu machinery on the platform of rather obscure parties, and he was already poised to repeat the same in 2015.

In Oyo, Ondo, and practically every state in the South-West, there were latent sentiments rising against the dominance of Bola Ahmed Tinubu. These were mostly aided by the federal government under Jonathan who was equally funding the PDP elements in the South-West. So, while Obasanjo and the rump of what he controlled in the PDP in the South-West had left the party, the other elements who were diametrically opposed to Tinubu's hegemony were already significant headaches for him in the countdown to the 2015 election; and it was in Tinubu's interest to nationalise the elections.

Every election is local, the conventional wisdom goes, but in 2015, Tinubu found it necessary to nationalise the poll because the power of incumbency was poised to work against every one of his candidates in the South-West. Such was the glaring level of their failure across the length and breadth of Yorubaland.

For Tinubu, it was a boon to have an election where the subject of discussion was about PDP's corruption. That way, the focus was taken away completely from the serial malfeasance of his own electoral machine; the corruption of the system he had instituted in every part of the western region. Having a rentable press was a bonus.

The fact that every one of these governors had failed spectacularly was also sufficient reason for him to be worried. In the countdown to the 2015 election, it was strategically important that attention be taken away from

the lack of a record on which the ACN governors could run. Hence, in the run up to the formation of the APC, Bola Tinubu's primary focus was not on winning power at the center, it was essentially about the preservation of his own hegemony in the west.

In getting into his alliance with the CPC, it is arguable if Tinubu honestly believed that the APC was capable of winning power at the center, giving his keen knowledge of the power dynamics of the Nigeria State, and the knowledge of everybody involved in the Buhari project that only a person in the character of Jonathan could have been the incumbent president and found the grace to lose an election that he himself had supervised.

Had Obasanjo been available to micro-manage the electoral process on Jonathan's behalf, that election would have been a foregone conclusion. At the dawn of 2014, leading up to the 2014 formation of the APC, Tinubu found himself obliged to align with the most conservative elements in the north.

Obasanjo was in a position where he had out-manuevered himself and practically every member of his own hegemony into accepting the *fait accompli* that Muhammadu Buhari truly is. And in endorsing him, a systemic error was made because a man incapable of sharing or working in a collegiate manner, or endorsing the consensus that had empowered the hegemony he

supplanted, Buhari took power, aligned to a most rapacious stealing machine that had overtaken the Yoruba land.

That is where we are today.

Jimi Agbaje and others ended up in the PDP as a result of the creation of the APC and the resultant need for them to respond to the systemic quest for a behemoth on whose platform to run in the elections. Agbaje who had started his political career with the *Afenifere* and the Democratic People's Alliance, DPA, found himself marooned in the PDP. His case was not dissimilar to those of several others, whose capacity to run in the smaller parties in the South-West were destroyed with the formation of the APC in 2014. On APC and Buhari gaining power in 2015, the death of opposition politics was effectively signaled. Ideological syncretism has led Nigeria into a situation where we have today become a feudalised democracy, where no credible voice is speaking in opposition to this from an organised political platform, and when they do, their voices are lost in the milieu.

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*Every hegemony inflicts its character on the people over whom it rules. The defining instincts of the hegemons within the hegemony shape the trajectories of the nation or state. The Nigeria State is not an exception, and the ruling hegemonies have shaped Nigeria and the Nigerians in their own sordid images.*

# Chapter 8

## The new Hegemony

**T**he trajectories of every hegemony are shaped by the character of its arrowhead. As a man's habits shape his choices, and hence, his character, so does an aggregation of characters of the hegemons determine the trajectory of the nation or state controlled by the hegemony.

It is necessary to examine the character of Buhari, the arrowhead of the hegemony that currently rules Nigeria, and whose image, the State projects.

Muhammadu Buhari is a product of the hegemony that was birthed to rule Nigeria. Muhammadu is a Fulani before he is anything else. He sees himself and the entire world through the prism of his Fulani nationalism. Whilst this is not in itself either unique, or necessarily negative, the unimaginative irredentism of his Fulani nationalism has worked to narrow his perspectives and worldview to the point, where he had been deemed unfit for leadership by the other components of the traditional operators of the Nigerian hegemony.

As a student of English Literature, I was taught critical analysis and characterisation. The key methodology for

decoding the character of a protagonist in a literary work, is to listen to what the person has to say about himself. Another is to evaluate what others have to say about him, and the most important is to observe and then evaluate his actions. Muhammadu Buhari has been in the public eye since he was Petroleum Minister in the Murtala-Obasanjo government, and his records are in the public domain.

I have already dealt with the systemic rejection of the man, Buhari, and proffered what I believe to be the rationale for this rejection by his own. It is now time to examine the reasons he was serially rejected by his own; how and why he has been embraced, first by the wretched of the north; then by myopically romantic southerners in their search for a shortcut to national redemption, and finally by the illusionists who sold the Buhari project in 2014/2015.

Buhari is a populist. Populism is the affliction of the unintelligent, but when found in the intelligent, it is best recognised for what it is: an inability to be curious enough to stake out one's own position, and a readiness to opportunistically adopt the opinion that has gained pre-eminence without due interrogation of the thinking, or lack of thoughts, behind the opinion.

The populist has a simple solution for every complicated issue, and rarely has the nous to understand the issues he/she presumed to simplify. For Trump, it's a wall: for Buhari, it is his imaginary war on corruption; for Hitler, it was exterminating the Jews.

One of the most consistent stories told by everyone involved in the removal of Buhari at his first coming, is his resolve to retire Gen. Gusau and some other high-ranking officers loyal to Babangida, and in some account, Ibrahim Babangida himself, for corruption. That the alleged act of corruption was one from which Muhammadu was said to have benefited, as the loot was allegedly used to finance the coup that brought him to power, was insufficient to save the alleged thieves. This inflexibility, and refusal to play by the rules was what Babangida used to justify his removal. The same were the reasons offered for passing him over to promote Yar'Adua in 1976.

Out of office and something of a pariah to members of the Babangida hegemony, he was not to be brought back from the cold until the Abacha years. Abacha rehabilitated Buhari because it was politically expedient to do so. As the Nigeria State began to grow stronger in the Babangida years, and the new feudal lords were being created across the country, Buhari had acquired a cult like following amongst the poor and disinherited of Northern Nigeria.

The gluttonous consumption and vulgarities of the Babangida era were cultural anathemas for the Hausa-Fulani.

The fact that Babangida is from one of the northern minorities considered to be of the barely tolerated slave stock made it easy for the disinherited Hausa-Fulani streets to develop a romantic relationship with the austere Buhari,

who always appeared spartan in comparison with the epicurean Ibrahim and the coterie of thieves around him. The Fulani royalties loved Babangida for recognising their privileges and ensuring same, but the Fulani streets hated him.

Abacha removed Sultan Dasuki to build his own clientele traditional rulers, and to erase Babangida's influence over a critical throne in the *Pulaku* hegemony. The rehabilitation of Buhari, and his appointment as the chairman of the PTF, were deliberate steps to raise him as a counterweight to Babangida. It was also to make sure that the fanatical support enjoyed by Buhari on the streets of the north, rubbed off on the Kano-born Kanuri man who had announced the coups that ushered him in, and the one removing him. What's more? Buhari got his pound of flesh off MKO, who was allegedly complicit in his 1985 removal.

Two examples would suffice to establish the point I seek to make. The episode at the Government House in Ibadan should interest any genuine researcher of the Buhari persona.

Buhari had stormed Ibadan on October 13, 2000 to meet Governor Lam Adesina and protest on behalf of the Fulani herdsmen, who had been in a constant state of strife with the *Oke-Ogun* communities of the state, where they had lived in peace for decades. Lam Adesina was to deprecate Buhari's crass tribalism, in view of the fact that he had occupied the highest office in the land.

Buhari is a religionist, and his instincts are conditioned by his religiosity. After the meeting of the Council of State on February 29, 2000 in which the council was said to have ordered cessation of the implementation of Sharia Law, Buhari a member of the council, in an interview with BBC Hausa, had the following to say: *"If we as Muslims want amputation or death penalty, we said we want it because it is our religion and the constitution of the country has agreed that everyone has the right to practise the religion of his choice."*

The problem with this statement is that the constitution of Nigeria has never endorsed the Sharia Criminal Law. So, the deliberate politicisation of Islam in Nigeria is rooted in the deeds of simple-minded men such as Buhari, who have failed to understand the extent of the damage they have caused the Nigeria nation by their unthinking religiosity.

Buhari built his political platform around the political grievances of the Hausa-Fulani peoples. He became the darling of the ethno-religious movements that had begun to emerge and coalesce during the Babangida years, and which found its apogee in the second term of Obasanjo's government.

The political class that had emerged in the Hausa-Fulani states had been mostly bereft of visionary leadership; the rulers were mostly focused on the narrow interests of their own class. As the failure of the political class multiplied, they collectively sought to find other persons to blame, and the Christian Yoruba civilian president became the

convenient scapegoat for all their woes; the common enemy against whom they could unite the northern horde, and thereby divert attention from their own abject failures.

Obasanjo is tailor-made for villainy; he was rather easy to present as the enemy to blame for the many problems that afflicted the North. He is brash, can be as uncouth as he might be charming; is extremely egotistical in his evaluation and treatment of perceived opposition and enemies, and has been around and inconsistent long enough to have provided validation for every one of the many accusations they levelled against him.

Obasanjo was rendered even more vulnerable to these charges by his Janus embrace of the *Afenifere* in his quest for Yoruba endorsement for his second term; a seeming repudiation of his original backers.

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## **The opium... religion as politics**

THE northern political class has always viewed and used religion as a legitimate weapon in the zero-sum game of politics, but the traditional institutions were always cognisant of the need to avoid allowing the religious institutions the freedom to preach anything inconsistent with their own divine right to rule as feudal lords over the impoverished hordes, who had been indoctrinated to accept

the worst excesses of earthly rulers, and to never challenge their rules. This began to change in the wake of Obasanjo's ascension to power and religion was weaponised.

We are reaping the fruits of the seeds sown in the rich fields of grievance politics that took roots in the days of Obasanjo's reign.

Religion is taken from the Latin word, *religare*, which literally means to bind. The true meaning comes alive in the country named Nigeria, and religions have in truth, unbounded the Nigerian peoples from reason, and yoked them to idiocies.

The Sultan of Sokoto sits atop the pyramid of Islamic religious governance in Nigeria, and he does so as a hereditary right possessed in the office he occupies, and unconnected to any training he might possess in Islamic jurisprudence. It is an inheritance unyoked to reason. Islam was in Yoruba land long before the Sokoto Jihad commenced, so the Yoruba never required the help of the Fulani to convert to Islam. But the Sultanate was the centrepiece of the Islamic empire upon which the British built their Nigerian possessions. The sultanate was the intended beneficiary of the estate built by the British when the time came to leave.

The Sultan and the emirs worked in concert to control the clergies, and by a deft combination of patronage, carrots, and sticks, managed to keep the radical clerics quiet and under control, whilst promoting their loyalists amongst the

clerics. The mosques and the palaces worked effectively in concert to keep the North quiet and free of the worst effects of religious fervor and ferment.

Poverty has a way of breeding extremism, and when you factor in ignorance, its most common denominator, you find a volatile mix, which finds easy expression in religious extremism.

The north has always been suffused with religious extremism and hatred, but a new dimension was introduced in the Obasanjo years. Those that would have in the past condemned the excesses and worked to stamp it out, facilitated and promoted it. Unimaginative politicians began to unleash forces that had long been used sparingly, and the North began to seed the tsunamis that it is reaping today.

Sharia law was one of the most divisive issues tackled by Ahmadu Bello in cobbling together the political North, but he was sensitive to the political dangers of pushing to Islamise a people who have had a long history of brutal subjugation and slavery at the hands of the Fulani hegemonies that had reigned supreme in the bulk of northern part of Nigeria.

The introduction of the penal code, as recalled by Sharwood-Smith, was considered crucial to the resolution of this most divisive of issues in the north. The fears of the ethnic minorities – in the middle belt and the Mambilla Plateaus – of having the Muslim Shariah laws forced on them were removed. Deliberate and conscious efforts were

made to assimilate these disparate tribes, and thereby fuse their identities into the political mainstream of Northern Nigeria.

The colonial masters emphasised the need to unite the North, and the evidence would tend to suggest that apart from the conscious layers of the minority tribes, who kept up their agitations against the Fulani hegemony, the populations of these minorities rarely became energised enough to threaten the existing order. In the instances where passion became inflamed, such as the Tiv Riots, the army was drafted in to violently suppress the dissent.

The Nigeria State, after the civil war, became a state of four broad divisions. The North of the Hausa was a major part of the division. This was the division of the country in power. It comprised of the entire old northern region. It spoke as one and carried the loudest voice. This North was one in every material particular. The Angas of the Gowon family believed themselves to be northerners. The Christianised pagans and those of the Benue plains, Jos and Mambila plateaus had space in this North. The Zuru tribes of Kebbi, the many northern minorities fused, spoke as one, and dealt with the remaining three regions as though they are one.

The elite consensus that ruled the north, and by extension, the Nigeria State, had no space for religious extremism, recognised the need to keep the North united, and made concessions to the long-oppressed minorities, in

order to build and foster the illusion of a monolithic Northern Nigeria. This was the understanding that birthed Gowon's ascent to power in the aftermath of the second coup. This was the reason Murtala Muhammed was constrained to wait nine years before he would fulfill his long-restrained ambition to rule.

With Obasanjo in the presidency, not in any hurry to leave, second term done, and a third being sought, the northern parts went up in flames.

The northern governors and politicians began to weaponise Islam. And whilst the introduction of Sharia Criminal Law might be the public evidence of the embrace of religious Islam, the real violence was taking place in the mosques and madrassas. Militant clerics, the very ones that the traditional elite would have made sure to expunge from the system, became the norm in most parts of the North.

The extremism had always been part of the northern religious climate, but it was tightly controlled, and in some cases even tolerated. The most radical Sunni Muslim groups were actively cultivated and used by the Nigeria State and its intelligence agencies in the years of military rule, and Babangida more than most, tolerated them as counterweights to the mostly garrulous Christian organisations, who had constituted themselves into some sort of unofficial opposition platform. But this was different.

Politicians were bypassing the traditional structures that had for eons managed the religious affairs of the emirates.

The clerics became aware of the immense amount of power they could wield in the name of Allah, and several became politically motivated in their interpretation of the Koran. Boko Haram was a part of the political machine built by Governor Ali Modu Sherriff of Borno, and they were represented in his cabinet. The deadly history of the evil sect is rooted in Sheriff's politics as the first governor of the state in the current republic.

Sani Yerima's madness soon swept the streets of the north. Demons that had been leashed for generations were again reborn, energised, and weaponised in pursuit of ephemeral and tangential interests. Islamic fundamentalism, the sort that had been the source of fears of the northern minorities, and the one thing that was bound to reawaken the latent ethnic nationalism of the long oppressed and institutionally-marginalised Middle Belt, was embraced by those who would play the grievance politics that was initially the preserve of the non-PDP politicians such as Sherrif, but which was to become the hallmark of every seeker of power, outside of the corridors of power.

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## **Sentiments of the PMB base**

**MUHAMMADU** Buhari's fanatical northern support base has its roots in the belief that he is a pious man, devoid of the consumptive and sybaritic lifestyle of the Babangida era.

He was born to rule unlike the Kanuri man, Abacha, who dealt with the 'foolish' Yoruba, and most definitely better than the other one from Minna. That a Yoruba bully such as Obasanjo was in power for all of eight years, drove them into apoplexy, and Jonathan was the final straw.

The pious Muslim, the saint that would punish the many sinners, had to win in 2015. And with Tinubu's support proving the difference, Buhari had a clear path to Aso Rock once Jonathan decided to blink.

The CPC that fused with the ACN to win the APC presidential primaries in 2014 had two dominant hegemonies; the ACN and the APC. These have fused together to define the character of the hegemony that currently governs Nigeria, and the smaller hegemonies, such as the N-PDP Bukola Saraki and co have been either pushed out, destroyed, or assimilated into the new realities. These other hegemonic powers lost the APC presidential primaries in 2014, and it was always a matter of time before they were to leave. The conflicting interests of the many strange bedfellows were always bound to unravel; such is the nature of power in these climes.

I have attempted to show how Tinubu's franchise is one and the same as the ACN hegemony. I would proceed by describing the CPC hegemony which had at its head, Muhammadu Buhari.

The CPC was long on talk but never had a foothold in any state. Buhari's fanatical northern supports, annexed to

Tinubu's ownership of the Nigerian press, birthed the myth of Buhari as the change agent, and the reality of return to the madness of 1984.

The hegemony that controls Nigeria is the same that was in power during Buhari's first coming. It is a hegemony that does not share power. It is happy to tolerate stealing, it has no quarrel with corruption either -- what can be more corrupt than a refusal to be governed by law? Tinubu and everyone else can steal all they want, as long as they do as they are told.

The gangsters' paradise dawned in Nigeria.

With the CPC/ACN alliance in power, Tinubu's street savvy while in opposition, the same one that saw him employ the judiciary to take back what the PDP had stolen in its own highjack of the electoral system, found a dangerous synergy with the feudalistic impunities of the most feudalistic elements of the historical North. Feudalism has never been compatible with the rule of law, and Tinubu's street savvy is in truth, barely concealed contempt for the law, which he knows applies only to the weak. It was an alliance of two feudalistic forces.

The Kogi election that had Abubakar Audu as the APC candidate and James Abiodun Faleke as his deputy, set the tone for the relationship once the alliance gained power. That election served to establish the pecking order in the emerging hegemony.

I shall not be bothered by the squabble that ensued upon Audu's demise, but it is public knowledge that Faleke was denied the right to succeed Audu, simply because of the fear of Tinubu by persons who employed the powers of the presidency, to declare that the election was inconclusive. Yahaya Bello, Governor of Kogi is the child born of the power game.

The hegemony deployed the same powers in Ekiti, where Fayemi bested his old nemesis and friend, Ayo Fayose, in the bidding war that was the Ekiti election. Nigerians were treated to a new level of electoral chicanery in the Osun gubernatorial election. Tinubu was in his element at the palace of the *Ataoja* of Oshogbo, declaring the state too poor to be worthy of his kleptomaniac attention, and the candidacy of his anointed candidate, a favour to the state. The rest as they say, is history. Iyiola Omisore is no longer corrupt, and the election declared inconclusive was concluded with the anointed enthroned.

The 2019 general election was decided before the vote. It was only the foolish and the romantic that expected results any different from what were declared. The marriage between Tinubu's hegemony and the Buhari crowd has produced a most dangerous hegemony, one that has scant regard for the law, has corrupted the press, and is unmoored to any restraint in the pursuit of power, and its retention. If Tinubu was not a part of the reigning hegemony, albeit a junior but ambitious one, the Nigerian press would be

correctly pillorying the Buhari regime for its sickening nepotism, and serial failings.

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## **Collateral victims 1: The Press**

**THE** 2019 elections are over. The battle for the 2023 elections had commenced before the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic; the time has come to take stock of where we are, and where we are headed if we kept traveling on our current trajectories.

With the ascension of the APC to power in 2015, the *Jagaban* had every shackle on his avarice broken. He already owned the press, and had acquired considerable savvy in the judiciary under the noses of Obasanjo, Yar'Adua, and particularly under Jonathan. Tinubu brought all these into the alliance. The direct facilitation and complicity of the presidency has had the consequence of annexing the impunity of the PDP to the thuggish street-smarts of the *Jagaban* franchise. The thinking thieves have aligned with the ones that believe themselves above the law, and a most vile evil has been born of that union.

Tinubu has helped deodorise, and thereby normalise the enthronement of a feudal democracy. The corruption and putrefaction that entered his soul, have blinded him to the truth of the evil that he has helped to enthrone. Now too rich

to even number his wealth, high on the aphrodisiac that power is, a narcotic more potent than opiates, ambition has finally become the Achilles' heels of the man that would be the sage. Tinubu has been too blind to see what he ought to be seeing: he has now outlived his usefulness to the hegemony that he helped to birth. His quest for the presidency in 2023 has failed before it began. He has been caught up by the irrepressible forces of history.

The feudal state must die. Now.

Every hegemony inflicts its character on the people over whom it rules. The defining instincts of the hegemon within the hegemony shape the trajectories of the nation or state. The Nigeria State is not an exception, and the ruling hegemonies have shaped Nigeria and the Nigerians in their own sordid images. It is the current hegemonies that concern me.

Literally and figuratively: I am worried.

I am worried because certain factors that are inimical to the survival and sustainability of the Nigeria State, and the birth of the Nigeria nation have emerged. These factors have never been dealt with in the past, and I am worried because those that would have been concerned in the past, institutional checks against the endemic madness, have become either compromised, or complicit. The praetorian guards have become the receivers of stolen goods.

With Tinubu and the like of Orji Uzor Kalu owning their own media empire, and the press drowning in corruption –

as the judiciary, police, and every other part of our dying State – its legendary vibrancy has become largely compromised, and mostly lost. The Nigerian press has become lost in the crass mercantilism of the current time; almost unrecognisable from its glory days in the military era, and during the heady days of the pro-democracy movements.

Truth was the first casualty of the Buhari project, and the Nigerian press where the lies would have once been challenged thrives on the subjectivation of truth. The same actions that were once correctly criticised are today endorsed, and defined in terms of the persons involved. Men that were once labelled corrupt and evil, have now been rebranded and held up as models. The current hegemony is the one that has rendered the Nigerian press, bar a few exceptions, completely lacking in the capacity for objective and fair reporting. The lions are the ones telling the tale of the hunt.

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## **Collateral victims 2: Judiciary**

ONE of the very first things that the current hegemony did was to subjugate the judiciary. To be sure, there is nothing new in the Nigeria State -- another word for the Nigerian Presidency -- keeping the judiciary under its control. That is

the standard fare. But this is different. The new hegemony is not contented with the old style of remote control of the judiciary by influencing its decisions, it wants to dictate to the bench. The removal of Onnoghen must be viewed through this prism.

With the loss of power by the PDP, and the movement of most of its old merchants into the APC, coupled with the corruptive presence of Tinubu in the APC, something had to give in the judiciary. Armed robbers are not spirits, and the judges serving on the benches of our different courts are parts of the Nigerian systems. The knowledge of what damages a judiciary gone rogue could do was not lost on the new hegemony, and with the removal of a viable opposition and an independent press, a brutal war was waged against the remnants of the PDP's influence on the bench. It was a most corrupt war against judicial corruption, and it ended with the judiciary captured, and Ibrahim Muhammad Tanko unlawfully ensconced in the office of the CJN.

During the reign of Raji Fashola as the governor of Lagos, a new word entered the legal lexicon amongst litigation lawyers: "Fashola's Date." Tinubu's franchise was consolidating power in those days, and the boundaries of citizenship rights were shrinking, as the extremely feudalistic policies of the hegemony began to take hold. The phenomenon was characterised by an adjournment of cases against Lagos State to dates when the court would not be sitting. Several cases taken before the courts challenging the

worst excesses of the state suffered untold adjournment and many aggrieved citizens were frustrated into abandoning their claims. It is nigh on impossible to get social justice in a Lagos court; the progressive partners in the APC partnership.

The Nigerian judiciary cannot remedy the situation, it has instead become a part of the problem, and the Nigerian people have ceased seeing it as being a refuge for either the weak or the poor.

In the new hegemony created by the wedlock of the CPC and the ACN, a most dangerous entity has been birthed. The instinctive impunity of the Fulani feudalists has been welded to the criminal genius and lawlessness of the *Jagaban* political dynasty, and pure tyranny reigns today in Nigeria. Those who pretended to corruptly fight tyranny as they looted the commonwealth have aligned with those who always viewed the commonwealth and its riches as their own inheritance. What we have feared the most has overtaken us. The perfect storm is here with us.

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*The loss of critical voices in the human rights community because of their friendship with key political actors which is further aggravated by the deliberate appointment of such critical voices into political offices, has assured that the ones that used to watch have stopped their watch, and the ones that once wailed are either hailing now, or have lost their voices. Truth has been largely subjectivised, or completely ignored. The same act, when performed by different actors, attracts disparate reviews.*

## Chapter 9

### **The perfect Storm and the inevitable Implosions**

**T**he Nigeria State has been described as a crime scene. The persons who came up with this characterisation are geniuses beyond their own comprehension. The State has been hijacked; it does not exist for the benefit of the citizens who have had their citizenship rights cruelly snatched away from them, and have been reduced in station to serfs, bondsmen, and slaves.

The Nigerian civil right groups have for long mischaracterised the struggles that they have endured and have thereby been engaged in what are essentially distractive wars of attrition.

As the feudal system was emerging, the civil rights movement, fresh from what it believed its finest hours in the wake of the transition to civil rule at the dawn of this republic, began to embrace the madness that was always there, but mostly restrained by the exigencies of the pro-democracy battles. The human rights community grew, but the rights community went to sleep; believing that democracy had been won.

The traditional human rights community became subsumed beneath the umbrella of Bola Ahmed Tinubu, and

their exertions became mostly corrupted because of his corruptive influence. That Tinubu was the rallying point and funder for a lot of the agitations engendered by Obasanjo's tyrannical rule further cemented his relationship with the human rights community, which goes back to his days in the NADECO movement.

A lot of people, who are otherwise incorruptible, have found themselves sucked into the corrupt vortex that revolves around the *Jagaban*. Some critical voices have been lost as a most rapacious feudal system has been foisted on the people. Those Tinubu had not managed to purchase with filthy lucre, he managed to compromise with his toxic friendship.

The loss of critical voices in the human rights community because of their friendship with key political actors which is further aggravated by the deliberate appointment of such critical voices into political offices, has assured that the ones that used to watch have stopped their watch, and the ones that once wailed are either hailing now, or have lost their voices. Truth has been largely subjectivised, or completely ignored. The same act, when performed by different actors, attracts disparate reviews.

With the press lost, there is only a precious few left to ask the critical questions, and to hold the government accountable.

With the human rights community distracted by the many existential considerations that define the Nigerian

experience, there are few people available to speak for the voiceless. Lines have been blurred, and the people have become preys in the hands of the State, its press, the judiciary. The men and women who once kept the watch, have become one with the ones they used to watch.

*Ole ti ja wa.*

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### **The impish clergy...**

**NIGERIA** is a very religious country. There is practically a church or mosque on every street of the country. We commence every national assignment with prayers, sometimes said to the same God in the manner of the Arab slavers, and then according to the inheritance of the Christ – mouthing colonialists and slave traders!

We are a very religious country.

Nigerians are however only vacuously religious. We mouth all the rhetoric and have mastered all the dogmas; we have the motions but are severely lacking in motivations. Our deeds have rarely matched up with our protestations, and the loudest proclamation of religiosity is usually a mask for deceit. Our religions are stripped of godliness; superficial and hollow. Christians and Muslims are alike and same. The clergy is truly Nigerian in all ramifications. Religion has truly found its home and true meaning in Nigeria.

While religion is a means to bind, Nigerian religiosity is in a class all by itself. When you have embraced religion in Nigeria, you are obliged to divest yourself of your God-given brains, and you are expected to wait on God for everything. There are spiritual explanations for every one of the many existential considerations that defines the Nigerian existence. The church is not unlike the hospital, and the mosques are no different.

We demand of God, duties that are owed to us by the State. The imams and pastors are constantly urging prayers by the victims for the State and its rapacious rulers. The clergy have become complicit in the mess.

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### **The curse of religion**

**IN** the northern part, religion has always been everything. Islam is everything to the Hausa-Fulani plebeians. For the traditional slave stock of the Fulani jihadist slavers, their religion is also everything. To the several minorities in the north, religion is linked to the personal and tribal identities of the persons.

Slavery has a history in the north that predates the transatlantic slave trade by over three centuries. I speak specifically of the trans-Saharan slave trade that drew its stock from the Benue plains and the Cameroon mountains

and valleys -- the basis of the powers of the two Islamic empires of Kanem Bornu and the Sokoto Caliphate.

With the incursion of the Europeans into Africa, and the subsequent history of colonisation and indirect rule, many of the tribes that were resistant to Fulani hegemony but had not evolved a governance system suitable for British intentions, were brought under Fulani rule, taxation, and dominion.

The embrace of the missionaries and Christianity became an act of defiance by a people determined to seek out an identity distinct from that of their historical enslavers. The minorities in the north embraced Christianity and western education with the colonial service protesting and doing everything it could to impede the works of the missionaries. This is because the feudal hegemony was incensed and the colonists were unhappy about having their partners discomfited.

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**ISLAM** and religion are important factors in the allocation of rights and privileges in Northern Nigeria. Both are at the root of every one of the several crises endemic in that part of the country. They are also closely aligned to the issues of ethnic violence.

Religion is the most visceral of all human emotions outside of sex; and the less informed a person is, the higher the level of his religiosity and superstition.

The long history of feudalism, and the resultant need to keep the serfs suppliant, has rendered the north susceptible to all manner of religious charlatans, rabble rousers, and demagogues. Boko Haram was born in this storm, and the “suspected Fulani herdsmen” draw their lifeblood from the pool of hate thus created.

The traditional power structure in the north is controlled by the original inheritors of the Nigerian veto and partners of the British colonists; an aristocratic lot. They were highly educated men with Islamic worldviews, but were not religionists.

The feudal lords controlled the mosques and imams, and the sultan was the head of the entire *ummah*. The Emirs were educated in the Islamic traditions and shariah, and they were knowledgeable about Islamic jurisprudence. The state-controlled religion, and sheiks were clients of the State.

The Nigeria State is reaping dividend of the diminishing powers of the traditional authorities over the northern mosques today in increased politicisation of Islam, and the embrace of fundamentalism.

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## **Decapitation of the foundation**

AS the military became entrenched and found less and less need for political coverage of the traditional political institutions of power, thus began to treat the traditional rulers as clients, however influential they remained, the mosques and imams began to gain independence that was hitherto unheard of, but difficult to discern, and, restrain when seen.

The *Almajiri* system has always been part of the Islamic education system in the north. What is different today is the extreme poverty that coexists alongside the religious extremism that the hopeless poverty has birthed.

The return of civilian rule in 1999, and the promulgation of the Abdulsalami (1999) constitution, created a state that is in truth, a feudalised democracy. The long years of military rule has taken us farther away from the mornings of our beginning. Instead of the four federating regions of 1966 -- and the expressed desires to create a further two, one out of the eastern region, the other from the northern region -- Nigeria had become a highly centralised unitary state. Where the holder of the Nigerian veto would once prefer to govern from Kaduna, now he would rather be the president that would have been unacceptable to everyone in the negotiations leading up to creation of independent Nigeria State in 1960.

We are now a federation of 36 states, and a Federal Capital Territory (that has the status of a state); 774 Local Government Areas. Each state has a mini-presidential system in place, complete with legislative house, speakers, and 'loudspeakers'. The purpose of the state has become the maintenance of the rulers in style, and poverty has become the lot of the people. The living reality of the human called Nigerian is to just survive. The rulers are in a class all by themselves, and the Nigerian people have become preys to the ones sworn to serve them.

The creation of the 36 'Emirates' and the Sultanate in Aso Rock has destroyed the foundation of the Nigerian federation, and rendered the state a modern feudal system. The purpose of governance, to reiterate, has become the maintenance of the ruling class in comfort and style, and the people would appear to have become serfs in the land of their birth. The rulers appropriate rights of representation to themselves; they exercise all the rights that should belong to the citizens, leaving them barely able to breathe, even as they luxuriate in the largesse purchased with the commonwealth.

The southern part is not much better. Vacuous religiosity has largely overtaken the land. Amongst the Igbo of the east, the tussles are denominational and not across religious lines: the Anglican Church is in a perennial war with the Catholic Church, and the Methodist Church wars with the Baptist. In some cases, it is the Anambra Catholic priest that is unwelcome in the diocese in Imo State. The few Muslims

amongst the Igbo are mostly heard of but rarely seen. They are victimised and marginalised by their own.

The Yoruba culture has always been quite adept at tolerating diverse expressions of religiosity. Religious syncretism is part of the Yoruba worldview. There are families where brothers and sisters, uterine siblings and cousins, husband and wife, worship God in different manners. Among the Yoruba, religion is generally a relaxed affair, but the people have not been spared the corrosive effects of the politicisation of religion. Whilst it might be tempting to situate the problem in the present, and present it as though it is an unusual phenomenon in Yorubaland, historical facts would suggest otherwise.

Those opposed to the politics of Obafemi Awolowo had used religion, particularly Islam, to rally and mobilise opposition to the *Awoist* philosophy and urgings. The Ede-Iwo axis of current Osun State was primarily mobilised against Awolowo and his ideology by the adoption of Islamist arguments that sought to couch the ideas in religious terms. It took active engagement of the like of Senator Adeleke (father to the dancer that wants to be governor), and Chief Bisi Akande to tamp down the religious fervour that was being whipped up against Awolowo.

On Bola Tinubu's watch, Yoruba's long-held religious tolerance was gradually eroded, and overt Islamic influence began to exert and assert a dominance over the affairs of

state. Though he has never shown an inclination for religious extremism, or even religiosity, Tinubu has unleashed forces that were hitherto dormant, not in any expression of religious zealotry, but as a force for political mobilisation.

Islam has a long history amongst the people of Lagos State, particularly the indigenes. Early trade with the Malians had exposed the Lagos elites to Islamic influences, and had become a rallying point for the aborigines, in the days before Nigeria's Independence, and in the outcry and demand for the creation of the state.

Whilst religion is a difficult tool for political mobilisation in Yorubaland, it has proven a powerful weapon for mobilising against political interests of persons perceived as working in the interest of other ethnic groups.

Jimi Agbaje's candidacy couldn't be undermined on account of his Christian religion, especially as the *Jagaban* had also been compelled to field a Christian candidate, but the massive support of the Igbo residents, who are predominantly Christian, was spun in selected circles of Muslims to become a nascent plot by Christians and Igbo to take over the state.

Islam has become a tool for political mobilisation in the hands of the *Jagaban*.

Nigeria is a place where religion has become a tool for keeping the people down; a tool for the enslavement of otherwise freeborn men and women. The clerics have

become fattened on the food taken off the tables of the wretched, and the religious orders are as complicit in the conditions of the masses as the political class. Religion is the opium being fed to the masses, and the sedative that has kept the people pliant.

The religious Nigerian is held bound; incapable of rationally examining how he got to the sorry pass in which he lives. He is told to pray for the rulers, and to await his reward in the heaven he is assured awaits him if he obeys the laws of God, those of the unjust State, and then fulfills his obligations to pay his tithes and bring his offerings to the men of God who have become the gods of men.

With the loss of the Nigerian press and the civil rights movement to Tinubu's political machinery, and the resultant loss of hitherto critical voices in the marketplace of ideas and ideals, truth became subjective, and ignorance weaponised against the people.

Tinubu had succeeded in normalising the most modern exposition of feudalism before Buhari happened on the scene. The pinnacle of Tinubu's governance capacity remains the city state of Lagos, a painted sepulchral, rotten and putrid in all of its ramifications.

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**THE** Nigerian situation had come to a head for me in 2014. As I helplessly watched the unveiling of Buhari as a power-

seeking, visionless, ethnic and religious irredentist who would do anything to gain power.

Witnessing the emergence and ascension to power of the APC in 2015, I began to understand the systemic nature of our malaise and the impotence and limitations of personnel changes in affecting systemic issues. The eight years of Obama's presidency had no effect on the systemic racism of the America State or the racist chokeholds of white privilege. Buhari is no Obama, and has proven to be more corrupt and corruptive than the ones that he replaced in 2015. The illusion of change was hyperbolically packaged and sold in the months before the 2015 elections, and Jonathan lost the liver he had never been accused of possessing.

Nigerians were promised change and change they have received: A change from bad to worse; to newer levels of leadership degeneration. Left with the glaring reality of Buhari's inability to deliver on the change that was promised in 2015, the hegemony reverted to the systemic position; fascist tactics were embraced, and in the absence of an articulated alternative to the enduring system, the behemoth in the race captured power at the centre with the usual impunity fully restored but with a new-found swagger that had been born of the knowledge that nobody is watching again. The watchmen have become complicit in the robberies.

The press is largely bought and owned by the Nigerian ruling class, the courts are complicit, and Tinubu's

involvement has compromised critical strata of civil society. If you were to place a map of Nigeria on a wall, and a selection of colour-coded flags ranging from green denoting peace, and the amber signifying insecurity, you would find very quickly that Nigeria is a State in a state of war. The entirety of Nigeria is in a state of anarchy. The state has lost its monopoly of coercive force. In large chunks of its territory, it has lost its very legitimacy for a loss of purpose and relevance.

Nigeria is rendered asunder in the Eastern parts – land of the Igbo – by the same Igbo question that had led it into the first civil war and that has continued to ensure that whilst the war might have been declared over, the battles have continued to rage; the wounds have continued to fester.

The refusal of the Nigeria State to provide equal citizenship to its peoples is founded on the feudal need for the creation of a class above the law, and explained by placing group interests above that of the general citizenry, thereby providing the seeding grounds for legitimate evil and iniquitous systems.

The Igbo man was the original victim of the Nigeria State. Having lost his voice to the war, his group privileges were appropriated to the winners of the vanquished. But as the Yoruba would say: *Ore ti a fi na Iyale, o wa la'ja fun Iyarwo*. The rod that today adorns the back of the senior wife, shall visit the new consort's derrière someday. That day has come

for the rest of Nigeria. The failure and the refusal of the Nigeria State to provide equitable citizenship to the people have birthed the idiocy of secessionist struggles in the entirety of the southern part. The phenomenon deserves attention because of the distraction that it truly is.

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### **Triggering the Secessionist alarm**

I **MUST** confess to having been once possessed of the intellectual indolence required to embrace the asinine belief that Nigeria's problems, and more particularly, my interests as a "Yoruba" man, would be resolved by a breakup of the "Nigerian federation". I was ideologically committed to the creation of a "Yoruba Nation", and at a minimum, I was happy to accept a "restructured" Nigeria State. I have now come to the knowledge of just how foolish I was. Now, I have little patience for those who continue to hold to this distractive and idiotic position. They are the ones that have been blinded to the truth. The Nigeria State can never break up peacefully. Whilst they are wasting their energies and lives seeking the unachievable that is easily achievable, much-better is being lost.

If Nigeria were to be a nation founded on the equality of citizenships; if laws shall be the foundation upon which the state is found; if all are truly equal before the law, and the

law is not an instrument of injustices and institutional wickedness, the secessionist noises would have never been heard.

If a man's tribal origin has nothing to do with his rights as a citizen, or his weight before the law, if his religion is his business and solely his; if Nigeria is what it was purposed to be, nobody would want to be part of a smaller nation. If some people do not profit by claiming to speak on behalf of the divisions that they have created and fostered, the secessionist voices would have long been silent.

The systemically endemic inequities and injustices of the State are the breeding grounds for the demands for tribal homelands but I assure you, that Nigeria is too strong to be broken into the tidy enclaves sought by the secessionists. The State knows this and works always with this knowledge. I will even go as far as to say that the Nigerian intelligence agencies have encouraged these tendencies as part of the scheme to deflect critical attention away from the failures of the State and to both delegitimise and criminalise genuine dissenting voices that have embraced secession in their frustration with the system.

I have recently become increasingly convinced that we are sleeping through a revolution that has commenced without announcing its arrival. The common lullaby being sung for the somnambulists, which are in truth, dirges, are secessionist songs. I ask that you open your minds. The sum of the Nigerian minorities is larger than whichever believes

itself the biggest of the three dominant ethnic groups – the ones that have ever demanded to secede. The minorities are more than the biggest of the ethnic giants.

The Nigeria State has never been predicated on the equality of citizenship, or on the very idea of citizenship. It has always been characterised by the rights acquired by the group. In every modern State of the world, at the basis and very foundation of the State, would be the citizens. Montesqui's social compact theory is the generally accepted explanation for the evolution of the modern state, but the countries and states of Africa have been robbed of the capacity for evolution, and had states arbitrarily decreed into existence by malign interests and forces of slavery and colonialism.

The regionalisation of Nigeria by the British was an exercise in administrative convenience. Management of scarce resources and systemic efficiency were the cardinal reasons behind the adoption. What did not feature in colonial considerations were the several minority ethnic groups that were arbitrarily Balkanised and rendered subjects of the mostly overbearing ethnic majorities in the regions created. Nobody asked questions of the many ethnicities before they were lumped together for administrative purposes, and the social compact theory was nowhere in sight. The Bill of Rights contained in the Independence Constitution was a direct result of agitations

by the minorities, and a recommendation of the Willinks Commission raised to address the concerns.

The minorities have always found common cause in refusing to be part of any secessionist undertaking. This is informed by a commonality of their fears of domination, subjugation, and repression by the majority tribes. If the fundamental human rights sections of the Independence Constitution owe its origins to the fears of the minorities for the inequities of the State at birth, why would they support any secessionist agitation by any of the three behemoths? What has changed?

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### **... A justifiable Yoruba nationalism?**

**THE** Yoruba have the most impressive secessionist arguments. I know because I had argued a few of them in my time. They are the most homogeneous of the old regions., The few ethnic minorities to the fringes of their territories have been mostly assimilated. Aside from the Ondo riverine boundaries with the Ijaw, and the troublesome issues of Ilorin and the Okun Yoruba of Kogi, they have few conflicts to resolve. But where would the rest of Nigeria be if they allowed the secession of the part of Nigeria that has, by the exertions of all, become the economic engine room of the Nigeria State?

The Igbos have been the loudest of all the secessionist voices. They have fought the civil war, paid a heavy price for the war they had no choice but to fight. Ndigbo are still paying to date for their daring. But the Igbo secessionists would forget the truth of their own history. They are the ones that have proven the thesis that I seek to establish. To watch the refusal to draw the strategic lessons for which entire generations paid a hefty price, is a disservice to their sacrifices.

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### **...An insolvent Igbo question?**

**NIGERIA** has an Igbo problem. At the root of the many seemingly intractable problems assailing the Nigeria State is the refusal to allow the equality of citizenship. The Igbo man has never asked to be treated differently from anyone. I have never heard Ndigbo ask for anything that he is unhappy to see other Nigerians enjoy. I have never heard anyone say that what the Igbo man is demanding injures their own rights. I have not heard of any, that would reject the Igbo charter of demands from the Nigeria State if the same were offered to them. If Nigeria would resolve its Igbo problem, it would have answered its crises of nationhood.

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**TWENTY-TWO** years after the military junta had left office, years in which the states have been exclusively ruled by sons of the soils – the governors, legislators, local government chairpersons and all members of the state governments are not foreigners posted to loot the state – how well have the states fared? Who is responsible for the bulk of the rots that the secessionists point at as validation for their agitations? Granted that the Nigeria State has facilitated the evil by the evil governance systems, how do they expect to cure these institutional maladies in their utopian republics?

In the *Oodua* Republic being sought by the Yoruba irredentists, where would Tinubu be? Would the rulers be different from the current lot that afflicts the people? What would be different in that republic? Would the Ibadan allow the Oke-Ogun people to rule Oyo State? Would Okeho allow Saki to take the slot? Ofiki people *nko*? Would the Yewa-Awori in Ogun State become eligible for the gubernatorial office? Ha! Lest I forget, would the Ikorodu people then get a shot at the governorship of Lagos State? And this is amongst the homogeneous Yoruba. What about the warrant Obas and chiefs? Would we be appointing new ones whilst we are at it?

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**IGBO KWENU!** Would the Anambra man be the one that rules first? What about the Ebonyi man? *Ehn ehn*, where are

the Ijaws in this Biafran Republic? The Ikwere and other lost tribes of the Igbo people *nko*? Where would the Orji predators of Abia be? Would you be hosting annual New Yam Festivals to beat the Ekweremadus of the Biafran utopia? Those pesky Calabar people *nko*?

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**I WILL** not even bother to address the many issues that make it impossible for the North to secede. I will merely ask that you pick up a map of the Nigeria State, and seek to divide its northern part according to the disparate ethnic groups that have endured centuries of political and religious oppression in the hands of the Fulani and Kanuri hegemonies. Northern secession is equal to cultural and religious genocide for a lot of people that Nigerians of southern extraction have blithely labeled as northerners.

It is possible and much easier to galvanise Nigerians behind a quest for a better Nigeria, one that is just and fair to all; than to chase the illusion offered by secessionism. Every Nigerian that is not in government or a friend of government, is a victim of the injustices that permeate the Nigerian experience. Members of the ruling class do not bicker over their tribal differences, and even the ones that have demanded restructuring and encouraged secessionist voices in the past, become great nationalists once they are given room at the feeding trough. We play into their hands

when we accept the divisions that they have sown to keep the people divided; and unable to see the commonalities of their afflictions.

In the north, Islamic terrorism has become a pandemic. The systemic failure is even more evident to the cursory observers than in the south. The general state of insecurity has meant that the natives, mostly farmers and pastoralists, have become prey to rampaging bandits that have overtaken the countryside and the parts outside of the larger cities and towns in the region. Kidnappings are rife, and the security forces are complicit in the despoliation of the land. Boko Haram has the northeast in a vicelike grip while the "suspected" Fulani herdsmen and bandits have overtaken the northwest, north central, and the Benue trough.

The Niger Delta has largely become a no-go zone for the Nigeria State for the last 20 years. The State has become a licensee of the several warlords and militias who in truth run the show in the creeks of the oil-soaked Delta. The few cities and towns of the Delta region are the only parts where the State pretends to exist, for once the state capitals are in the horizon, all that remains are vast fields of deprivations, armed men that are not agents of state, ecological wastelands and criminal impunity. The Nigeria State has abandoned the common citizens to the criminal accomplices of the feudal lords that operate the local franchises.

The level of popular support for separatist agenda amongst the Yoruba was always a good measurement of the

egalitarianism, otherwise of the government of the day. However, current realities have led to a subtle, but substantial shift in Yoruba worldview. Political power in Yorubaland, for about four decades, had been predicated on the enlightened selfish interests of the larger group and determined by the collective wisdoms of the *Afenifere* collegiate led by charismatic men, who exercised necessarily despotic powers in pursuit of clearly identified and carefully articulated group objectives. With the Obasanjo designed tsunami of 2003, what the *Afenifere* had gained as AD, was lost to the Yoruba, and what emerged is the thriving *Jagaban* political dynasty.

# Chapter 10

## The Time is Now

*“But all the same, our charity must begin at home. Government must appreciate where we are, summon each group that should make contributions one by one and subsequently collectively seek the way forward with all hands on deck and with the holistic approach of stick and carrot. There should be no sacred cows.*

*“Some of the groups I will suggest to be contacted are: traditional rulers, past heads of service (no matter how competent or incompetent they have been and how much they have contributed to the mess we are in), past heads of para-military organisations, private sector, civil society, community leaders particularly in the most affected areas, present and past governors, present and past local government leaders, religious leaders, past Heads of State, past intelligence chiefs, past Heads of Civil Service and relevant current and retired diplomats, members of opposition and any groups that may be deemed relevant.*

*“After we have found appropriate solution internally, we should move to bilateral, multilateral, regional, continental, and global levels. With ISIS involvement in the Boko Haram crisis, we cannot but go global. Without*

*security and predictable stability, our development, growth and progress are in peril.*

*“Let me hasten to add that we must be at the appropriate seat at the table of international discourse, deliberations, agenda and action. That Nigeria from independence has always been in the forefront of any continental initiative, decision, action or programme has put us in some form of leadership position. For Nigeria to be outside the African Continental Free Trade Zone Agreement when it automatically came into effect with twenty-two-nations’ ratification is to say the least unfortunate.”*

**– Obasanjo, 2019**

*“Time is running out and the stock of options available for rekindling the dying embers of Nigerian unity is getting steadily depleted. I have argued elsewhere that the failure of Nigeria cannot be remedied by hopes of the arrival of the elusive good leadership alighting on our shores to incrementally tackle the myriad of problems and crisis afflicting this country.*

*“What we are confronted with is systemic failure and it directly results from the extent of our constitutional deviation from the practice of federalism which requires no less a holistic constitutional response and reversal to what the President himself called ‘true federalism’. The constitutional vehicle of Nigeria suffered an accident at the error of the road rule violation of a group of young military*

*officers in 1966. Rather than repair and restore the vehicle, we kept on piling on the damaged vehicle until it becomes a near complete wreck that constitutes a present danger to the safety and security of the passengers.*

*“Going forward, we are left with two options: we can deconstruct and reassemble the vehicle and make it whole again – a feat that is not beyond the trademark ingenuity of Nigerian mechanics or we can abandon the wreckage altogether and get another one. The first option amounts to deferring to the logic of restructuring (understood as the restoration of federalism) while the latter represents the abandonment of Nigeria altogether to seek new nations.”*

*– Akin Osuntokun*

**I HAVE** taken the quotes above as examples of the roundabout manner that several Nigerians have taken in calling for the obvious solution to the Nigerian conundrum. For the Nigeria nation to be born, the State as it is presently constituted, must die. The Nigeria State is not amenable to reform. It is the very definition of injustice, inequity and a most violent rapist of its citizens. A cannibalistic entity that sucks the very life out of its people, the wolf that has fed on the flock it had deceived was watching over. The Nigeria State is a criminal empire that does not exist for the benefit of the ruled.

What has eluded Nigerians have been the absence of alternative views or pathways by which we might safely

navigate the murky waters of our quest for nationhood. The Nigeria State has stifled alternative views since the collapse of the First Republic, and the entire purpose of the state and its agencies has become the preservation of the State. This is regardless of the cost to the nation and the citizens, who have been stripped of their citizenship rights because these rights are incompatible with the feudalistic State, and; an unfettered expression (of the rights) would threaten the unjust foundations of the State.

Nigeria is a country that has been taken to the edge of the abyss. All pretences at normalcy have been abandoned; what has been normalised is generalised and rampant insanity. To continue traveling on our current path is to end up with a fate much worse than Somalia, and certainly comparable to the Rwandese situation on steroids. Something must give, and it is my conviction, that the time is now for a radical turnaround. It is time for the Nigerian revolution.

The Nigeria State is at war with itself. The country is in the grip of a vicious and most debilitating Islamist insurgency in the North-East. A vast part of the North-West has been overtaken by Fulani militias and criminal elements of all types. The Plateau and the hills of the Mambila are in a general state of strife. The Benue trough has become a death zone. The Nigeria State is prostrate in the Niger Delta; the presence of armed troops and the rents paid to ethnic warlords, assured that oil production has continued in the

Delta. The land of the Igbo people continues to enjoy grinding insecurity. Yorubaland is not unaffected. Nigeria needs help.

As Nigeria began the countdown to the end of the Buhari Presidency and the battles for the succession begin amongst the coterie of thieves and feudal lords, the time has come for the Nigerian peoples to critically assess the state of the country. It is in my opinion, by far more important, that we earnestly commence radical overhaul of our entire governance systems and structure of our country. The alternative is to wait for the imminent and unavoidable collapse of the country due to implosions that are completely unavoidable if the current trajectories are not speedily reversed. I believe it to be most dangerous and irresponsible for us to wait for an already precarious situation to further deteriorate before acting to prevent the tragedy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has painfully crystallised the sickening failure of the Nigeria State and exposed the truth of its feudalised democracy and institutional inequities. The Nigeria State at all levels has proven to be most lackadaisical, evil and wicked in the way it has allowed itself to be completely indifferent to the sufferings of the citizens and untouched by their afflictions. Elsewhere in the world, the state took the lead in the fight against the pandemic. In Nigeria, the pandemic has become just another opportunity to exploit and impoverish the already beleaguered citizens.

A scamdemic.

Everywhere in the world, lockdowns were preceded by massive public health education campaigns, ramped up efforts at building and increasing the operational efficiencies of the healthcare delivery system, economic stimulus packages and relief efforts. In Nigeria, the lockdown was announced weeks after when it should have been in force; it was incompetently enforced, totally ineffective and ineffectual. The usual corrupt exemptions were made to accommodate business and political interests, and as with everything Nigerian, the discretion dictated by corrupt interests were corruptly applied by the corrupt and corrupted gatekeepers.

The rest of humanity ramped up their test and trace capabilities, but as I write these final chapters in the third week of June, the Nigeria State has conducted less than a hundred thousand tests! It has stopped pretending to trace and build healthcare capacity. It has continued pretending as if we do not have rampant community spread, and the rulers have continued to maintain the focus of governance on the provision and assurance of their own personal comforts and powers.

As its economy has continued to crumble in response to the global financial collapse that has been acknowledged by better placed nations and economies, the Nigeria State and its ruling class have continued as though we are immune to these realities, even as they have

continued to borrow unsustainable amounts of monies, which soon disappear into the vast holes of the feudal “*demoncrazy*” that we have erected in place of a democracy.

No less a person than a prince of the evil system itself, Atiku Abubakar had this to say in an article published in Cable Newspaper on June 16, 2020:

*“Not only have we squandered our opportunities, we have also squandered the opportunities of our future generations by bequeathing them debt that they neither incurred or enjoyed.*

*“As a matter of utmost urgency and importance, I call on the Federal Government to take immediate steps to drastically reduce its expenditure, especially on wasteful projects, such as maintenance of the Presidential Air Fleet, and unnecessary renovations of buildings that could serve as is, limousine fleet for top government officials, overseas travels and treatments, and the ₦4.6 billion Presidential villa maintenance budget, etc.*

*“In fact, Nigeria must sell those planes and channel the revenue to other vital areas of need while taking additional steps to reduce the cost of running our government.*

*“The Federal Government cannot continue to justify these unsustainable numbers by pointing at Nigeria’s debt to GDP ratio. That is only half the picture.*

*“Our debt to revenue ratio paints a much more realistic portrait of our financial situation, especially as our*

*revenues are majorly tied to a mono product, oil and gas, which are very vulnerable to global shocks."*

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### **...The economic meltdown**

**THE** unholy alliance between the rapacious Bola Ahmed Tinubu political crime family and the exceedingly conservative CPC wing of the northern hegemony, which had never found oxygen in Southern Nigeria, has birthed a tragedy that has today normalised impunity amongst the Yoruba who were the historical conscience of the Nigeria State, and whose free press and culture of egalitarianism had once called out the very best in all of Nigeria's several ethnicities.

The Nigeria State is drifting aimlessly in very turbulent seas, and everything deducible from the general state of our country would suggest that we have entered a period of extreme economic and financial crisis, and this is aggravated by the burgeoning security challenges that the years of grievance politics, political brinksmanship and unenlightened selfish interests have foisted on the entire country.

In the midst of these meltdowns, the state and its ruling class have continued to behave as though it is business as usual and have accelerated the process of systematically

impoverishing the people, even as they have taken a chokehold on every avenue for the ventilation of alternative views, and every hope of a systemic change predicated on electoral choices. The Nigerian citizen is being daily asphyxiated, and we are losing the capacity to breathe, but we have also lost our voices and stopped crying out our agonies and pain.

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*The Nigeria State is the only legal killer in this space and given its manifest and well-established reputation as a serial killer, it is only the foolish or the deranged that would engage with such an entity at its own game. I am neither deranged nor foolish, but I seek a change in Nigeria. The Nigeria State is killing the Nigeria nation, and if the amoral State and its evil governance systems are not killed, it is all but certain that the Nigeria nation will die.*

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# Chapter 11

## The Pacifist Warrior

If I would be bothered, I am confident that I can pick out the exact date of my entry into Fiditi Grammar School. It was the second Sunday of September 1978. It was most likely the 10th of the month. I had just turned 10 years old in April of that year. I was a runt. We were assigned Houses, and in the Houses, we were assigned rooms.

The bell was scratched at 5 AM, and barely tolled at 5:30 AM. I will save the beatings that cleared the fog of sleep; today is not the day to recount the tales of the incubuses that passed by the names of seniors or my own transition into one. I intend to offer you a window into how I grew up to embrace my pacifist ideology.

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**MORNING** devotions and prayers done, basic orientation talks dispensed with, we were assigned our morning duties, then it was bath time, and I truly found my level.

I entered the bathroom every other person appeared to be entering, a long room rigged with showers. It wasn't the compartmentalised space I had imagined, and there were men inside. Some of them with more pubic hair than the

entire Afro on my young head, and seemingly sporting snakes where I had a tadpole. I ran outside in fear. I believed that I had somehow managed to stray into the staff bathroom. The seniors were amused beyond words, slapped me back inside to have my bath. I also embraced my future and began to evolve in order to survive.

I was brought up to be respectful of myself, deferential with older persons and measured in making my position clear to anyone with whom I would treat. These trainings came in handy in the land of bullies into which I had been immersed when I was sent to the boarding school at the tender age of 10. The seniors' only restraint was that they must not kill their juniors but that did not stop them from trying. A few of the seniors might have tried to find out just how much abuse the junior could endure. I learnt to avoid interactions with the seniors. Someday, I will tell you of my bed in the attic, all to avoid Senior Sola Adedun.

But my own classmates were no less intimidating. I was the runt of the litter, and being constantly bullied themselves, they mostly responded by bullying others... Oh, yes, you guessed right: Oladele was the favourite person to bully. I have always been blessed with a quick wit and a sharp tongue, and; whilst I was brought up to be respectful, I was never taught to fear anyone. My tongue got me regular beatings amongst my own classmates, and I quickly became adept at avoiding fights, even as I learnt to court trouble.

*“Ejo la n’ko, baba enikan ki ko ija.”* It is best to learn how to state the facts of the dispute than to learn how to fight. This is one of the foundational pillars of Yoruba civilisation and culture. Resort to physical violence is culturally deprecated, while civility of peaceable disputation is generally encouraged. To be fighting when you could reason with the other person is an anathema to the culture in which I grew up.

But whilst I could afford to forget these admonitions at *Inalende*, with *Maami* constantly watching to ensure that none of the older kids would practice their acquired fighting skills on me, there was nobody to protect me at *Fiditi*, and I soon learnt to embrace extreme pacifism. It was the difference between being constantly beaten or learning to hold my tongue – an affliction that has never found space in my spirit.

I would disagree with anyone regardless of their office or seniority, but I would do so methodically. I learnt to be extremely respectful in my choice of words, depending on the person’s age, stature and status. I would go to great lengths to ensure that every person listening to us is clear about my disavowal of violence as a tool for resolution of the dispute, and labour to establish my readiness to be swayed by superior reasoning. The unwary would commit to these terms, and I began to escape the perennial beatings that were my lot in the first months of secondary school.

My 16-year-old son is taller than me today, and he has been taller since he was 14. I am 1.73 meters, but at graduation from secondary school I was still shorter than the boys in Form One. The fact that the iron clad discipline that birthed the bullies of my junior years had waned by the time I got into my senior years, and the number of boarding house students had reduced in tandem with the Unity Party of Nigeria, UPN's Free Education Programme, meant that I had to be reasonable with the men that became my juniors. Day students that might beat the runt on his truant forays into town.

When I was at Oyo State College of Arts & Science, OSCAS in Ife in 1984/1985, I found myself in an argument with a retard named Niyi Obembe. I cannot now recall what the subject was, but I was my usual respectful self – it is my factory setting; I have never known any other way. We were not friends, and I am not even sure I knew him before the day. He was brash, loud and as uncouth as he was ignorant. I was intent on making him realise the idiocy of his position, and I succeeded. He lashed out with a head-kick. It was the first time anyone had physically bullied me outside of my own home in over five years, for doing nothing aside telling the truth. Others were present, but only one person rebuked him. Lesson learnt again.

I have always hated seeing birds in cages. I have always found the sight of the avian in a cage a constant source of great discomfort. This predilection was the catalyst for the

last fisticuffs in which I was a participant, albeit a reluctant one. I was living in Adanla Hostel at the Lagos State University. Pardon the extension of the word hostel to describe the LASU hostels. Adanla Hostel was in Adanla Close. It was a bungalow in the classic 'face me I slap you' style. At the rear was an enclosed courtyard with the customary communal kitchen and the toilets and bathrooms.

The birdcage was hung in front of the open kitchen, just by the entrance. The cage housed a captured bird, I cannot now recall its breed, or name of its owner, a mild-mannered man, very respectful of me. He was a good neighbour too. He never caused me offence. I was to blame for the beating I received in his hands.

I freed his bird. I opened the cage and set the captive bird free. The owner asked, and I fessed up. I explained my angst at seeing the bird imprisoned. I preached to him a sermon on how God did not create the bird for his amusement and the decoration of his cage. The usually mild-mannered man was enraged, and we did not fight as much as he trashed me. My hands were addled by the knowledge of the fact that I was wrong, and that he was clearly provoked. But I learnt another lesson that day. Let's bring home the sermon.

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## **My resolve**

IT has become necessary and crucial that I define my position in the public arena, and thereby make clear that in pursuit of the systemic changes to which I have committed my life, I do not seek the use of violence. I disavow it unequivocally and will never consider it.

The Nigeria State is a criminal empire. It is happiest when dissenters embrace the use of violence., And as it has narrowed avenues for the ventilation of grievances, it has deliberately forced violence on those who have sought to engage with it. The State would then turn around to label the ones that they had led to violence as terrorists, and thereby kill, jail and criminalise genuine agitations. I have no truck with violence.

The Nigeria State is the only legal killer in this space and given its manifest and well-established reputation as a serial killer, it is only the foolish or the deranged that would engage with such an entity at its own game. I am neither deranged nor foolish, but I seek a change in Nigeria. The Nigeria State is killing the Nigeria nation, and if the amoral State and its evil governance systems are not killed, it is all but certain that the Nigeria nation will die.

I seek a new beginning for Nigeria. I seek a nation built on citizenship, one in which everyone is treated the same before the law. I seek a Nigeria nation. I seek a nation where your religion is your business, where there is no use for the

state of your origination or tribe, where the Yoruba man is unknown to the constitution of the federation, and; where a man's humanity is the common denominator of his rights. I seek a nation that is the lighthouse of humanity; a refuge for the brown race. I see a nation the equal and better of any other nation on God's earth.

I see the assurance of a most vile and violent future if we should persist in working with the current systems. I see the consolidation of the forces of feudalism and further enslavement of Nigerians in the immediate future. I see the day after COVID-19 with this lot in charge, and I see men and women in fetters. I see Asian overlords, and their local collaborators. I see the slave trade that is coming. I see the decimation of the middle class, and I see the turbaning ceremonies of the local pashas disguised as swearing-in ceremonies. I see a feudalised "*demoncrazy*", where the citizens are truly serfs, and the rulers live in style.

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**NECESSITY** demands that the revolution sought must be nonviolent, and the rulers of Nigeria are the only ones that might decide the peacefulness or violence of the revolution. We own no arms and shall seek none. Now, or in the future. We have evolved a raft of nonviolent actions that are designed to help the citizens educate themselves as to the truth and the issues at stake, and then build consensus and

common purpose for a people who had been deliberately and systematically divvied up for long.

The Nigeria revolution is not inevitable. It is also very unlikely to be peaceful. The beneficiaries of the current system, the victims of the system and those of us that have sought to end the system are doomed to a cycle of violence determined by the reflexive evil of the Nigeria State, and its total inability to identify what its own altruistic interests are, because there is nothing altruistic about Nigeria. But the higher duty of care belongs to the patriots that would birth a better Nigeria State. We thus have to articulate a nonviolent path to the future that we have sought.

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*This section is rounded off by the contribution of my brother, Taiwo 'Wemimo Akinlami. He is a better man than I am in several ways but he is a particularly well-grounded advocate of nonviolent tactics and a committed revolutionary.*

# THE CHANGE MANIFESTO

by Taiwo Wemimo Akinlami

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*The masses of our people seem to believe in the messianic approach and they believe that an activist or group of activists is coming to help them, and make everything work for them. The*

*Nigerian masses have perfected the act of waiting for a messiah...The masses of our people must be made to understand and accept that change does not happen except they take their collective destiny into the hands and become their own messiah.*

**CHANGE** is an ever-present possibility for any person, organisation or nation which is ready to take responsibility for it.

In the following axiom lie the 20 major components of change.

**1. CHANGE IS WAITING ON US:** Change is a waiting and ready servant willing to be engaged, though it hardly engages itself.

At every point in time, change is either acting on us or we are acting on change. When we heed the invitation of change, we act on change but when we do not heed the invitation of change, change acts on us and we waste all its inherent potentials which can only be unlocked for the eternal benefits of humanity.

**2. CHANGE MUST BE INITIATED AND ENGINEERED:** To be initiated here refers to deliberately putting in place the machinery (the system and processes) of effecting a change in a desired area.

To engineer is to 'skillfully arrange for (something) to occur.'

The principle is very simple. Nothing on the face of the earth improves except human efforts are deliberately and skillfully engaged in the direction of the same.

**Franz Fanon** speaks to the first and the second components of change as enunciated above thus: *'Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it.'*

**3. CHANGE IS FIRST A PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:** The way it works is that we cannot lead a change whose credibility we are not able to consistently model.

Our lives must become the symbol of the possibility of the change we seek at the corporate level, gaining the moral authority and credibility to lead a moral persuasion.

The change seeker must be the conscience of the change processes and must be able to say like Nelson Mandela, *'The struggle is my life.'*

According to Ghandi, who prosecuted one of the most successful political struggles of the 20th Century which delivered political independence to

the Indian people on August 15, 1947, through the instrumentality of passive resistance, *'You must be the change you wish to see in the world.'*

#### **4. CHANGE MUST BE DEFINED, SEEING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING:**

What change exactly do we want? The vision must be clear and the mission must also have a level of clarity.

The vision of the political change we seek in Nigeria must be the attainment of an egalitarian society, where there must be a level-playing field for every of its citizenry to give expression to his/her God-given potentials.

I think in expanding the scope of the preceding, suggested direction for the change we seek, we may have an idea to borrow from Bryan Stevenson, when he said, *'My work with the poor and the incarcerated has persuaded me that the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice. Finally, I've come to believe that the true measure of our commitment to justice, the character of our society, our commitment to the rule of law, fairness and equality cannot be measured by how we treat the rich, the powerful, the privileged and the respected among us. The true measure of our character is how we*

*treat the poor, the disfavoured, the accused, the incarcerated and the condemned.'*

## **5. CHANGE MUST SET ITS METHODOLOGY**

It is not only change that must be defined, the methodology must also be defined with an intention to adhere to the same strictly. Mode of execution of the method must be reviewed from time to time but not the agreed method.

The mission/mythology of achieving the vision or direction enumerated above must by all means necessary be peaceful, through the instrumentality of nonviolence resistance, which is an age-long and tested strategy of achieving social and political change through peaceful means.

According to Wikipedia, *'Nonviolent resistance (NVR), or nonviolent action, is the practice of achieving goals such as social change through symbolic protests, civil disobedience, economic or political noncooperation, satyagraha or other methods, while being nonviolent. This type of action highlights the desires of an individual or group that feels that something needs to change to improve the current condition of the resisting person or group.'*

The article, 'Gandhi and the Passive Resistance Campaign 1907-1914,' published on the website ([www.sahistory.org.za](http://www.sahistory.org.za)), shed some light on the basic ideology and reasoning behind nonviolent resistance as follows: "Gandhi biographer Louis Fischer says Satyagraha 'means to be strong not with the strength of the brute but with the strength of the spark of God.' Satyagraha, according to Gandhi, is 'the vindication of truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one's self.' The intention is to convince the opponent and not to crush him, to convert the opponent, who must be 'weaned from error by patience and sympathy.'"

In his book, *Stride Toward Freedom*, **Martin Luther King, Junior**, an outstanding proponent of nonviolent resistance, set out the following cardinal principles of nonviolent resistance as follows:

*I. First, it must be emphasised that nonviolent resistance is not a method for cowards; it does resist. If one uses this method because one is afraid or merely because one lacks the instruments of violence, this person is not truly nonviolent. This is why Gandhi often said that if cowardice is the only alternative to violence, it is better to fight. He made this statement conscious of the fact that there is always another alternative: no individual or group need*

*submit to any wrong, nor need they use violence to right the wrong. There is always the way of nonviolent resistance. This ultimately is the way of the strong person. It is not a method of stagnant passivity. The phrase "passive resistance" often gives the false impression that this is a sort of "do-nothing" method in which the resister quietly and passively accepts evil. But nothing is further from the truth. For while the nonviolent resister is passive in the sense that she is not physically aggressive toward the opponent, her mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade the opponent that he is wrong. The method is passive physically, but strongly active spiritually. It is not passive non-resistance to evil; it is active nonviolent resistance to evil.*

II. *A second basic fact that characterises nonviolence is that it does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his friendship and understanding. The nonviolent resister must often express protest through noncooperation and boycotts, but the resister realises that these are not ends in themselves; they are merely means to awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent. The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness.*

III. *A third characteristic of this method is that the attack is directed against forces of evil rather than against persons who happen to be doing the evil. It is evil that the nonviolent resister seeks to defeat, not the persons victimized by evil. If she is opposing racial injustice, the nonviolent resister has the vision to see that the basic tension is not between races. As I like to say to the people in Montgomery: "tension in this city is not between white people and Negro people. The tension is, at bottom, between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And, if there is a victory, it will be a victory not merely for fifty thousand Negroes, but a victory for justice and the forces of light. We are out to defeat injustice and not white persons who may be unjust."*

IV. *A fourth point that characterises nonviolent resistance is a willingness to accept suffering without retaliation, to accept blows from the opponent without striking back. "Rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood," Gandhi said to his countrymen. The nonviolent resister is willing to accept violence if necessary, but never to inflict it. He does not seek to dodge jail. If going to jail is necessary, he enters it "as a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber."*

*One may well ask: "What is the nonviolent resister's justification for this ordeal to which he invites others, for*

*this mass political application of the ancient doctrine of turning the other cheek?" The answer is found in the realisation that unearned suffering is redemptive. Suffering, the nonviolent resister realises, has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities. "Things of fundamental importance to people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering," said Gandhi. He continues: "Suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears which are otherwise shut to the voice of reason."*

*V. A fifth point concerning nonviolent resistance is that it avoids not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent, but he also refuses to hate him. At the center of nonviolence stands the principle of love. The nonviolent resister would contend that in the struggle for human dignity, the oppressed people of the world must not succumb to the temptation of becoming bitter or indulging in hate campaigns. To retaliate in kind would do nothing but intensify the existence of hate in the universe. Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. This can only be done by projecting the ethic of love to the center of our lives.*

VI. *A sixth basic fact about nonviolent resistance is that it is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice. Consequently, the believer in nonviolence has deep faith in the future. This faith is another reason why the nonviolent resister can accept suffering without retaliation. For the resister knows that in the struggle for justice he and she have cosmic companionship. It is true that there are devout believers in nonviolence who find it difficult to believe in a personal God. But even these persons believe in the existence of some creative force that works for universal wholeness. Whether we call it an unconscious process, an impersonal Brahman, or a Personal Being of matchless power and infinite love, there is a creative force in this universe that works to bring the disconnected aspects of reality into a harmonious whole.*

Gene Sharp, an American political scientist and founder of the Albert Einstein Institution – a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the study of nonviolent action, has identified 198 methods of nonviolent action and same are published on the website of his organization ([www.aeinstein.org](http://www.aeinstein.org)).

The Gene Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolent actions are '*classified into three broad categories: nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation (social, economic, and political), and nonviolent intervention.*'

I think a careful study of the Gene Sharp's list holds the sure promise of providing inspiration for employing nonviolence resistance as a means of seeking political liberty.

It is important to note that the fourth and fifth components must be in place to forestall the change and its process from being hijacked and redirected.

**6. INTELLIGENCE MUST PRECEDE METHODOLOGY:** Without intelligence, a careful observation of the thinking and inner workings of the maintainers of the *status quo ante*, methodology will not be optimised, strategies will be defective, tactics will be out of place and execution will be futile.

The intelligent efforts of the change engineers must never be embarked upon with the aim of underrating or overrating the maintainers of the *status quo ante*, noting that the commonest errors of change engineers is to underrate the maintainers of the *status quo ante*.

**7. WHAT IS THE PLAN:** There must be a meticulous plan that breaks down the change we seek into phases and the measuring rod for the attainment of each phase. The following helps us to monitor and evaluate progress.

**8. INVOLVE THE MASSES:** The change engineers must deliberately involve the beneficiaries of the change being sought as the foot soldiers, building them into a conscious mass ready to take their destiny into their hands.

To involve the beneficiaries of change in the battle for the same, particularly in political struggles, the change engineers must deliberately build mass-based organisations, energised by a well communicated ideology.

To build mass-based organisations means that the society and its people will be organised along the lines of social, economic and social Interests, helping all or most parties to see what is in the change being sought.

Except the micro interests are linked to the macro issues of the national social, political and economic interests, it may be difficult to get the buy-in of the majority of the people. It is about building the interests of the people from the ground up.

Another way to engage the masses is to be committed to embarking on rigorous political education in the language that the masses understand. The political

education will help to clarify the issues, understand the concept of citizenship and debrief them of all the misinformation they have been fed by the state.

**9. KNOW THE MASSES:** It is important to understand the mindset of the Nigerian masses who have never agitated for anything before. They are more used to being recipients of the gain of an agitation than for them to be in the forefront of the agitation.

I think the only section of the Nigerian masses that have been involved in an agitation before are the Igbo, who participated in the civil war.

If the saying: 'You are as good as your last match' is anything to go by, the Nigerian masses do not necessarily have an antecedent and discipline of being part of a political movement fighting for the liberation of the Nigerian people.

It is important to note that Nigerians are also not long-distance runners when it comes to holding the government accountable through peaceful protests. Still fresh in our minds are the June 12, 1993 protest and Occupy Nigeria, in January 2012.

The masses of our people seem to believe in the messianic approach and they believe that an activist or group of activists are coming to help them and make everything work for them. The Nigerian masses have perfected the act of waiting for a messiah.

The masses must be made to understand and accept that change does not happen except they take their collective destiny into the hands and become their own messiah.

**10. CHANGE CHARTER:** This is the curriculum for the political education referred to in point 8 above. It is also a charter of demands stating the minimum standards acceptable to the change engineers as minimum standards of alternative in different areas of social, economic and political lives.

There must be a closely knit connection between our change charters, the political education earlier referred to and most importantly the vision and mission of the change that we seek.

### **11. BUILD BRIDGES**

Build the bridges of consensus to a polarised people who lack political education. When a people are polarised along the line of ideology, it means they

have developed a system of thinking and reasoning leading to persuasion but if they are polarised along primordial sentiments and religious persuasions, it means their intellectual capacity to think has been sacrificed on the bleeding altar of sentiments.

We must therefore build bridges of collaboration across the entire Nigeria. To build such bridges, we must identify gatekeepers to diverse areas of interest in Nigeria, work with them and guide against the lies that the ruling class has fed them with over the years.

**12. CHANGE DEMANDS SACRIFICE:** Change, irrespective of the methodology employed, demands personal and communal sacrifices, including the readiness of the change engineers to lay down their lives if the need arises.

Nelson Mandela, concluding his statement from the Dock, titled, *'I am Prepared to Die'* at the Opening of the Defence Case in the Rivonia Trial, before the Pretoria Supreme Court on April 20, 1964, declared, *'During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony*

*and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.'*

**13. PAYING WITH YOUR LIFE OR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE:** While the immediate point is critical, what must be paramount on the mind of the change engineer is the commitment to accept that the choice of sacrifice is always between paying with his/her life once and for all as a martyr, or dedicate the rest of his/her life to the change efforts.

As Mandela said at his trial, the change engineer is ready to lay down his/her life but must never be fatal and tactless in his/her disposition and operation. Fatalism is often a function of foolhardiness.

The change engineer wants to be alive to prosecute change for as much as necessary except the shedding of his/her blood becomes necessary when the same will advance the cause for which he/she is martyred.

For example, Nelson Mandela had to go underground for over six months when he was being haunted by the apartheid government. He even left South Africa to attend the Conference of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central

Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is important to note that Mandela did not surrender himself for arrest but he was arrested by the state.

Martyrdom is not what a change engineer makes himself/herself available for as a lamb who must surrender himself/herself to the slaughter. It is a consequence a change engineer is conscious of but does not live to pursue, knowing that while his/her death may accelerate the change process, the rest of his life may do much more.

It is a strategic commitment of the change engineer that it is not his/her responsibility to surrender his/her freedom or life to the maintainers of the *status quo ante* to prove the point that he/she is courageous.

**14. VIGILANCE IS AN ETERNAL COMMITMENT:** 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,' says a sage. Therefore, vigilance is a major tool in executing change. Vigilance does not happen by wishes. It happens by putting in place the mechanism to build a system almost impervious to the infiltration of the fifth columnists and detecting the same early or making it impossible for them to access useful information.

**15. CHANGE REQUIRES HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES:** Mass-based organisations raise funds from their members to prosecute the change processes. There is a sense of belonging that also comes with being financially committed to a cause. A sage once said, 'Where your treasure is, your heart will be also.'

Therefore, proper financial system and budgeting is critical to engineering and managing the change process.

**16. ORGANISED AND FULLTIME LEADERSHIP IS A PREREQUISITE TO PROSECUTING THE CHANGE PROCESS:** 'Strike the shepherd, the sheep will scatter,' says a sage. Therefore, a change agenda must have its leaders and cadres, and the processes of ascension to leadership and 'cadreship' clearly defined and documented. Change engineers, who get the foregoing right may have also estopped the machinations of infiltrators.

The other aspect is that change engineers all over the world are often people whose fulltime commitment is the prosecution of the change being sought.

Those who are designing diverse plans to continue

holding Nigerians in servitude do it fulltime, how much more those who want to fix the nation? If it is true that we produce most effectively in the area of our dominant commitments, then we need fulltime commitment.

**17. SEIZING THE CONTROL OF THE MEDIA:** He who owns the media owns the mind of the people. Seeking to execute change without seeking to have consistent and meaningful access to the minds of the people for whom the change is sought is to set in motion a frustrating mirage.

There must be a commitment on the part of the change drivers to create their own media.

**18. CHANGE WILL FOREVER BE A FUNCTION OF THE BALANCE OF FORCES:** According to Montesquieu, French philosopher, 'Power does not shift except for superior power.' Therefore, the change drivers must never be under any illusion as to its power per time and what it can deliver, guiding against offering false hope, thereby making irreplaceable withdrawals from the trust bank account of the people they are mobilising for change.

The change engineers must therefore know how to win some and lose some while embracing necessary and immediate compromises in the interest of the larger goals, even at the risk of being accused of being bought over by the maintainers of the *status quo ante*.

That was the spirit with which Nelson Mandela chose to reach out to the apartheid government in South Africa for a round of negotiation that led to his freedom and the path to general election, aimed at giving power to the majority.

**19. CHANGE IS A MARATHON AND IT IS NEVER A DASH:** It is a marathon because it involves human actions both on the side of those who seek change and those who represent the *status quo ante*

Therefore, the change engineers must understand that those who represent the *status quo ante* do not relinquish their positions and the benefits thereof because a demand has been made for change.

Also, the change engineers may become victims of their own human foibles, falling into temporary despondency and depression due to the enormity of the requirements of the change they seek or the

reaction of the maintainers of the status quo ante which is often virulent and ruthless.

When the change engineers experience the foregoing, depending on how deep this is, change suffers minor or major setback. Therefore, the change processes must be insured with what I call 'comeback strategies.'

Change is marathon because the *status quo ante* exists and is fueled by a system which is often entrenched and has developed a life of its own. Dismantling such system might take a lifetime, or may be trans-generational.

Change is a marathon because the *status quo ante* often functions by ideology and indoctrination of both the maintainer of the *status quo ante* and the change engineers. The maintainers of *the status quo ante* live by an ideology to keep it alive and beneficial while the change seeker seeks to debrief the people for whom the change is initiated of the ideology which has come to accept that the maintainers of the *status quo ante* are invincible.

The rule of thumb here is to hope for the best but be prepared for the worst.

When Mandela and his comrade were jailed, they did not know that the walk to freedom was still 27 years away. The foregoing must have informed the title of his book, *'Long Walk to Freedom.'*

**20. CHANGE BEGINS WHEN CHANGE OCCURS:** Change is in phases; therefore, change begins when change occurs. Change management is more important than change occurrence.

When change occurs, there must be a concrete plan on ground to ensure that the people for whom the change is achieved, live up to the expectations of the achieved change. There is a sense of *uhuru* when a major change occurs, which becomes the greatest enemy of the occurred change.

Consider the Israelites when they encountered the change of deliverance from Egypt but the generation who experienced that change of departure from Egypt did not get to experience the ultimate change that was the arrival at Canaan, which was the original plan.

A more recent example is the Islamic Brotherhood of Egypt, who gained political power, with a chain of change processes set in motion for years, but were

poor in managing the newly won change. The *status quo ante* re-emerged and crushed the change engineers and they are today in a worse state to arise and begin another process of leading political change.

Whatever change processes that do not have an inbuilt mechanism for the management of the same after the occurrence of a milestone, will constitute a waste of time and resources, and may orchestrate a round of backlashes, which may dwarf whatever gains of the attained milestone.

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*The Nigerian peoples, long denied citizenship, have learnt to accept and live with their derogation to indigenes, but this has also meant that in the absence of citizenship, the Nigerian gave up on the Nigeria State. Denied the benefits of citizenship, the Nigerian lost the capacity to become patriots; for true patriotism is found and birthed in the souls of citizenship: how do you demand patriotism from the persons to whom you have denied citizenship? The Nigerian peoples, having little or no benefit of citizenship, have become estranged from the country that the Fulani, long desirous of their own homeland, covet and are pillaging to provoke a pretext for war.*

## Epilogue

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*The Nigerian people have only one choice in the unfortunate situation in which we have found ourselves: we have to discover the Nigerian identity and character in the furnace of these afflictions.*

*We have to desire Nigeria more than the Fulani Islamists. We have to want Nigeria, and we have to want it more than we hate the other Nigerian, who worships God differently, or speaks a different language from mine. Nigerians have to want Nigeria enough to fight for it, and enough to die for it, if we must.*

## The Choices before Us

**T**he Nigerian peoples are left with only two plausible scenarios in the face of their sick realities. And however much we might seek to sugarcoat things, the painful truth remains unavoidable. Nigeria is already in a slow burning civil war. That war has been escalating steadily since the beginning of the Buhari regime, the remarriage of unbridled Fulani irredentism and the unconscionable powers of the Nigeria State. The second option would be anything that might be done to yank Nigeria off its current trajectories and reorientate it to restore the citizenship rights of the peoples that have been rendered indigenes, indigent, and impecunious by a governance system that has guaranteed servitude to them.

The Nigeria State is already at war with itself. The Nigerian, wherever he might live within Nigeria is already living a nasty, short and brutish existence. He does not live if the truth be told; he exists from day to day, and has been generally stripped of hope. From *Kankara* to *Kagara*, from *Ile-Oluji* to *Orlu*, from *Otueke* to *Daura*, *Ibogun* to *Telubodo*... from the Benue trough to the Jos Plateau, the forests of Akure to the marshes of Bayelsa; the indigenous peoples of the Nigeria State are under the guns of the Fulani herdsmen/militia.

The reality is that the Nigeria State is at war, even though the enemies are being mollycoddled by the Buhari regime,

and principal members of the regime are not unsullied by what would appear to be credible evidence of vile complicity at the highest levels of Nigerian governance. The virulence and spread of the Fulani herdsmen/bandits, the brazenness of their bestiality and the complete impunity that attends their operations, when taken in tandem with the constancy of presidential interventions on their behalf, whenever anyone criticised them or point out their excesses, suggest that the time has come to examine what would appear to be the unfurling of a Fulani-Islamist agenda.

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**I HAVE** taken time to lay bare the historical basis of the Fulani agenda in Nigeria, and I have laid out the symbiotic nature of the relationship that was built and fostered between the Fulani rulers of Northern Nigeria, and how centuries of the Fulani feudal system and the highly stratified society that they had built with the vast administrative systems of the sultanate, lent itself to British purposes for their new Nigerian territories. Of the several ethnic nationalities that ended up in the British creation that was eventually named Nigeria, the Fulani were the favoured of the colonists, and the anointed inheritors of the Nigerian possessions.

The installation of the Buhari regime in 2015 marked the beginning of an aggressive and undisguised *fulanisation* of

the Nigerian security architecture and of the upper reaches of the governance systems. All pretense of ethnic and religious balancing in Federal appointments disappeared, and where the Fulani was not available to be doubly promoted to head an agency, a nominal head with limited powers would be named while the Fulani subordinate would be appointed as a deputy to wield the real powers. The EFCC and its recent politics of removal and replacement of the head, offers a ready example.

The security architecture paints a rather dangerous picture too, and it is here that the agenda becomes quite glaring. The upper reaches of the security services are almost exclusively northern in origin, and less than 10% of the members of the National Security Council, are from outside of the northern part of Nigeria. The brazenness of the security forces in taking sides with the Fulani herdsmen in their perennial clashes with indigenous communities all over the country, from the Benue trough to the forests of Ondo and the hills of Ekiti, has led one to question the neutrality of the security forces in these conflicts.

The Nigerian reality is that we are already at war. The Fulani herdsmen, bandits and Boko Haram would appear to have fused together somewhat, and almost impossible to differentiate. The ranks of the terrorists are stocked full of Fulani from across the entire African subregion. The Sahel would appear to have exported its war-hardened, battle-tested and unwanted Fulani to Nigeria, where they have

been welcomed by the long-established Fulani ethnic groupings, and extended the cover of impunity by which they had long established and managed their Nigerian inheritance.

What is the Islamist angle, you might ask? The Fulani are the masters of disguise. The true minority of the Nigeria State, they have by sleight of hands, for long punched above their weight. The Fulani took over the Hausa kingdoms by stealth. They are the masters in the art of cultural assimilation. But they are the true Teflon Don; nothing they swim in permeates their armour. The Fulani assimilates all without ever being themselves assimilated. The Fulani blended into the Hausa culture, and by a deliberate combination of marriages and conquest, have largely replaced the Hausa aristocracy and rendered the people serfs in their own lands.

For a long time in Nigeria, official sources deliberately helped to promote the myth of an imaginary tribe: the Hausa-Fulani. The identity of the Fulani rulers of Northern Nigeria was hidden behind that of the larger Hausa ethnic groups, and the rest of Nigeria was none the wiser for as long as it suited the Fulani to remain hidden behind the Hausa and the facade, myth and illusions of a homogeneous and monolithic Northern Nigeria.

The emergence of Buhari is what has accelerated the Fulani agenda for the domination of Nigeria. And again in need of a larger shield to hide behind, the Fulani has

emerged in the shadow of the Wahhabi Islamists. Thus the Fulani agenda for the expropriation of Nigeria is today cloaked in Islamist robes.

More people have been killed in God's name than by any diseases or by wars occasioned by other factors. When the venal brutality of the Fulani herdsmen and bandits are combined with the murderous psychopathy of the Boko haram terrorists, what you find is that Nigeria has been turned into a most horrific killing field. The statistics are scary to contemplate. The spread of the malaise is suggestive of a country that is trapped in a civil war.

The Nigerian peoples, long denied citizenship, have learnt to accept and live with their derogation to indigenes, but this has also meant that in the absence of citizenship, the Nigerian gave up on the Nigeria State. Denied the benefits of citizenship, the Nigerian lost the capacity to become patriots; for true patriotism is found and birthed in the souls of citizenship: how do you demand patriotism from the persons to whom you have denied citizenship? The Nigerian peoples, having little or no benefit of citizenship, have become estranged from the country that the Fulani, long desirous of their own homeland, covet and are pillaging to provoke a pretext for war.

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## **Revolution: The alternative to War**

**THE** Nigerian peoples have been badly divided and distracted from what should be the existential battle for the survival of the Nigerian homeland. As Nigeria burns from one end of the country to the other, the peoples are busy debating inanities; quarrelling over the most unimportant of subjects, and debating how to break up the country that is already being broken up by the incessant and unrelenting combined actions of the Fulani and Boko Haram terrorists. A violent gerrymandering of the Nigeria State is already underway, and whilst we might have been distracted, the map of Nigeria is being redrawn and old wars and unfinished conquests are being prosecuted in the name of the cow herders.

The Nigerian people have only one choice in the unfortunate situation in which we have found ourselves: we have to discover the Nigerian identity and character in the furnace of these afflictions. We have to desire Nigeria more than the Fulani Islamists. We have to want Nigeria and we have to want it more than we hate the other Nigerian who worships God differently, or speaks a different language from mine. Nigerians have to want Nigeria enough to fight for it, and enough to die for it, if we must.

Nigeria is nobody's father. It cannot be anyone's mother either. Nigeria is a country of pain, a land that devours its inhabitants and a most difficult place in which to dream,

birth or nurture. The dream of the Nigerian is to escape Nigeria. Countless Nigerians have perished in their quest to escape their homes. The Nigerian is traded in the slave markets of Libya and in the Gulf Arab states. The parks of the Champ Elyse are a market for the flesh of Nigerian women, and the fields of Corsica have hosted the backs of Nigerian belles who have earned €5 from grunting men to pay humongous debts to those who have owned them in their bid to escape.

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**THE** Nigerian youth, labelled lazy and cowardly, journeys through the Sahara and crosses the Mediterranean Sea. The ones buried in the sands of the Sahara are the fortunate ones, several did not get the benefit of a blanket of sand; left to be picked up by scavenging birds and animals, until the bones are bleached white and scattered in the sands, barely recognisable or visible in the sands of time. They are victims of an iniquitous state that has declared war on its own peoples.

The fearlessness of the Nigerian youth came to the fore during the #EndSARS protests, and I quickly discerned something that I had not seen in my own generation. The Nigerian youth of this generation is a different animal from the ones of my own generation. Whilst my generation was fearful, these ones are carelessly defiant, even in the face of

the most brazen danger and or threats. I was intrigued by this phenomenon, and this led me to study it a little closely.

What I found holds the likely key to the Nigerian conundrum, and might be the required trigger for the Nigerian revolution: the only thing that might save Nigeria from its current path to cataclysmic disintegration.

The Nigerian situation is objectively bleak and hopeless. The objective realities of the Nigeria State do not inspire hope in any of the peoples trapped within its borders. And those that have escaped, live sorry existences in foreign lands where they are stigmatised and reviled, rendered vagabonds by a wicked state and an even more wicked ruling class. But it is in this hopelessness that hope resides for the Nigerian enterprise, and this hope must be kindled to spark the Nigerian revolution.

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## **Trapped by Hope**

**HOPE** renders a man cautious. But caution might become cowardice when it restrains critically required interventions. My generation grew up hopeful. We were impregnated with the hopes invested in us by our parents, imbued with the false hopes and vain promises of the Nigeria State, and drunken on the fumes of the several heady perfumes of hope that were peddled by the state as we became young adults.

The Nigeria State promised much as we became men in our own right, and we were kept captive by Hope. By the time we realised just how fickle and deceitful Hope is in Nigeria, our youth was done; we had become jaded old men. But the ones after us have learnt.

The Nigerian youth is hopeless. Nothing about the objective realities of the Nigerian existence inspires hope. The years have taught the youth not to dare to hope, and jaded they have become. They watched their fathers, mothers and their uncles and aunts, they saw them stripped of the hopes that fuelled their youthful dreams and aspirations. They watched some escape to saner climes, and those would appear to have been the wise and the sane. Shorn of hope, the Nigerian youth is also largely robbed of the chains of fear. Having nothing to hope for, the young have also thrown away their fears.

Being fearless is not enough to change the trajectories of Nigeria, it would require far more than the loss of hope, and the resultant absence of fear to save Nigeria from the impending catastrophe. Hope in the possibilities of an egalitarian and equitable, and law-ruled Nigeria need to be rekindled before the peoples might be persuaded to fight for its preservation. The Nigerian has to become enamoured enough with their country to want to save it. The Nigerian people must be offered citizenship before they might be mobilised to save Nigeria from itself.

**THE** 1999 Constitution is a product of a crime against the Nigerian people, and in spite of its declaration of the involvement of the Nigerian people's will in its pedigree, it is in truth a mongrel of no determinable pedigree, the encapsulation of a people's frustrations with a governance system and the fetters by which the people are held captive. This constitution must be changed before the Nigerian might acquire citizenship, and thereby be set free from the systemised slavery of his current circumstances.

There are several eminently qualified Nigerians, by far better men than myself, from across the length of the Nigeria State, that have made attempts at crafting new pathways to the Nigerian future. Most Nigerians, high and low, north and south, have agreed upon the critical need to seek a different way and to walk away from the evil texts known as the 1999 Constitution. I make bold to say that we are not stuck in reverse gear because of a paucity of ideas, but because we have looked to the beneficiaries of the system to change the system that has sustained and nurtured them.

The last expressed will of the Nigerian peoples is enshrined in the 1963 Republican Constitution, it built on the Independence Constitution of 1960, itself a product of multiple constitutional conferences held in various locations in Nigeria and the United Kingdom. The peculiarities of the several ethnic nationalities were carefully recognised and considered before certain structures and nuances were

adopted; religious and ethnic minority rights were carefully ring-fenced to assuage their worries.

The Nigeria State, that was agreed, was founded on the principles of multiparty parliamentary democracy based on a federal structure; and with each of these regions able to grow at a speed that is commensurate with the desires of the people, and their capacities. The three regions at the point of independence became four after the 1962 plebiscite, which created the Midwestern Region out of the Western Region, in partial fulfillment of the recommendations of the Willink Commission on the rights of the minorities. The four regions created by the 1963 constitution is what has today become 36 states.

The Nigeria nation that was fragmented by the January 1966 coup, was eventually killed by the several military hegemonies and bandits that have ruled Nigeria. The truth is: what we have today is a Frankenstein's monster that serves not the peoples it pretends to govern, but those who have captured the state and peoples while pretending that it is serving them. The 36 states have become as 36 Emirates; the governors are nothing but feudal lords and pashas, existing as a burden to be carried on the back of the victims. The Nigeria State does not work for the Nigerian peoples.

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## **A return to the past...**

**THE** path forward lies in a return to the abandoned past.

*Ti iwaju o ba se lo, eyin a de se pa'da si.*

If one does not know the way forward, or the road becomes impassible, recourse must be found either in a retreat or in retracing one's steps to whence one has come. The Nigerian path to the future has been pulverised by the several contradictions birthed by the 1999 Constitution, and the only viable alternative before Nigerians is a return to the point of our derailment. The harder we have worked to depart from the foundational agreements, the more worrisome the Nigerian situation has become.

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## **...A new, fresh deal**

**I HAVE** worked with my longtime partner and friend, a great patriot and a great legal mind, Mr. Ralph Nwoke to produce a draft constitution for the Nigeria State and its peoples. We had no illusions about the task that we have set ourselves, and we have drafted and are making these proposals in good faith, recognising that we are limited men, and laying these proposals before you all, in the hope that it might provoke the required debates, and perhaps galvanise us all into peaceable actions.

The original version of the draft constitution, which was annexed to the book, *Do Not Die in Their War*, has been reworked and hopefully improved by the several suggestions and corrections that have been invited by us. We here offer the Nigerian peoples the new and hopefully much improved version at the foot of the new book. It offers a path to the future by going back to the past to recalibrate the journey to the Nigerian future.

In place of the current 36 states governing structure that is neither federal nor unitary, we have recommended a return to federalism based on the strong federating regions as it was the case under the 1963 Constitution. Taking into consideration the recommendations of the pre-independence Willink Commission on the rights of the minorities and the reports of the Abacha, Obasanjo and Jonathan's Constitutional conferences, we have recommended a six-regional structure for Nigeria, and a lot of constitutional rearrangements designed to structurally return Nigeria to where it was before the military intervention of 1966.

The Nigerian peoples of all ethnicities and religious persuasions are universally disenchanted with the 1999 Constitution; even the principal beneficiaries, the Nigerian ruling class, have conceded that the current constitution is ruinous, and represents a clear and present danger to the sustainability of the Nigerian project. The complete lack of national leadership and the political will to do the right

thing have combined with the pervasive disenchantment with the country that is prevalent among the many indigenes that have been stripped of citizenship and; rendered functionally stateless.

The path to the future lies in mobilising popular action behind an agreed path forward based on a broadly agreed roadmap. I have attached such a roadmap to the foot of this treatise. It is my hope that we might be able to abridge time and move forward with saving this blighted land before we are enmeshed in a ruinous war that would be won by none and lost by all. This gory future is avoidable if we shall dare to confront the demons of our past.

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*The Fulani hegemony has always been masked behind entities larger than the Fulani ethnic group. The Fulani are done with the mask of Hausa-Fulani. They have no more use for the lies of Arewa; One North, and the time has come to fulfill the larger ambition of owning the Nigeria State and securing it as a patrimony for the Fulani peoples wherever they might come from. Islam, the very excuse for the colonisation of the Hausa peoples, the reason why the Hausa peoples rebelled against their kings and joined the Uthman Dan Fodio Jihad of 1804, is the new mask behind which the Fulani agenda has found refuge.*

# **Addendum**

## **Nigeria, Nigerians, and Religiosity**

I had submitted the manuscript for this book to my editor several weeks before the inescapable need to return to the manuscript to write this section was crystallised and my laziness caught up with me. I shall explain.

As I have examined the land of my birth and spent time in contemplation of the many woes besetting it, the preeminent role of religion in shaping its trajectories, blighting it, and killing it became more obvious to me; I realised the need to spend some time considering the role of religion in the retardation of my country in particular and Sub-Saharan Africa in general.

The peoples of the different ethnicities that have been lumped together and named Nigeria were not religious, but deeply spiritual. They were largely pantheistic in their outlooks, even though they largely had a God-figure, who decreed the foundations of the earth. This God was so powerful that He, in most of the traditions, could not be approached directly, but there are pantheons of gods and goddesses through whom he rules and could be approached.

The African was a spiritual being, not a religious creature. He would behold the majesty of a river and bow in worship. But he worships the God of creation, not the river, His creation. The connections between the physical and the spiritual are central to African traditional religions. The cult of the ancestors, Egungun to the Yoruba, is common to almost every African ethnic group. The African was a spiritual entity; everything in his sociopolitical traditions emphasised this reality.

The first foreign religion to enter the space that is today known as Nigeria was Islam. The history of Islam in the space known as Nigeria has been told by better men than myself hence, it is not my purpose to dwell much on the subject, but I am compelled by our current realities to examine how Islam has influenced the course of Nigerian history and its relationship and competition with Christianity, the second foreign religion, to affect the living realities of the Nigerian peoples.

The trans-Saharan trade was built principally around the trade in human cargo. Islam came to northern Nigeria through the Sahel; it was the religion of the Barbers and the Tuareg, itinerant traders and caravanners, who crisscrossed the Sahara. Islam had already been established in Northern Africa, and the Malian rulers had long established Islamic empires that ranged wide. But the Hausa peoples of Northern Nigeria and their kings remained largely

practitioners of the African religion long after Islam had been introduced into the kingdoms.

The Fulani, nomadic pastoralists and creatures of the Sahel, had been exposed to Islam for a much longer time. They were the scribes and clerics that had settled amongst the Hausa and served in the royal courts as valued advisers and counselors, spiritual guides to the pious and tutors to the aristocracy, and it was their lot to islamise the Hausa kingdoms. The stories and legends of Uthman Dan Fodio are there for those in search of knowledge, but the feudal theocracy that ruled vast swathes of Northern Nigeria was established by the Jihad that he launched in 1804.

Feudalism is predicated on the presumption of a strict stratification of sociopolitical and economic classes. There are only ever two classes in true feudal systems: The feudal lord and those who serves him, and the serfs. There is no room for citizenship in feudal systems, and rights are what the king and his court says they are at any point in time. Feudalism is dependent on the continuing readiness of the serfs to obey the diktats of the feudal lords and the men to whom they would necessarily delegate authority; the entire governance systems and the sociopolitical realities flow through this prism.

To achieve mass compliance by the serfs, they are kept deliberately ignorant; the rulers would deny education to all but the religious classes who were always closely regulated by the feudal lords and who owed their patronage to the

feudal lords. The Sokoto caliphate that was established by Dan Fodio followed the classic pattern of every feudal hegemony, even though it was established as a theocracy. The Fulani rulers replaced the Hausa rulers at the head of the totem pole. The aristocracy was Fulanised through a deliberate process of assimilation aided by marriages. The ruling class was largely Fulani, as were the clergy and the head of the military classes; Islam was interpreted to the people through the prism of the feudal need to preserve power and to secure the obedience of the serfs.

The role of Islam in establishing the Sokoto Caliphate cannot be lost on any serious student of history, but what has often been ignored is the impact of the Islamist influence in shaping the trajectories of the country. This is the purpose of my exertions. I have offered historical context only as a student of history and I do not presume any expertise in the field.

“One North, one people, irrespective of religion, rank, or tribe.” This was the motto of the Northern People’s Congress (NPC), the Ahmadu Bello-led NPC. Deconstructing these words with the benefit of the passage of time and the current Nigerian realities would reveal a lot about the house built by Uthman Dan Fodio, renovated by Ahmadu Bello, his grandson, and being burnt down today by the hubris of Muhammadu Buhari and the Fulani-Islamist irredentists. Ahmadu Bello understood the delicate balance that had to be maintained in order to retain the installed veto which is

unsustainable without the maintenance of the illusion of a monolithic Northern Nigeria. The above-quoted motto of the NPC in recognition of the need to create a northern consensus was offering equality to those that had long been denied exactly that.

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### **Irrespective of religion?**

**THE** history of Islam in Northern Nigeria is steeped in blood and gore; slavery was a very important consideration in the growth and trajectories of Islam in the north. The peoples of the Benue trough and most of the parts that the southern Nigerian would blithely refer to as the “Middle Belt”, “Northern Christians” and such other descriptions were the ones that either had enough natural defenses to resist Fulani conquest and hegemonic exertions, or the ones that were left deliberately unconquered as conquering them would mean having to impose Islam on them which would consequently render them unsuitable for enslavement under Islamic traditions.

The parts of northern Nigeria where the ethnic groups are Christians are the ones that were affected by either of the above realities. The Beroms and several of the tribes on the plateau were largely unconquerable because their terrain neutralised the Fulani cavalry and its key military advantage, rendering them unworthy of the risks, when

there were easy pickings elsewhere. The Benue trough was another kettle of fish, and its plains offered relative advantages to the Fulani cavalry, but the Fulani preferred to retain garrison towns in strategic locations in the north central and the middle belt, and thereby exert pressure and influence on the region while raiding them for slaves periodically in a manner that is reminiscent of free-range ranching.

All the other “irrespective” might have been truly irrespective, but the truth is that religion is everything in Northern Nigeria. Then and now. The difference between the two is to be found in the temperament of those that have been charged with the duty of preserving the illusion. The NPC and its promoters made the efforts to bring a sense of inclusion to bear on policy issues in the north, and when the time came to decide on the application of shariah laws in Northern Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello settled for the Penal Codes in the north, rejecting the demands of the like of Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi for the application of full Islamic laws in Northern Nigeria, in recognition of the multicultural and multiethnic nature of the peoples that he was cobbling together in a new identity. One North.

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## **Irrespective of tribe?**

**TRIBE** was and is still everything in northern Nigeria. It was for a long time an indicator of religious choices and a tool of ethnic nationalism. The tribe's interactions with the Fulani before the colonial times would usually be easy to glean from the traditional rulership structure and the prevalent religion in the tribe.

Islam was always part and parcel of the feudal construct that has ruled northern Nigeria; while its influence has grown exponentially over the years, the centrality of clergy control has been largely lost, leading to serious consequences for the Nigeria State.

The peoples of the north were simple men and women, self-effacing and differential towards their rulers. The long years of feudalism had established a rigid class structure within which everyone generally knew their place and stayed in their corner, order and peace maintained. The peoples were largely farmers; there were established market towns where rural dwellers bought and sold to each other. The Emir's word was law. The imams were clients of the rulers; the Emirs were the rulers of the clergy class. The Sultan of Sokoto remains the titular head of the Nigerian Muslims in spite of the fact that Islam had been established in Lagos, long before Uthman's Jihad.

The powers that the traditional feudal system once had over the Islamic clerics have been largely lost as the feudal

system itself has evolved with the passage of time, and as the needs of the hegemonies have changed in the constantly changing realities of Nigeria.

The Fulani hegemony has proven to be adroit and extremely syncretic in its evolutionary capacities. It first engaged and introduced itself as “The North”. When you get to ask questions, the north disassembles and becomes the “Hausa-Fulani.” In recent times, dovetailing with the growth of the Fulani hubris and its increased assertiveness during the reign of Buhari, the myth of a tribe known as the Hausa-Fulani tribe has been abandoned for the Fulani-Islamist toga. This metamorphosis of the Fulani agenda and its fusion with the Islamist agenda is of extreme importance in tracking the trajectories of Nigeria, and is deserving of careful attention, proper definition, and deep cogitations. It is what might yet kill Nigeria, where other factors have failed.

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### **What is the Fulani-Islamist agenda?**

There is no Fulani-Islamist agenda. There is a Fulani agenda to own Nigeria. To deny this in the face of Buhari’s crass ethno-religious biases would be sufficient to establish one’s reputation as a liar whose words may never be trusted, but the Fulani agenda is neither Islamist nor ethnic, even though it has fraudulently appropriated the identity of the Fulani

peoples to perpetrate a most vile evil against the Nigeria State and its peoples. I shall explain.

The Fulani hegemony arose out of a feudalised theocracy. The rulers were Fulani, who had replaced the Hausa rulers, but the soldiers were largely the Hausa, who became subjects of the minority Fulani, who had to weaponise Islam in order to retain their minority rule over the Hausa majority. The clergy was largely Fulani; the need to obey God's laws and the rulers He had set over the people became the preoccupation of the faithful. The Fulani had a clear century to perfect the feudal system inherited from Yunfa before the British would come. The British found a colonial hegemony in place on conquering Northern Nigeria in 1904, albeit one that was rooted in a theocratic construct.

The British colonial rule being predicated on indirect rule and the feudal system developed by the Fulani mimicking their own historical sociopolitical realities found the Fulani to be a most ideal partner in the colonial experiences. If the British would create Warrant Chiefs in the republican lands of the Igbo peoples, you can imagine how they affected the political landscape in the north. The emirates were left to function as they always had while the Fulani hegemony was enhanced, promoted and given succor by the British colonists. The hegemony, never being separate from its Islamist roots, grew more powerful under the careful ministrations of the British, retaining its tight leashes on the Muslim clerics.

When the colonists were preparing to leave, and political parties were being formed, the place of Islam as a tool of political mobilisation was taken as a given, resulting in the power dynamics that have ruled northern Nigeria since 1804. Islam was the glue that bound the Fulani and Hausa peoples, and the several other ethnicities that had embraced Islam in the north, forming the base upon which the Sardauna of Sokoto, Ahmadu Bello built the concept of One North. The Hausa language is the lingua Franca of the northern peoples; every tribe in the north, every ethnicity, have their distinct languages, but all, with few exceptions, spoke Hausa language. Political astuteness demanded that a pan-northern identity was built as a bulwark against southern Nigerian politicians and their machinations, and the emerging Arewa political class pre independence, embraced secularism in public life, in an act of forbearance and realpolitik lost on the current leadership of the north.

Nigerian Muslims have always been a diverse lot. The role of Islam and its political traditions are varied as one travels around the country. The Fulani are largely Sunni Salafists who have largely looked to the Saudi clerics for religious directions. The overwhelming influence of the Fulani Islamist clergy, from whose ranks came Uthman Dan Fodio, ensured that the Sunni Muslim are the undisputed majority of the Muslim population of northern Nigeria while the Shia, are only an important bellwether for the measurement of religious tolerance and or intolerance in

Nigeria. They are a microscopic minority in the north, and practically invisible in the south.

Power and religion have always coexisted in northern Nigeria. The theocratic roots of the feudal system had assured that the entire governance systems were consequently islamised, where they were impossible to fulanise. The influence of the Christian missionaries that followed in the wake of the merchants, slave traders and raiders and recently the colonists soared in spite of the best efforts of the colonists at inhibiting the works of the missionaries and the objections of the theocratic feudal lords. The parts of the north that had been either unconquerable or deliberately left unconquered for economic reasons were rapidly Christianised. Religion became part of the tapestry of ethnic identity in northern Nigeria and a dangerous weapon of political mobilisation.

The effect of religion on local politics in the north is inseparable from the tribal identities of the various ethnicities found in northern Nigeria. Amongst the Berom, Anga, Langtang and several tribes on the plateau, Christianity was embraced as a counterforce to the Islamic faith of the old enemy. The story was little different in the Benue trough, the Mambilla Plateau, the Cameroon mountain homes of the peoples of present-day Adamawa state, the Zuru people of Kebbi, and the Jukuns of Taraba state. The long-repressed peoples, who had hitherto been silent, embraced Christianity and western education, and

were to become a particular inconvenience for the colonial administration, who blamed the missionaries for making their own jobs difficult by educating the “pagans and animists” beyond their station in the country being constructed. Chapter 21 of Sharwood-Smith’s book dealt with this at length.

Every politics is local. Even the politics of religion is local. The first effect of the Nigerian independence – the introduction of adult suffrage and the flirtation with citizenship suggested by the sanctity of the vote – led to the Sardauna’s avoidance of his Islamist instincts and posture. The readiness to embrace secularism was informed by the need for consensus. But religion remained the factor for deciding who gets what, even as the public protestations of the ruling hegemony declared the north as secular. It is in the area of national politics that the north has never pretended to be secular, it has engaged with the rest of Nigeria as though it were a monolithic bloc in its religiosity.

The north is unabashedly Islamist in engaging with the rest of Nigeria, but until the coming of the Buhari regime, it had rarely been irredentist in these engagements; what had never been done blatantly in daytime has become commonplace in Buhari’s Nigeria. Muhammadu Buhari is the first self-confessed Islamist in the seat of Nigerian power, but Islam has been the point of engagement between the northern Nigerian political class and the collaborators in the

southern parts whether the southern partners were aware or not.

When Yerima declared the Islamist Republic of Zamfarastan, and the other governors began to fall over themselves in defiance of the clear provisions of the fraudulent 1999 Constitution, how come Obasanjo forgot about his oath to protect the integrity of the constitution that was the basis for the existence of his office? He knew better than to make any such presumptions, he declared it “political shariah” and allowed the seeds of insanity to flourish. That was the signal moment for the assertion of the northern prerogative in the latest republic, and Obasanjo’s impotence incubated the insanity.

Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola, now, that was a man. And then some. He understood the mentality of the northern street. He understood the pivotal place of Islam in the life of the northern hordes. He came from poor stock. He understood poverty from being related to it. He knew what it meant to be hungry... To be desperate... To be hopeless. He understood poverty intimately. His was the true rags to riches story. He was the poor boy made good. But he never forgot his roots, and the early education in the Quran coupled with his own near photographic memory meant that he could hold his own against any sheikh. His stupendous wealth that he evidently deployed to the benefit of the poor and the religious made him a darling of the poor wherever they might be found in Nigeria. He was one

southerner that could not be legitimately labeled a Kaffir or Monafik. MKO won across the length of the north, defeating his opponent in his home state of Kano. Kashimawo scared them. But that is another story for another day.

The influence of Islam as a tool of political mobilisation in the southern parts of Nigeria is largely restricted to the Yoruba-speaking states where Muslims and Christians are largely the same in number, and have the highest level of religious tolerance in the entire country. The religious tolerance and liberalism of the Yoruba Muslims are largely perceived as evidence of religious syncretism by the northern Muslims, who have preached these divisive messages in preservation of the sanctity of the northern clergy rights to decide who the true Muslims are, which equally serves as a gateway against the infiltration of the northern hordes by the progressive teachings of the southern sheiks and Islamic clerics.

The Yoruba people have endured for centuries; they belong to an ancient civilisation that had evolved jurisprudence and religious literature going back several centuries. The Yoruba identity is much stronger than the religious identity as the sociopolitical sophistication of the Yoruba nation had worked to weaken the capacity of religion to be used as an open tool of political mobilisation. However, that was until recent times; several factors, some that are consequences of historical realities, and yet more that are consequences of deliberate actions and inactions

have changed the narrative. We should also look at unintended consequences of deliberate actions and deliberate inactions.

The Yoruba leadership recruitment system that was in place before the independence of Nigeria, and which provided the leadership of the Yoruba peoples that attended the negotiations leading to Nigeria's Independence Constitution and the place of the Yoruba nation in the newly established country couldn't have been more careless about the religious protestations of anyone of the lot. It is not uncommon amongst the Yoruba to have the wife attend the Muslim Jumaat service on Friday, dropped off by the husband, who then attends church on Sunday after dropping the children off at the Quranic school. Such was the religious liberality of the Yoruba peoples. While the objective realities have been drastically altered in recent years; it is critical to understand the historical context.

Yorubaland has always had its Islamists. The general ineffectuality of the Islamist agenda in Yorubaland until recent years is a direct consequence of the egalitarianism that had hallmarked the leadership of the ethnic group within the Nigerian experience. Religion, particularly Islam, with its demand for the adherents to study the Quran, is difficult to weaponise against educated minds. The leadership of the Yoruba nation had focused on education as a defence against the forces of feudalism, which had become one with the fulanised Muslim clerics in the north.

Yoruba political leaders saw the marriage of feudalism and religion very early, and did all in their power to decouple Islam in Yorubaland from the political influence of the caliphate.

Islam was a tool of political mobilisation in parts of Yorubaland where there were already sizable Muslim populations; this was the overt case in parts of what is today Osun state and the larger Ibadan metropolis. The Ede/ Iwo/ Ikirun/Ikire axis have always been largely Muslim. In the early years of the Action Group, Islam was a tool used to curtail its growth until notable Muslims such as Chief Bisi Akande of Ila-Orangun became arrowheads of the AG, and thereby blunted the capacity of the would-be Islamists to employ Islam as a political weapon. The rise of Pentecostal Christianity in the south in the last 3 decades, particularly in Lagos and amongst the Yoruba, its projection of political powers and influence, and the resultant reactions and responses of the Muslims in the region have given oxygen to the rise of the otherwise latent Islamist tendencies in the southern part of the country.

During the years of the military hegemonies in power, particularly from immediately after the removal of the Shagari regime, Nigeria was ruled by a succession of Muslim dictators. The Buhari administration that was installed after the coup that ended the 2nd Republic was as the current one, Islamist in instinct, but it did not stay long enough to have discernible effect on the religious balance in

southern Nigeria. The Babangida regime that followed was a different kettle of fish. Babangida took Nigeria into the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, OIC in his bid to retain himself in office. He was blatantly Islamist in his bid to appease the theocratic feudalists in whose names he ruled, and in whose hands, lay the control of the northern hordes. Babangida was not only in office, he was also in power but he was a proxy who knew his limits when it came to control of the northern streets.

A lot of historical factors are responsible for the rise of political Islam in the south, and more particularly amongst the Yoruba. The rise of the Islamist agenda in Yorubaland is connected to the rise of political Islam in the region, and the two might be used as synonyms, even as they are also not the same. The likes of “Hi Brother”, Professor Ishaq Akintola of MURIC have been around long before the current democratic experiment was launched in 1999. He was a member of the LASU faculty in my days in the university, an object of curiosity to a lot of students and his colleagues, beloved by all for his easygoing ways, but generally considered eccentric for his Arabic headdress and seemingly quixotic demands for Muslim rights. The hot button issues for the southern based Islamists were never of concern to the mainstream Yoruba Muslims who have always considered religion the private business of the adherents.

Demands for a work-free Friday, the increasing proliferation of the hijab in schools and public spaces, the

rapid construction of mosques in public institutions, the projection of Muslim power in the political space, the aggressive and sometimes abrasive use of these powers are phenomena that have become increasingly commonplace in the last 18 years or thereabouts. These occurrences are directly traceable to the collapse of the leadership recruitment system in Yorubaland and the upward trajectory of, first the Obasanjo Tsunami Gang, and then the Jagaban Franchise, both of which have effectively created a new class of leadership in Yorubaland that recognises the political powers of Islam and plays the game to varying degrees. Islam has become a factor in the politics of the Yoruba peoples; the Islamists have established a beachhead that is critical to the Fulani-Islamist agenda.

The Fulani hegemony has always been masked behind entities larger than the Fulani ethnic group. The Fulani are done with the mask of Hausa-Fulani. They have no more use for the lies of Arewa; One North, and the time has come to fulfill the larger ambition of owning the Nigeria State and securing it as a patrimony for the Fulani peoples wherever they might come from. Islam, the very excuse for the colonisation of the Hausa peoples, the reason why the Hausa peoples rebelled against their kings and joined the Uthman Dan Fodio Jihad of 1804, is the new mask behind which the Fulani agenda has found refuge.

### **...The Sheikh kneeling on our identity**

**SHEIKH** Isa Ali Pantami. He is a Muslim cleric and the current minister in charge of the national databases and extremely sensitive projects such as the National Identification Number (NIN) and General Multi-Purpose Cards (GMPC). Problem is, Pantami is a self-declared terrorist sympathiser. He is on record expressing support for international terrorist organisations and known terrorists including Osama Bin Laden. Mr. Pantami is the Islamist riposte to the presence of Pastor, Professor Yemi Osibajo in the federal cabinet; his closeness to General Buhari has been well-established and advertised. That Buhari is executing a clear Fulani agenda is beyond any contestation, but Pantami's key role in the execution of that agenda is only beginning to emerge. "Shekere Garuba's" apologies to Professor Soyinka have silenced any doubts as to whose pleasures Mr. Pantami serves.

The Pantami episode interests me for only one reason; its exposure of the dangers posed by an entrenchment of Islamist sympathies in promoting the subjectivisation of an issue, because of the Muslim faith of the persons involved and a resultant conflation of personal interest for the collective good of the religion. The marriage of feudalism and theocratic governance, which had ruled the north for centuries, has taken hold where it was once decried and resisted. In spite of the fact that Mr. Pantami admitted to

what he could not have denied in the face of the objective realities that would indict the Buhari regime for complicity in the activities of the rampaging Fulani hordes and the obvious compromise of our national security by the continuing presence of Pantami in his position, no Yoruba Muslim political actor of note has demanded his removal. That Pantami is a Muslim has immunised him against scrutiny in the eyes of a critical mass of Yoruba Muslims, something that would have been unthinkable less than a decade ago.

The rise of Pentecostal Christianity with its pop culture and aggressive evangelical activities is what has awakened a critical mass of Yoruba Muslims, who had become increasingly alarmed by the Pentecostal overreach, and had responded by launching a revival within Islam in the western part of Nigeria. The rise of Pentecostalism coincided with the return to civil rule hence, the churches with their huge numbers during their different congregations began to exert influence on the political class. Churches became the new Mecca for politicians of all religious persuasions, and pastors began to emerge as critical voices in national discourse. These were to have direct consequences down the line, and some of the consequences include the birth of Muslim organisations such as Nasrul-lahi-li Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT) and several others that have preferred to be less obvious.

The role of Islam as a tool of political mobilisation was embraced very early by the new crop of political leadership in Yorubaland. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Lagos State where rightful demands for equality found astute political actors, resulting in the political annexation of the Muslim clergy in Lagos State, rendering them clients of the governing hegemony in the state. This weaponisation of Islam was never intended to serve the purpose of the Islamists, but was a political opportunity too good to be passed up, but it has today become the foothold long desired by the Islamist forces.

In taking on Oyinlola in Osun State, Aregbesola tapped into the existing Islamist network in the state, deploying vast resources to ensure mobilisation of the mosques and madrassas. That he was running against a Christian incumbent made the job easier; that Chief Bisi Akande, the old warhorse of Osun politics, the same one instrumental in dismantling Muslim opposition to Awolowo and the AG was batting in his corner, made the job even easier. The margin of Oyinlola's loss in the Muslim strongholds of Ede, Iwo, Ikire, Ikirun and Osogbo areas is not unrelated to the massive riggings that both parties facilitated, but the overtly Islamist postures of the Aregbesola regime, spanning both terms, speak to the extent of the collaboration, and how vital the Islamist support is in the retention of power in the state by the APC.

## **The role of Christianity in Nigeria's Mess**

LET me reiterate for the benefit of the intellectually indolent and the mischievous, my sole interest in either of the imported religions of Islam and Christianity is to track their effects on shaping the political trajectories of the Nigeria State, with particular emphasis on its effect on the efforts to revolutionise Nigeria, and its power plays with Islam in the contestations for political influence and power in the current republic, only dwelling on the history, solely to offer context as may be required to provide clarity. Better qualified men and women have written and are writing church history in Nigeria, my purpose is to track its effects.

The 'Animal Called Man', Obasanjo, the same man who coined the phrase, unwittingly unshackled the forces that assail Nigeria today. After the death of Abacha, with the decision having been taken by the powers behind the Abdusalami's throne to murder Abiola and replace him with another Yoruba man; the Earnest Shonekan interim arrangement and its chief arranger quickly emerged the commonsensical choice. Aremu was sprung out of jail, granted a state pardon, had myths and legends spun around his imprisonment for being an arrogant know-it-all that Abacha could not tolerate, and almost emerged as some sort of Mandela figure, who was promptly casted to play the Mandela role in the new democratic experiment. Problem is,

Aremu is nobody's Mandela; his promoters had miscalculated badly.

Obasanjo's religious protestations in the days leading up to his coronation in 1999 were loud and vociferous. His embrace by the Christian south, particularly in the land of Ndigbo, where Obasanjo earned more votes than in his own Yorubaland, and where religion is a major issue in national and local politics, made it easy for Obasanjo to be labelled a Christian president in the run up to the 2003 elections and in the struggle against his 3rd-term agenda.



**Appendix**  
**Proposed**  
**Constitution**  
**of the Federating States**  
**of Nigeria**

by Ralph Nwoke

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*We the peoples and tribes of the  
amalgamated territories known and  
geographically defined as Nigeria, in  
our bid to build one united country  
governed by law do declare, enact and  
give to ourselves the following  
Constitution:*

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## CHAPTER 1: SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION, NIGERIA AND ITS TERRITORIES

### **Effect of this Constitution**

1. This Constitution shall have the force of law throughout Nigeria, if any other law (including the constitution of a Region) is inconsistent with this Constitution, this Constitution shall prevail, and the other law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void.

### **Establishment of the Federal Republic**

2. Nigeria shall be a Federation comprising of Regions and a Federal Territory and shall be a Republic by the name and style of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

### **Territories of the Federation**

3. (1) The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall consist six (6) territories and a federal capital territory.  
(2) The territory of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall consist of the North Western Region, North Eastern Region, South Eastern Region, South Southern Region, South Western Region and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja.

(3) The Regions and Federal Capital Territory shall consist of the areas indicated in Schedule 1 to this constitution.

### **Alteration of this Constitution**

4. (1) The House of Representatives may alter any of the provisions of this Constitution provided that a bill of the House of Representatives altering this Constitution shall not come into operation unless each legislative house of at least four Regions have passed a resolution adopting such alteration and the President has assented to the bill on the advice of the Prime Minister.

(2) A bill for an Act of the House of Representatives altering the provision of this constitution, shall not be passed in the House of Representatives unless it has been supported on second and third readings by the votes of not fewer than two-thirds of all the members of that House of Representatives.

(3) Alterations to section 3 of this Constitution for the purpose of establishing new Regions out of other territories shall be effected only in accordance with the following procedure:

(a) A proposal for the alteration shall be submitted to the House of Representatives by the Government of the Region seeking the creation of a new Region from

its territory or by a community of not fewer than one hundred thousand people, within the Region.

(b) The proposal shall contain the proposed name, estimated population and map of the new Region, duly endorsed by a Surveyor in the Civil Service of the Federation designated by the Prime Minister for this purpose.

(c) A proposal submitted pursuant to Section 4(2)(a) above shall be debated in the House of Representatives and if supported on second and third readings by the votes of not fewer than two-thirds of all the members of that House of Representatives, the proposal shall be submitted to the legislative houses of all the Regions for adoption by resolution of the majority of members of the Legislative Houses of all the Regions and if so adopted, the proposal shall become an act of Parliament amending Section 3 and Schedule 1 of this Constitution to create the Region as proposed.

### **Provisions relating to Regional Constitutions**

5. (1) The peoples of the Region shall adopt for themselves a Regional Constitution, which shall, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, have the force of law throughout that Region and if any other law is inconsistent with that constitution, the provisions of that constitution shall prevail, and the other law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void.

(2) Subject to the provisions of this constitution, the constitution of a Region may be altered only by a law enacted by the legislature of that Region.(3) A bill for a law to be enacted by the legislature of a Region altering any of the provisions of the constitution of that Region shall not be deemed passed unless it is supported on second and third readings by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all the members of the legislative house of the Region and then presented to the Governor of the Region for assent.

(4) Where a new Region is established the House of Representatives may make laws for the peace, order and good government of that Region with respect to matters not included in the Legislative Lists (including provision for the constitution of that Region) for a period of six months after the establishment of that Region or for such period as the legislative house of the region is duly constituted, but thereafter the House of Representatives shall have only such powers to make laws for that Region as it has in relation to the other Regions: Provided that nothing in this section shall preclude the legislature of that Region from making laws in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and the constitution of the Region, after the due constitution of the legislative house of the Region.

6. Subject to the provision of this Constitution, the constitution of the Region shall in accordance with basic democratic tenets establish the system of government for Regions, which must include a fully representative legislative house and a system of executive power.

## CHAPTER II: CITIZENSHIP

7. (1) The following persons are citizens of Nigeria by birth, namely –

(a) every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria; Provided that a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by virtue of this section if neither of his parents nor any of his grandparents was born in Nigeria.

(b) every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria; and (c) every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria.

(2) In this section, "the date of independence" means the 1st day of October 1960.

8. (1) Subject to the provisions of section of this Constitution, a person to whom the provisions of this section apply may be registered as a citizen of Nigeria, if the Prime Minister is satisfied that -

- (a) he is a person of good character;
- (b) he has shown a clear intention of his desire to be domiciled in Nigeria; and
- (c) he has taken the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the Second Schedule to this Constitution.

(2) the provisions of this section shall apply to-

- (a) any woman who is or has been married to a citizen of Nigeria; or
- (b) every person of full age and capacity born outside Nigeria any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria.

9. (1) Subject to the provisions of section 8 of this Constitution, any person who is qualified in accordance with the provisions of this section may apply to the Prime Minister for the grant of a certificate of naturalisation.

(2) No person shall be qualified to apply for the grant of a certificate or naturalisation, unless he satisfies the Prime Minister that -

- (a) he is a person of full age and capacity;
- (b) he is a person of good character;

- (c) he has shown a clear intention of his desire to be domiciled in Nigeria;
- (d) he is, in the opinion of the Governor of the State where he is or he proposes to be resident, acceptable to the local community, in which he is to live permanently, and has been assimilated into the way of life of Nigerians in that part of the Federation;
- (e) he is a person who has made or is capable of making useful contribution to the advancement; progress and well-being of Nigeria;
- (f) he has taken the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the second Schedule to this Constitution; and
- (g) he has, immediately preceding the date of his application, either- (i) resided in Nigeria for a continuous period of fifteen years; or (ii) resided in Nigeria continuously for a period of twelve months, and during the period of twenty years immediately preceding that period of twelve months has resided in Nigeria for periods amounting in the aggregate to not less than fifteen years.

10. (1) Subject to the other provisions of this section, a person shall forfeit forthwith his Nigerian citizenship if, not being a citizen of Nigeria by birth, he acquires or retains the citizenship or nationality of a country, other than Nigeria, of which he is not a citizen by birth.

(2) Any registration of a person as a citizen of Nigeria or the grant of a certificate of naturalisation to a person who is a citizen of a country other than Nigeria at the time of such registration or grant shall, if he is not a citizen by birth of that other country, be conditional upon effective renunciation of the citizenship or nationality of that other country within a period of not more than five months from the date of such registration or grant.

11. (1) Any citizen of Nigeria of full age who wishes to renounce his Nigerian citizenship shall make a declaration in the prescribed manner for the renunciation.

(2) The Prime Minister shall cause the declaration made under subsection (1) of this section to be registered and upon such registration, the person who made the declaration shall cease to be a citizen of Nigeria.

(3) The Prime Minister may withhold the registration of any declaration made under subsection (1) of this section if -

(a) the declaration is made during any war in which Nigeria is physically involved; or

(b) in his opinion, it is otherwise contrary to public policy.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section, "full age" means the age of eighteen years and above;

12. (1) The Prime Minister, deprive a person, other than a person who is a citizen of Nigeria by birth or by registration, of his citizenship, if he is satisfied that such a person has, within a period of seven years after becoming naturalized, been sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years.

(2) The Prime Minister shall deprive a person, other than a person who is citizen of Nigeria by birth, of his citizenship, if he is satisfied from the records of proceedings of a court of law or other tribunal or after due inquiry in accordance with regulations made by him, that -

(a) the person has shown himself by act or speech to be disloyal towards the Federal Republic of Nigeria; or

(b) the person has, during any war in which Nigeria was engaged, unlawfully traded with the enemy or been engaged in or associated with any business that was in the opinion of the Prime Minister carried on in such a manner as to assist the enemy of Nigeria in that war, or unlawfully communicated with such enemy to the detriment of or with intent to cause damage to the interest of Nigeria.

13. For the purposes of this Chapter, a parent or grandparent of a person shall be deemed to be a citizen of Nigeria if at the time of the birth of that person such parent or grandparent would have possessed that status by birth if he had been alive on the date of independence; and in this section, "the date of independence" has the meaning assigned to it in section 6(2) of this Constitution.

13. (1) The Prime Minister may make regulations, not inconsistent with this Chapter, prescribing all matters which are required or permitted to be prescribed or which are necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to the provisions of this Chapter, and for granting special immigrant status with full residential rights to non- Nigerian spouses of citizens of Nigeria who do not wish to acquire Nigerian citizenship.

(2) Any regulations made by the Prime Minister pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be laid before the House of Representatives from adoption by voice vote resolution.

### **CHAPTER III: FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS**

14. (1) Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life.

(2) A person shall not be regarded as having been deprived of his life in contravention of this section, if he 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.

15. (1) Every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person, and accordingly -(a) no person shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment;

(b) no person shall be held in slavery or servitude; and

(c) no person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.

(2) for the purposes of subsection (1) (c) of this section, "forced or compulsory labour" does not include -

(a) any labour required in consequence of the sentence or order of a court;

- (b) any labour required of members of the armed forces of the Federation or the Nigeria Police Force in pursuance of their duties as such;
- (c) in the case of persons who have conscientious objections to service in the armed forces of the Federation, any labour required instead of such service;
- (d) any labour required which is reasonably necessary in the event of any emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community; or
- (e) any labour or service that forms part of -
  - (i) normal communal or other civic obligations of the well-being of the community.
  - (ii) such compulsory national service in the armed forces of the Federation as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly, or
  - (iii) such compulsory national service which forms part of the education and training of citizens of Nigeria as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.

16. (1) Every person shall be entitled to his personal liberty and no person shall be deprived of such liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure permitted by law -

- (a) in execution of the sentence or order of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty;

- (b) by reason of his failure to comply with the order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation imposed upon him by law;
  - (c) for the purpose of bringing him before a court in execution of the order of a court or upon reasonable suspicion of his having committed a criminal offence, or to such extent as may be reasonably necessary to prevent his committing a criminal offence;
  - (d) in the case of a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years for the purpose of his education or welfare;
  - (e) in the case of persons suffering from infectious or contagious disease, persons of unsound mind, persons addicted to drugs or alcohol or vagrants, for the purpose of their care or treatment or the protection of the community; or
  - (f) for the purpose of preventing the unlawful entry of any person into Nigeria or of effecting the expulsion, extradition or other lawful removal from Nigeria of any person or the taking of proceedings relating thereto. Provided that a person who is charged with an offence and who has been detained in lawful custody awaiting trial shall not continue to be kept in such detention for a period longer than the maximum period of imprisonment prescribed for the offence.
- (2) Any person who is arrested or detained shall have the right to remain silent or avoid answering any

question until after consultation with a legal practitioner or any other person of his own choice.

(3) Any person who is arrested or detained shall be informed in writing within twenty-four hours (and in a language that he understands) of the facts and grounds for his arrest or detention.

(4) Any person who is arrested or detained in accordance with subsection (1) (c) of this section shall be brought before a court of law within a reasonable time, and if he is not tried within a period of -

(a) two months from the date of his arrest or detention in the case of a person who is in custody or is not entitled to bail; or

(b) three months from the date of his arrest or detention in the case of a person who has been released on bail, he shall (without prejudice to any further proceedings that may be brought against him) be released either unconditionally or upon such conditions as are reasonably necessary to ensure that he appears for trial at a later date.

(5) In subsection (4) of this section, the expression "a reasonable time" means-

(a) 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, a period of one day; and

(b) 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.

(6) Any person who is unlawfully arrested or detained shall be entitled to compensation and public apology from the appropriate authority or person; and in this subsection, "the appropriate authority or person" means an authority or person specified by law.

(7) Nothing in this section shall be construed -

(a) in relation to subsection (4) of this section, as applying in the case of a person arrested or detained upon reasonable suspicion of having committed a capital offence; and

(b) as invalidating any law by reason only that it authorizes the detention for a period not exceeding three months of a member of the armed forces of the federation or a member of the Nigeria Police Force in execution of a sentence imposed by an officer of the armed forces of the Federation or of the Nigeria police force, in respect of an offence punishable by such detention of which he has been found guilty.

17. (1) In the determination of his 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.

(2) Without prejudice to the foregoing provisions of this section, a law shall not be invalidated by reason only that it confers on any government or authority power to determine questions arising in the administration of a law that affects or may affect the civil rights and obligations of any person if such law -

(a) provides for an opportunity for the persons whose rights and obligations may be affected to make representations to the administering authority before that authority makes the decision affecting that person; and

(b) contains no provision making the determination of the administering authority final and conclusive.

(3) The proceedings of a court or the proceedings 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.

(4) Whenever any person is charged with a criminal offence, he shall, unless the charge is withdrawn, be entitled to a fair hearing in public within a reasonable time by a court or tribunal: Provided that

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(a) a court or such a tribunal may exclude from its proceedings persons other than the parties thereto or their legal practitioners in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality, the welfare of persons who have not attained the age of eighteen years, the protection of the private lives of the parties or to such extent as it may consider necessary by reason of special circumstances in which publicity would be contrary to the interests of justice;

(b) if in any proceedings before a court or such a tribunal, a Minister of the Government of the Federation or a commissioner of the government of a State satisfies the court or tribunal that it would not be in the public interest for any matter to be publicly disclosed, the court or tribunal shall make arrangements for evidence relating to that matter to be heard in private and shall take such other action as may be necessary or expedient to prevent the disclosure of the matter.

(5) Every person who is charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed to be innocent until he is proved guilty; Provided that nothing in this section shall invalidate any law by reason only that the law imposes upon any such person the burden of proving particular facts.

(6) Every person who is charged with a criminal offence shall be entitled to - (a) be informed promptly

in the language that he understands and in detail of the nature of the offence;

(b) be given adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence; (c) defend himself in person or by legal practitioners of his own choice;

(d) examine, in person or by his legal practitioners, the witnesses called by the prosecution before any court or tribunal and obtain the attendance and carry out the examination of witnesses to testify on his behalf before the court or tribunal on the same conditions as those applying to the witnesses called by the prosecution; and

(e) have, without payment, the assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand the language used at the trial of the offence.

(7) When any person is tried for any criminal offence, the court or tribunal shall keep a record of the proceedings and the accused person or any persons authorised by him in that behalf shall be entitled to obtain copies of the judgement in the case within seven days of the conclusion of the case.

(8) No person shall be held to be guilty of a criminal offence on account of any act or omission that did not, at the time it took place, constitute such an offence, and no penalty shall be imposed for any criminal offence heavier than the penalty in force at the time the offence was committed

(9) No person who shows that he has been tried by any court of competent jurisdiction or tribunal for a criminal offence and either convicted or acquitted shall again be tried for that offence or for a criminal offence having the same ingredients as that offence save upon the order of a superior court.

(10) No person who shows that he has been pardoned for a criminal offence shall again be tried for that offence.

(11) No person who is tried for a criminal offence shall be compelled to give evidence at the trial.

(12) Subject as otherwise provided by this Constitution, a person shall not be convicted of a criminal offence unless that offence is defined and the penalty therefor is prescribed in a written law, and in this subsection, a written law refers to an Act of the National Assembly or a Law of a State, any subsidiary legislation or instrument under the provisions of a law.

18. The privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications is hereby guaranteed and protected.

19. (1) Every person shall be 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 in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

(2) No person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction or to take part in or attend any religious ceremony or observance if such instruction ceremony or observance relates to a religion other than his own, or religion not approved by his parent or guardian.

(3) No religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any place of education maintained wholly by that community or denomination.

(4) Nothing in this section shall entitle any person to form, take part in the activity or be a member of a secret society.

20. (1) Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) of this section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions:

Provided that no person, other than the Government of the Federation or of a State or any other person or body authorised by the President on the fulfilment of conditions laid down by an Act of the National Assembly, shall own, establish or operate a television or wireless broadcasting station for, any purpose whatsoever.

(3) Nothing in this section shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society

(a) for the purpose of preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of courts or regulating telephony, wireless broadcasting, television or the exhibition of cinematograph films; or

(b) imposing restrictions upon persons holding office under the Government of the Federation or of a State, members of the armed forces of the Federation or members of the Nigeria Police Force or other Government security services or agencies established bylaw.

21. 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: Provided that the provisions of this section shall not derogate from the powers conferred

by this Constitution on the Independent National Electoral Commission with respect to political parties to which that Commission does not accord recognition.

22. (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 thereby or exit therefrom.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society-

(a) imposing restrictions on the residence or movement of any person who has committed or is reasonably suspected to have committed a criminal offence in order to prevent him from leaving Nigeria; or (b) providing for the removal of any person from Nigeria to any other country to:-

(I) be tried outside Nigeria for any criminal offence, or (ii) undergo imprisonment outside Nigeria in execution of the sentence of a court of law in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty:

Provided that there is reciprocal agreement between Nigeria and such other country in relation to such mater.

23. (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:-

(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 Nigeria of other communities, ethnic groups, places of origin, sex, religions or political opinions are not made subject; or

(b) be accorded either expressly by, or in the practical application of, any law in force in Nigeria or any such executive or administrative action, any privilege or advantage that is not accorded to citizens of Nigeria of other communities, ethnic groups, places of origin, sex, religions or political opinions.

(2) No citizen of Nigeria shall be subjected to any disability or deprivation merely by reason of the circumstances of his birth.

(3) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section shall invalidate any law by reason only that the law imposes restrictions with respect to the appointment of any person to any office under the State or as a member of the armed forces of the Federation or member of the Nigeria Police Forces or to an office in the service of a body, corporate established directly by any law in force in Nigeria.

24. Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, every citizen of Nigeria shall have the right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria.

25. (1) No moveable property or any interest in an immovable property shall be taken possession of compulsorily and no right over or interest in any such property shall be acquired compulsorily in any part of Nigeria except in the manner and for the purposes prescribed by a law that, among other things -

(a) requires the prompt payment of compensation therefore and

(b) gives to any person claiming such compensation a right of access for the determination of his interest in the property and the amount of compensation to a court of law or tribunal or body having jurisdiction in that part of Nigeria.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section shall be construed as affecting any general law.

(a) for the imposition or enforcement of any tax, rate or duty;

(b) for the imposition of penalties or forfeiture for breach of any law, whether under civil process or after conviction for an offence;

(c) relating to leases, tenancies, mortgages, charges, bills of sale or any other rights or obligations arising out of contracts.

- (d) relating to the vesting and administration of property of persons adjudged or otherwise declared bankrupt or insolvent, of persons of unsound mind or deceased persons, and of corporate or unincorporated bodies in the course of being wound-up;
- (e) relating to the execution of judgements or orders of court;
- (f) providing for the taking of possession of property that is in a dangerous state or is injurious to the health of human beings, plants or animals;
- (g) relating to enemy property;
- (h) relating to trusts and trustees; (i) relating to limitation of actions;
- (j) relating to property vested in bodies corporate directly established by any law in force in Nigeria;
- (k) relating to the temporary taking of possession of property for the purpose of any examination, investigation or enquiry;
- (l) providing for the carrying out of work on land for the purpose of soil- conservation; or
- (m) subject to prompt payment of compensation for damage to buildings, economic trees or crops, providing for any authority or person to enter, survey or dig any land, or to lay, install or erect poles, cables, wires, pipes, or other conductors or structures on any land, in order to provide or maintain the supply or distribution of energy, fuel, water, sewage,

telecommunication services or other public facilities or public utilities.

(3) Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, the entire property in and control of all minerals, mineral oils and natural gas in under or upon any land in Nigeria or in, under or upon the territorial waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone of Nigeria shall vest in the Government of the Federation and shall be managed in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly.

26. (1) Nothing in sections 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 of this Constitution shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society

(a) in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health; or

(b) for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedom or other persons

(2) An act of the National Assembly shall not be invalidated by reason only that it provides for the taking, during periods of emergency, of measures that derogate from the provisions of section 33 or 35 of this Constitution; but no such measures shall be taken in pursuance of any such act during any period of emergency save to the extent that those measures are reasonably justifiable for the purpose of dealing with the situation that exists during that period of

emergency: Provided that nothing in this section shall authorise any derogation from the provisions of section 33 of this Constitution, except in respect of death resulting from acts of war or authorise any derogation from the provisions of section 36(8) of this Constitution.

(3) In this section, a " period of emergency" means any period during which there is in force a Proclamation of a state of emergency declared by the President in exercise of the powers conferred on him under section 305 of this Constitution.

27. (1) Any person who alleges that any of the provisions of this Chapter has been, is being or likely to be contravened in any State in relation to him may apply to a High Court in that State for redress.

(2) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, a High Court shall have original jurisdiction to hear and determine any application made to it in pursuance of this section and may make such orders, issue such writs and give such directions as it may consider appropriate for the purpose of enforcement or securing the enforcing within that State of any right to which the person who makes the application may be entitled under this Chapter.

(3) The Chief Justice of Nigeria may make rules with respect to the practice and procedure of a High

Court for the purposes of this section. (4) The House of Representatives -

(a) may confer upon a High Court such powers in addition to those conferred by this section as may appear to the National Assembly to be necessary or desirable for the purpose of enabling the court more effectively to exercise the jurisdiction conferred upon it by this section; and

(b) shall make provisions-

(i) for the rendering of financial assistance to any indigent citizen of Nigeria where his right under this Chapter has been infringed or with a view to enabling him to engage the services of a legal practitioner to prosecute his claim, and

(ii) for ensuring that allegations of infringement of such rights are substantial and the requirement or need for financial or legal aid is real.

#### CHAPTER IV: THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

##### **Establishment of office of President**

28. (1) There shall be a President of the Republic who shall be appointed from the House of Elders in accordance with section

\_ of this Constitution and shall be the Head of State of the Federation and the Commander-in- Chief of the armed forces of the Federation.

### **Election and removal of the President**

29. (1) A person shall be eligible for election as President if he is a citizen of Nigeria is qualified to be a member of the House of Elders and possess at least a first-degree qualification or its equivalent from any higher institution recognized by the relevant agency of the Government of Nigeria;

(2) The office of the President shall be rotated amongst the Regions of the Nigeria. Every region shall be entitled to hold the office for a period of 2 years and no region shall be entitled to hold the office of president after the completion of a 2-year term, until all other regions have held the office for two years each.

(3) The President shall be elected by secret ballot of member of the Legislative House of the Region entitled to produce the President of Nigeria from member of the House of Elder representing the region.

(4) Where there is a tie on the ballots cast for two or more members of the House of Elders for the office of President, the Governor of the Region shall select amongst the eligible candidates the President of Nigeria.

30 (1) A person elected as the President shall not begin to perform the functions of that office until he has taken and subscribed the oath of allegiance and such oath for the due performance of those functions as may be prescribed by the House of Representatives.

(2) The oaths aforesaid shall be administered by the Chief Justice of Nigeria or the person for the time being appointed to exercise the functions of the Chief Justice.

31. The President shall cease to hold office if:

(1) he ceases to be a member of the House of Elders;

(2) if he is found by the investigative committee set up by the Chief Justice of Nigeria pursuant to Section of this constitution to have committed an act of grave misconduct or by reasons of infirmity of mind or body is unable to discharge his function as president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

32. (1) for the purpose of Section 31(2) of this constitution, the Chief Justice of Nigeria shall, upon, the resolution of two third of all members of the House of Representatives that the president is unfit to hold office, by reasons of misconduct or infirmity of mind or body, constitute an investigative committee of 7 (seven) highly reputable and accomplished citizens of Nigeria, who are neither public or civil servant and have

never held a political office or appointment and have never been members of a political party, to investigate an allegation of misconduct or a committee of 7 (seven) highly qualified medical doctors, to investigate an allegation of infirmity of mind or body.

(2) The President shall be deemed removed from office, if the investigative committee reaches a conclusion that the conduct of the president is grave and warrants the removal from office or that the president is unfit to hold to hold office by reasons of infirmity of mind or body. (2) Where it is alleged that the President has committed an act of misconduct, the Chief Justice shall designate one member of the committee, who shall be a legal practitioner of not less than 15-year post call experience, to serve as chairman and any other member of the panel as secretary of the investigative panel.

(3) Where it is alleged that the President suffers from such infirmity of body and mind as not to be able to discharge his functions, the Chief Justice shall appoint a medical doctor with not less than 20 years medical practice experience to serve as chairman and any other member of the panel as secretary of the investigative panel.

(4) The investigative panel is required to conclude its siting within 1 months from the date of commencement of siting.

(5) all members of the panel shall be entitled to receive not more than two- month total emolument of a Federal High Court Judge as remuneration.

## CHAPTER V: PARLIAMENT

### **Part 1: Composition of Parliament**

#### **Establishment of Parliament**

33. There shall be a Parliament of the Federation, which shall consist of the House of Elders and a House of Representatives.

#### **Composition of the House of Elders**

34. (1) The House of Elders shall consist of five members representing each Region, and three members representing the Federal Capital Territory, who shall be traditional rulers, retired military officers of ranks not less than the rank of Major General or its equivalent in any of the armed forces, retired police officers of rank not less than the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police, university professors, retired civil servants who had attained the rank of Director in the Federal or Regional civil service or its equivalent, retired Chief Executive Officers of any company quoted on the Nigerian stock exchange; (2) A

member of the House of Elders shall have attained the age of 55 years on the date of appointment into the House of Elders and shall serve for term of 4 years and may be reappointed subject to further nomination by the head of government of his Region and confirmation by the legislative house of the Region.

(2) The members of the House of elders shall be appointed by the Head of Government of each Region subject to confirmation by the legislative house of the Region.

(3) the Prime Minister shall appoint members of the House of Elders for the Federal Capital Territory, subject to confirmation by the House of Representatives.

### **Composition of the House of Representatives**

35. The House of Representatives shall consist of 10 members representing each Region of the Federation and 6 members representing the Federal Capital Territory.

36. A person shall be qualified for election as a member of the House of Representatives if he is a citizen of Nigeria and has attained the age of twenty-one on the date of nomination to stand for election as

a member of the House of Representatives and possesses a minimum of Senior School Certificate or its equivalent on the date of his election.

### **Disqualifications of membership of House of Representatives**

37. (1) No person shall be qualified for election to the House of Representatives-

(a) if under any law in force in any part of Nigeria he is adjudged to be a lunatic or otherwise declared to be of unsound mind;

(b) if he is under a sentence of death imposed on him by any court of law in Nigeria or a sentence of imprisonment (by whatever name called) exceeding six months imposed on him by such a court or substituted by competent authority for some other sentence imposed on him by such a court;

(c) if he is convicted of any felony by any court in Nigeria or in any democratic country in the world;

(d) if he is an undischarged bankrupt, having been adjudged or otherwise declared bankrupt under any law in force in any part of Nigeria;

(e) if he is a member of the public service of the Federation or the public service of a Region, a member of the armed forces of the State or the holder of any other office or emolument under the State; or

(e) if he is a member of the House of Elders or a legislative house of a Region.

### **Chairman of the House of Elders**

38. (1) There shall be a Chairman for the House of Elders, who shall be elected by the members of the House of Elders.

(2) No person shall be elected as Chairman of the House of Elders unless he is a member of the House of Elders and is not from the same Region as the President of Nigeria.

(3) The Chairman of the House of Elders shall vacate his office-

(a) if, having been elected from among the members of the House of Elders, he ceases to be a member of the House of Elders;

(4) No business shall be transacted in the House of Elders (other than an election to the office of the Chairman of the House of Elders) at any time when the office of Chairman of the house of Elders is vacant.

(5) The Chairman of the House of Elders shall coordinate the business of the House of Elders.

### **Speaker of the House of Representatives**

39. (1) There shall be a Speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be elected by the members of that House.

- (2) No person shall be elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives unless he is a member of the House of Representatives.
- (3) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall vacate his office-
  - (a) if he ceases to be a member of the House of Representatives;
  - (b) if he becomes a Minister of the Government of the Federation; or
  - (c) if he is removed from office by a resolution of the House supported by the votes of two-thirds of all the members of the House.
- (4) No business shall be transacted in the House of Representatives (other than an election to the office of Speaker) at any time when the office of Speaker is vacant.
- (5) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall coordinate the Business of the House of Representatives.

### **Establishment of Electoral Commission**

40. (1) There shall be an Electoral Commission for the Federation.
- (2) The members of the Electoral Commission of the Federation shall be-
  - (a) a Chief Electoral Commissioner, who shall be chairman; and

- (b) a member representing each Region.
- (3) The members of the Electoral Commission of the Federation shall be appointed by the Chief Justice of Nigeria subject to the confirmation of the House of Elders.
- (4) A person shall not be qualified to hold the office of a member of the Electoral Commission of the Federation if he is a member of either House of Parliament, a member of a legislative house of a Region, a Minister of the Government of the Federation, a Minister of the Government of a Region or a member of the public service of the Federation or the public service of a Region or member of any political party.
- (6) Subject to the provisions of this section, a member of the Electoral Commission of the Federation shall vacate his office
  - (a) at the expiration of five years from the date of his appointment; or
  - (b) if any circumstances arise that, if he were not a member of the Commission, would cause him to be disqualified for appointment as such.
- (7) A member of the Electoral Commission of the Federation may be removed from office by the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, for inability to discharge the functions of his office

(whether arising from infirmity of mind or body or any other cause) or for gross misconduct.

(8) A member of the Electoral Commission of the Federation shall not be removed from office except in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(9) In the exercise of its functions under this Constitution the Electoral Commission of the Federation shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.

(10) The registration of voters and the conduct of elections shall be subject to the direction and supervision of the Electoral Commission of the Federation.

### **Constituencies**

41. (1) There shall be 10 constituencies in each Region of Nigeria in accordance with boundaries delineated by the Electoral Commission.

(2) No constituency shall form part of more than one Region.

(3) The House of Representative may, on the written advice of the Electoral Commission that population increase necessitates the creation of new constituencies, by resolution supported by two third of all members of the House of Representatives create more constituency in Nigeria. Provide that no

constituency shall be created except an equal number of constituencies is created for all other Regions of Nigeria.

(4) Each constituency shall be represented by a member in the House of Representative, who shall be popularly elected by the peoples of the constituency.

### **Determination of questions respecting membership of Parliament**

42. (1) The Federal High Court shall have original jurisdiction to hear and determine any question whether-

(a) any person has been validly selected as a member of the House of Elders or elected as a member of the House of Representatives; or

(b) the seat in the House of Elders or the seat in the House of Representatives of a member of that House has become vacant.

(2) The House of Representatives may make provision with respect to-

(a) the persons who may apply to the Federal High Court for the determination of any question under this section;

(b) the circumstances and manner in which, and the conditions upon which, any such application may be made; and

(c) the powers, practice and procedure of the Federal High Court in relation to any such application.

### **Clerks to Houses of Parliament and their staffs**

43. (1) There shall be a Clerk to the House of Elders and a Clerk to the House of Representatives:

(2) Subject to the provisions of any Act of the House of Representatives, the office of the Clerk of each House of Parliament and the members of his staff shall be offices in the public service of the Federation.

(3) The Clerks to the Houses of Elders and Representatives shall be the head of administration in each of the Houses.

### **Procedure in Parliament**

#### **Oaths to be taken by members of Parliament**

44. (1) Every member of either House of Parliament shall, before taking his seat in that House, take and subscribe before the House the oath of allegiance in the form set out in Schedule \_ of this Constitution. Provided that a member may before taking that oath take part in the election of a Chairman of the House of Elders or a Speaker of the House of Representatives, as the case may be.

### **Presiding in House of Elders**

45. (1) There shall preside at any sitting of the House of Elders- (a) the Chairman; or

(b) in the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman; or

(c) in the absence of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman such member of the House of Elders as the House may elect for that purpose.

(2) The House of Elders may from time to time elect a member of the House of Elders to be Deputy Chairman and any person so elected shall hold office as such until he ceases to be a member of the House or is removed from office by the House.

### **Presiding in House of Representatives**

46. (1) There shall preside at any sitting of the House of Representatives

(a) the Speaker; or

(b) in the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker; or in the absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, such member of the House as the House may elect for that purpose.

(2) The House of Representatives may from time to time elect a member of the House to be Deputy Speaker and any person so elected shall hold office as such until he ceases to be a member of the House or is removed from office by the House.

### **Quorum in Houses of Parliament**

47. If objection is taken by any member of a House of Parliament present that there are present in that House (besides the person presiding) fewer than one-sixth of all the members of that House and, after such interval as may be prescribed in the rules of procedure of the House, the person presiding ascertains that the number of members present is still less than one-sixth of all the members of the House, he shall thereupon adjourn the House.

### **Use of English in Parliament**

48. The business of Parliament shall be conducted in English.

### **Voting in Parliament**

49. (1) Any question proposed for decision in a House of Parliament shall be determined by the required majority of the members present and voting; and the person presiding shall cast a vote whenever necessary to avoid an equality of votes but shall not vote in any other case.

(2) Save as otherwise provided in this Constitution, the required majority for the purposes of determining any question shall be a simple majority.

(3) The rules of procedure of a House of Parliament may provide that the vote of a member

upon a question in which he has a direct pecuniary interest shall be disallowed.

### **Mode of exercising legislative power**

50. (1) The power of Parliament to make laws shall be exercised by bills passed by the House of Representatives and assented to by the President on advice of the Prime Minister. Provided that a bill shall be deemed duly assented to if passed by Parliament and transmitted to the president with a written advice from the Prime Minister to assent to the bill and the President fails to assent to same within 30 days of receipt of the bill.

(2) When a bill is presented to the President for assent, he shall signify that he assents or that he withholds assent. Provided that the President may only validly withhold assent on the written advice of the Prime Minister.

(3) In the event that assent is withheld by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister, or such advice is not received within 30 days of passage of the bill, the bill shall, at the motion of any member of the House of Representatives be read again on the floor of the House of Representatives and vote taken, and if supported by two third of all members of the House of Representatives, the bill shall on the date of the vote become an Act of the House of Representatives.

(5) A bill shall not become law unless it has been duly passed and assented to in accordance with this Constitution.

### **Part 3: Sessions of Parliament**

51. (1) Each session of Parliament shall be held at such place within Nigeria.

(2) Parliament, unless sooner dissolved, shall continue for six years from the date of its first sitting.

(3) At any time when the Federation is at war, Parliament may from time to time extend the period of six years specified in subsection (2) of this section for not more than twelve months at a time: Provided that the life of Parliament shall not be extended under this subsection for more than three years.

(4) In the exercise of his powers to dissolve Parliament, the President shall act in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, so however that if the Prime Minister recommends a dissolution in a case not falling within subsection (5) of this section and the President considers that the government of the Federation can be carried on without a dissolution and that a dissolution would not be in the interests of the Federation he may refuse to dissolve Parliament.(5) The President shall dissolve Parliament -

(b) if the House of Representatives passes a resolution supported by two third of all the members of the House

of Representatives that it has no confidence in the Government of the Federation and within the period of three days beginning with the day on which the resolution is passed the Prime Minister does not resign or recommend a dissolution or does recommend a resolution;

(c) if the office of Prime Minister is vacant and the President considers that there is no prospect of his being able, within a reasonable time, to appoint to that office a person who can command the support of the majority of the members of the House of Representatives.

(d) For the purpose of Section 5(b), a vote of no confidence shall only be effective if adopted by resolution of a simple majority of all members of the House of Elders.

## **Part 4: Legislative powers**

### **Powers of House of Representatives to make laws**

52. (1) House of Representatives shall have power to make laws-

(a) for the peace, order and good government of Nigeria (other than the Federal territory) or any part thereof with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive and Concurrent Legislative List; and (b) for the peace, order and good government of the Federal

territory with respect to any mater.

(2) The power of House of Representatives to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Regions with respect to any mater included in the Exclusive Legislative List shall be to the exclusion of the legislatures of the Regions.

(3) The Powers of the House of Representatives to make law in relation to anything contained in the concurrent list is concurrent with the powers of the legislative House of the Region to make laws in relation to such matters and if any law enacted by the legislature of a Region is inconsistent with any law validly made by House of Representatives on such matters contained in the concurrent list, the law made by the House of Representatives shall prevail and the Regional law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void.

(4) The Legislatives Houses of the Region shall have exclusive powers to make laws on all maters not contained in the exclusive and concurrent list in relation to their region, to the exclusion of any other legislative bodies.

### **Special powers of House of Representatives in relation to emergencies**

53. (1) Parliament may at any time make such laws for Nigeria or any part thereof with respect to maters

not included in the Legislative Lists as may appear to Parliament to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of maintaining or securing peace, order and good government during any period of emergency: Provided that upon the passage of such bill, a version shall be sent to the House of Elders for adoption and shall only take effect upon the adoption of two third of all members of the House of Elders and assented to by the President.

(2) Any provision of law enacted in pursuance of this section shall have effect only during a period of emergency: Provided that the termination of a period of emergency shall not affect the operation of such a provision of law during that period, the validity of any action taken thereunder during that period, any penalty or punishment incurred in respect of any contravention thereof or failure to comply therewith during that period or any proceeding or remedy in respect of any such penalty or punishment.

(3) In this section "period of emergency" means any period during which-

(a) the Federation is at war;

(b) there is in force a resolution passed by each House of Representatives declaring that a state of public emergency exists; or

(c) there is in force a resolution of each House of Representatives supported by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all the members of the House declaring

that democratic institutions in Nigeria are threatened by subversion.

(4) A resolution passed by a House of Representatives for the purposes of this section shall remain in force for twelve months or such shorter period as may be specified therein: Provided that any such resolution may be revoked at any time or may be extended from time to time for a further period not exceeding twelve months by resolution passed in like manner.

#### **Implementation of treaties, etc.**

54. The House of Representatives may make laws for Nigeria or any part thereof with respect to matters not included in the Legislative Lists for the purpose of implementing any treaty, convention or agreement between the Federation and any other country or any arrangement with or decision of an international organisation of which the Federation is a member: Provided that any provision of law enacted in pursuance of this section shall not come into operation in a Region unless the Head of Government of that Region has consented to its having effect.

#### **Titles of Honour etc.**

55. (1) Subject to provisions of this section, House of Representatives may make laws for Nigeria or any

part thereof with respect to titles of honour, decoration and other dignities.

(2) Any such law providing for the award of title, decoration or other dignity shall confer the power to make the award upon the President, with the approval of the House of Elders.

## CHAPTER VI: EXECUTIVE POWERS

### **Exercise of executive authority of Federation**

56. (1) The executive authority of the Federation shall be vested in the President and subject to the provisions of this Constitution, shall be exercised on his behalf by the Prime Minister.

(2) Nothing in this section shall prevent House of Representatives from conferring functions on persons or authorities other than the President.

### **Extent of executive authority of Federation**

57. The executive authority of the Federation shall extend to the execution and maintenance of this Constitution and to all matters with respect to which House of Representatives has for the time being power to make laws.

### **Executive authority of Regions**

58. The executive authority of a Region shall extend to the execution and maintenance of the constitution of the Region and to all matters with respect to which the legislature of the Region has for the time being power to make laws but shall be so exercised as not to impede or prejudice the exercise of the executive authority of the Federation or to endanger the continuance of federal government in Nigeria or the unity of the Federation of Nigeria.

### **Ministers of Government of Federation**

59. (1) There shall be a Prime Minister of the Federation, who shall be elected by a majority vote of members of the House of Representatives from the party with majority control of the House of Representatives.

(2) for the purpose of subsection 1 above, a party shall be deemed to have majority control if it has more elected members of the House of Representatives than any other political party in the House of Representatives or if, in coalition with any other political party or independent members of the House of Representatives, it has more members than any other political party in the House of Representatives.

(3) There shall be, in addition to the office of Prime Minister, such other offices of Minister of the

Government of the Federation as may be established by the House of Representatives.

(4) Appointments to the office of Minister of the Government of the Federation other than the office of Prime Minister shall be made by the Prime Minister, who shall appoint ministers amongst members of the House of Representatives and subject to the approval of the House of Elders, from persons who are not members of the House of Representatives.

(5) Any person appointed as a Minister pursuant to subsection 2 above, not being a member of the House of Representatives shall be entitled to attend the proceedings of the House of Representatives and contributing in same without the powers to vote.

(6) A person shall not hold office at the same time both as a Minister of the Government of the Federation and as a Minister of the Government of a Region.

(7) The office of the Prime Minister shall become vacant if-

(a) if a vote of no confidence is proposed by any member of the House of Representatives and passed by at least two-third of all; members of the House of Representatives and adopted by a simple majority of the House of Elders; or

(b) if he ceases to be a member of the House of Representatives.

(8) The office of a Minister of the Government of the Federation other than the Prime Minister shall become vacant if the office of Prime Minister becomes vacant.

(9) The Ministers of the Government of the Federation shall hold office during the President's pleasure but the President shall not remove a Minister from office except in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister.

(10) If the office of the Prime Minister before the general elections, the House of Elders shall convene and appoint a new Prime Minister from the party with majority membership in the House of Representatives. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall act Prime Minister pending the appointment of a new Prime Minister.

(11) The new Prime Minister shall, not later than 2 weeks taking the oath of office as Prime Minister, appoint new Ministers of the Government of the Federation.

(12) where a Prime Minister is pursuant to clause, the Electoral commission shall not later than 3 months from the date of the appointment of the Prime Minister conduct a general election.

### **Attorney-General of the Federation**

60. (1) There shall be an Attorney-General of the Federation, who shall be the chief law officer and the chief prosecutor of Nigeria and shall be appointed by the Prime Minister on the advice of the National Judicial Commission.

(2) A person shall not be qualified to hold or perform the functions of the office of Attorney-General of the Federation unless he is qualified to practice as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria has been so qualified for not less than fifteen years.

(3) There shall be a Deputy Attorney-General of the Federation, who shall be the assistant Chief Prosecutor of the Nigeria and shall be appointed by the Prime Minister on the advice of the National Judicial Commission.

(4) A person shall not be qualified to hold or perform the functions of the office of Deputy Attorney-General of the Federation unless he is qualified to practice as barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria has been so qualified for not less than twelve years.

(5) If the person holding the office of Attorney General is for any reasons unable to perform the functions conferred upon him by this Constitution or any other law, those functions shall be performed by

the Deputy Attorney General or any other officer in the office of the attorney General.

(6) Where the Office of the Attorney General becomes vacant by reasons of incapacitation, resignation death or removal in accordance with the provision of Section \_ of this constitution, the Prime Minister shall on the advice of the National Judicial Commission appoint a person to the office of Attorney General within 3 weeks of the office becoming vacant. The Deputy Attorney General, or where the Deputy is unable to act, the most senior officer in the office of the Attorney General shall act in place of the Attorney General until a substantive Attorney General is appointed.

### **Removal of the Attorney General**

61. The Attorney General or Deputy Attorney may only be removed from office by reasons of incapacitation or gross misconduct.

62. A notice for the removal of the Attorney General or the Deputy Attorney General stating reasons for removal must be adopted by a simple majority vote of the House Elders and the House of Representatives and then delivered to the National Judicial Commission for investigation.

63. A copy of the notice must also be served on the Attorney General or Deputy Attorney General.

64. The National Judicial Commission, shall in the course of its investigation, invite the Attorney General or Deputy Attorney General to the hearing for investigation of the allegations contained in the notice and may invite any persons, bodies or organizations to make presentations at the hearing.

65. After the hearing, determine the veracity or otherwise of the allegations against the Attorney General or the Deputy Attorney General and where it is determined that the allegation have not been proven, the Attorney General or Deputy Attorney General shall be deemed exculpated from the allegations and the decision of the National Judicial Commission shall be final.

66. Where the National Judicial Commission determines that the allegations have been duly proven, it recommends to the Prime Minister, the appropriate punishment to be adopted, which may include dismissal or suspension from office for period of not more than 3months.

### **Establishment of Council of Ministers**

67. (1) There shall be a Council of Ministers for the Federation, whose function shall be to advise the President in the government of the Federation, and which shall consist of the Prime Minister and such other persons, being Ministers of the Government of the Federation, as the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, may from time to time appoint.

(2) A person appointed as a member of the Council of Ministers shall vacate his seat in the Council if he ceases to be a Minister of the Government of the Federation or if the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, so directs.

### **Collective responsibility**

68. (1) The Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to Parliament for any advice given to the President by or under the general authority of the Council and for all things done by or under the authority of any Minister of the Government of the Federation in the execution of his office.

69. The Prime Minister, may assign to any other Minister of the Government of the Federation responsibility for any business of the Government of

the Federation, including the administration of any department of government.

**Performance of functions of Prime Minister during absence or illness**

70. (1) Whenever the Prime Minister is absent from Nigeria or is by reason of illness unable to perform the functions conferred upon him by his Constitution, the President may authorize some other member of the Council of Ministers of the Federation to perform those functions (other than the functions conferred by this section) and that member may perform those functions until his authority is revoked by the President.

(2) The powers of the President under this section shall be exercised by him in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister: Provided that if the President considers that it is impracticable to obtain the advice of the Prime Minister owing to his absence or illness he may exercise those powers without that advice.

**President to be informed concerning matters of government**

71. The Prime Minister shall keep the President fully informed concerning the general conduct of the government of the Federation and shall furnish the President with such information as he may request with

respect to any particular matter relating to the government of the Federation.

**Oaths to be taken by Ministers, etc.**

72. A member of the Council of Ministers, Minister of the Government of the Federation or Parliamentary Secretary to such a Minister shall not enter upon the duties of his office unless he has taken and subscribed the oath of allegiance and such oath for the due execution of his office as may be prescribed by Parliament.

**Permanent Secretaries**

73. Where any Minister of the Government of the Federation has been charged with responsibility for any department of government, he shall exercise general direction and control over that department; and, subject to such direction and control, the department shall be under the supervision of a permanent secretary, whose office shall be an office in the public service of the Federation: Provided that two or more government departments may be placed under the supervision of one permanent secretary.

**Delegation of executive authority of Region**

74. (1) The Head of Government of a Region may, with the consent of the President, entrust either

conditionally or unconditionally to the President or to any officer or authority of the Federation functions in relation to any matter to which the executive authority of the Region extends.

(2) A law enacted by the legislature of a Region may include provision conferring powers or imposing duties, or authorising the conferring of powers or the imposition of duties, upon the President or any officer or authority of the Federation: Provided that no provision made in pursuance of this subsection shall have effect unless the President has consented to its having effect.

### **Prerogative of mercy**

75. (1) The President may -

- (a) grant to any person concerned in or convicted of any offence created by or under an Act of Parliament a pardon, either free or subject to lawful conditions;
- (b) grant to any person a respite, either indefinite or for a specified period, of the execution of any punishment imposed on that person for such an offence;
- (c) substitute a less severe form of punishment for any punishment imposed on that person for such an offence; or
- (d) remit the whole or any part of any punishment imposed on that person for such an

offence or of any penalty or forfeiture otherwise due to the State on account of such an offence.

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, the powers of the President under subsection (1) of this section shall be exercised by him in accordance with the advice of such member of the Council of Ministers as may from time to time be designated in that behalf by the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister.

### **Public prosecutions**

76. (1) There shall be a Director of Public Prosecutions for the Federation, whose office shall be an office in the public service of the Federation and shall serve in the office of Attorney General of the Federation.

(2) The Director of Public Prosecutions of the Federation shall, under the direction of Attorney General have power in any case in which he considers it desirable so to do -

(a) to institute and undertake criminal proceedings against any person before any court of law in Nigeria other than a court martial in respect of any offence created by or under any Act of Parliament;

(b) to take over and continue any such criminal proceedings that may have been instituted by any other person or authority; and

(c) to discontinue at any stage before judgment is delivered any such criminal proceedings instituted or undertaken by himself or any other person or authority.

(3) The powers of the Director of Public Prosecution under this section may be exercised by the Attorney General in person and through the Director of Public Prosecutions of the Federation acting under and in accordance with the general or special instructions of the Attorney-General, and through other officers that the Attorney General may designate.

(4) The Attorney-General of the Federation may confer a general or special authority upon the Attorney-General of a Region to exercise, subject to such conditions and exceptions as he may think fit, any of the powers conferred upon him by this section in relation to prosecutions in that Region and may vary or revoke any such authority.

(5) The powers conferred upon the Attorney-General of the Federation by this section shall be vested in him to the exclusion of any other person or authority: Provided that, where any other person or authority has instituted criminal proceedings, nothing in this subsection shall prevent the withdrawal of those proceedings by or at the instance of that person or authority at any stage before the person against whom the proceedings have been instituted has been charged before the court.

(6) In the exercise of the powers conferred upon him by this section the Attorney-General of the Federation shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.

(7) For the purposes of this section any appeal from any determination in any criminal proceedings before any court of law or any case stated, or question of law reserved for the purposes of any such proceedings to any other court or to The President in Council shall be deemed to be part of those proceedings.

(8) The provisions of this section shall apply—

(a) in relation to any offence created by or under any law in force in the Federal Capital Territory;

(b) any offence created by the Act of the House of Representatives; and

(c) any offence created by the Legislative Houses of the Region, in respect of which no prosecution has been commenced by the Legislative House of the Region.

## CHAPTER VII: POLICE

### **Establishment of Nigeria Police Service**

77. (1) There shall be a police Service for Nigeria, which shall be styled the Federal Police Service.

(2) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Federal Police Service shall be organised and administered in accordance with such provision as may be made in that behalf by House of Representatives.

(3) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the members of the Federal Police Service shall have such powers and duties as it relates to the enforcement offences and laws created by the House of Representatives, and on the invitation of the Government of the Region, enforcement of offences created by the laws of a Region.

(4) Subject to the provisions of this section, there shall be a police Service for each Region, which shall be created by the constitution of the Region and shall be responsible for the enforcement of law and orders in the Region and enforcement of laws made by the Legislative Houses of the Region.

(5) subject to the provisions of the constitution of the Region, the Governor of the Region may invite the Federal Police Service to enforce laws created by the Legislative House of the Region or to carry out law enforcement duties within the territory of the Region.

### **Control of Federal Police Service**

78. (1) There shall be an Inspector-General in charge of the Federal Police Service, whose offices shall be offices in the public service of the Federation. (2) The

Prime Minister or such other Minister of the Government of the Federation as may be authorised in that behalf by the Prime Minister may give to the Inspector-General of the Nigeria Police such directions with respect to the maintaining and securing of public safety and public order as he may consider necessary and the Inspector-General shall comply with those directions or cause them to be complied with.

(3) There shall be such other offices in the Federal Police Service, as the House of Representatives may deem necessary for the effective running of the Federal Police Service.

## CHAPTER VIII: COURTS

### **Part 1: The Supreme Court of Nigeria Establishment of the Supreme Court**

79. (1) There shall be a Supreme Court of Nigeria.

(2) The justices of the Supreme Court shall be –

(a) the Chief Justice of Nigeria; and

(b) such number of Justices of the Supreme Court (not being less than

7) as may be prescribed by the House of Representatives.

(3) The Supreme Court shall be a superior court of record and, save as otherwise provided by Parliament, shall have all the powers of such a court.

(4) The Supreme Court shall sit in the Federal territory and in such other places in Nigeria as the Chief Justice of Nigeria may appoint. Appointment of Chief Justice of Nigeria and Justice of the Supreme Court.

80. (1) The Chief Justice of Nigeria and the Justices of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the Prime Minister on the advice of the National Judicial Council.

(2) A person shall not be qualified to hold the office of Chief Justice of Nigeria or a Justice of the Supreme Court unless he is or has been called to the Nigerian Bar and has remained qualified to practice as a legal practitioner in Nigeria for not less than fifteen years; or

(3) If the office of Chief Justice of Nigeria is vacant or if the person holding the office is for any reason unable to perform the functions of the office, then, until a person has been appointed to and has assumed the functions of that office or until the person holding the office has resumed those functions, as the case may be, those functions shall be performed by the most senior Justice of the Supreme Court until a new Chief Justice is designated by the Prime Minister on the advice of the National Judicial Council. (4) The Prime Minister

shall from time to time on the advice of the National Judicial Council appoint persons into the office of Justices of the Supreme Court to fill up vacancies that may have been created by the death, removal from office or retirement of Justices of the Supreme Court.

81. (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, a person holding the office of Chief Justice of Nigeria or a Justice of the Supreme Court shall vacate that office when he attains such age as may be prescribed by House of Representatives: Provided that the Prime Minister, may permit a Justice to continue in office for such period after attaining that age as may be necessary to enable him to deliver judgment or to do any other thing in relation to proceedings that were commenced before him before he attained that age.

### **Original Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court**

82. The Supreme Court shall, to the exclusion of any other court, have original jurisdiction in any dispute between the Federation and a Region or between Regions if and in so far as that dispute involves any question (whether of law or fact) on which the existence or extent of a legal right depends.

### **Questions as to interpretation of this Constitution**

83. (1) Where any question as to the interpretation of this Constitution in any proceedings in any court of law in any part of Nigeria and the court is of opinion that the question involves a substantial question of law, the court may, and shall if any party to the proceedings so requests, refer the question to Regional Supreme Court having jurisdiction in that part of Nigeria and the Regional Supreme Court shall –

(a) if it is of opinion that the question involves a substantial interpretation of this constitution, refer the question to the Supreme Court; or

(b) if it is of opinion that the question does not involve a substantial interpretation of the constitution, remit the question to the court that made the reference to be disposed of in accordance with such directions as the Regional Supreme Court think fit to give.

(c) Where any question is referred to the Supreme Court in pursuance of this section, the Supreme Court shall give its decision upon the question and the court in which the question arose shall dispose of the case in accordance with that decision.

### **Appeals to the Supreme Court from High Courts**

84. (1) The Supreme Court shall have jurisdiction, to the exclusion of any other court of law in Nigeria, to

hear and determine appeals from the Supreme Court of a Region.

(2) An appeal shall lie from decisions of the Supreme Court of a Region to the Supreme Court as of right:

(b) where the ground of appeal involves the issues of fundamental rights or the right of peoples in any part of Nigeria;

(c) where the mater appealed includes a sentence of imprisonment for life; (d) decision on any civil or commercial dispute where the total amount claimed or awarded by the court is not less than N100,000,000,000.00 or any amount prescribed by the Chief Justice of Nigeria from time to time;

(e) where the mater appealed is between any person and the Government of the Region; (f) such other cases as may be prescribed by any law in the rules to be enacted by the Chief Justice of Nigeria: Provided that nothing in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall confer any right of appeal –

(i) from any order made ex parte;

(ii) from any order relating only to costs; or

(iii) from any order made with the consent of the parties.

(3) Any right of appeal to the Supreme Court from the decisions of the

Supreme Court of the Region conferred by this section-

(a) shall be exercisable in the case of civil proceedings at the instance of a party thereto or, with the leave of the High Court or the Supreme Court, at the instance of any other person having an interest in the matter and in the case of criminal proceedings at the instance of an accused person.

### **The Federal High Court**

85. (1) There shall be a Federal High Court for Nigeria, (2) The judges of the Federal High Court shall be -

(a) the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court; and  
(b) such number of Judges of the Federal High Court as may be prescribed by the House of Representatives.

(3) The Prime Minister shall appoint the judges of the Federal High Court on the advice of the National Judicial Council.

(4) A person shall not be qualified to be appointed as a judge of the Federal High Court unless he is qualified to practice law in Nigeria and has been so qualified for not less than ten years.

(5) The Federal High Court shall be a superior court of record and, save as otherwise provided by Parliament, shall have all the powers of such a court.

(6) The Federal High Court shall have Judicial Divisions in all Regions of Nigeria and in such places as

the Chief Judge of the Federal High Court may prescribe.

(7) The Federal High Court shall be duly constituted by one Judge of the Federal High Court.

(8) The Federal High Court shall have jurisdiction throughout the territory of Nigeria to determine issues relating to aviation, maritime, customs and excise and the enforcement of any laws made by the House of Representatives.

86. The Federal High Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction in the trial of criminal offences committed within the territory of more than one Region and offences bothering on treason, offences committed in Airplanes, Airports and waterways in Nigeria.

87. An appeal shall lie from the decision of the Federal High Court to the Federal Court of Appeal in all cases except in ex parte decisions, consent judgments and decisions relating to cost.

### **Federal Court of Appeal**

88. (1) There shall be a Federal Court of Appeal for Nigeria. (2) The justices of the Federal High Court shall be -

(a) the President of the Federal Court of Appeal;  
and

(b) such number of Justices of the Federal Court of Appeal as may be prescribed by the House of Representatives.

(3) The Prime Minister shall appoint Justices of the Federal Court of Appeal on the advice of the National Judicial Council.

(4) A person shall not be qualified to be appointed as a Justice of the Federal Court of Appeal unless he is qualified to practice law in Nigeria and has been so qualified for not less than twelve years.

(5) The Federal Court of Appeal shall be a superior court of record and, save as otherwise provided by Parliament, shall have all the powers of such a court.

(6) The Federal Court of Appeal may sit anywhere in Nigeria and may be divided into such divisions as the House of Representatives may prescribe.

(7) The Federal Court of Appeal shall be duly constituted by three Justices of the Federal Court of Appeal.

(8) The Federal Court of Appeal shall have jurisdiction to hear appeals from the Federal High Court. Provided that no appeal shall lie where issue appealed relates to consent judgment of parties.

89. (1) The Supreme Court shall have jurisdiction, to the exclusion of any other court of law in Nigeria, to

hear and determine appeals from the Federal Court of Appeal.

(2) An appeal shall lie from decisions of the Federal Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court

(b) where the ground of appeal involves the issues of fundamental rights or the right of peoples in any part of Nigeria;

(c) where the matter appealed include imprisonment for more than 3 years of any citizens;

(c) decision on any civil or commercial dispute where the total amount claimed or awarded by the court is not less than N100,000,000.00 or any amount prescribed by the Chief Justice of Nigeria from time to time;

(d) decisions in any civil or criminal proceedings on questions as to whether any of the provisions of Chapter III of this Constitution has been contravened in relation to any person;

(e) such other cases as may be prescribed by any law in the rules to be enacted by the Chief Justice of Nigeria: Provided that nothing in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall confer any right of appeal –

(i) from interlocutory matter;

(ii) from any order relating only to costs;

(iii) from any order made with the consent of the parties; or

## **Part 2: Courts of the Region**

### **The Regional Supreme Court**

90. (1) There shall be a Supreme Court for each Region.

(2) The judges of the Supreme Court of the Region shall be - (a) the Chief Judge of the Region; and (b) such number of judges (not being less than five) as may be prescribed by legislative Houses of the Regions.

(3) The Supreme Court of the Regions shall be a superior court of record and, save as otherwise provided by legislative houses of the Regions, shall have all the powers of such a court.

(4) The Supreme Court of the Regions shall sit within the territory of the Regions. Appointment of Chief Judge of the Region and Judges of the Supreme Courts of the Region

91. (1) The Chief Judges of the Region and the Judges of the Supreme Court of the Region shall be appointed by the Head of Government of the Region on the advice of the Regional Judicial Commission.

(2) A person shall not be qualified to hold the office of Chief Judge of a Region or a Judge of the Supreme Court of a Region unless he is or has been called to the

Nigerian Bar and has remained qualified to practice as a legal practitioner in Nigeria for not less than 10 years.  
Vacancy in the office of the Chief of a Region

92. If the office of Chief Judge of a Region is vacant or if the person holding the office is for any reasons unable to perform the functions of the office, then, until a person has been appointed to and has assumed the functions of that office or until the person holding the office has resumed those functions, as the case may be, those functions shall be performed by the most senior Judge of the Supreme Court of the Region until a new Chief Judge is designated by the Governor of the Region on the advice of the Regional Judicial Council.

93. The Head of Government of the Region shall from time to time on the advice of the Regional Judicial Commission appoint persons into the office of Justices of the Supreme Court of the Region to fill up vacancies that may have been created by the death, removal from office or retirement of Justices of the Supreme Court.

94. (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, a person holding the office of Chief Judge of a Region or a Justice of the Supreme Court of a Region shall vacate that office when he attains such age as may be prescribed by the Legislative House of the Region:

Provided that the Governor, may permit a judge to continue in office for such period after attaining that age as may be necessary to enable him to deliver judgment or to do any other thing in relation to proceedings that were commenced before him before he attained that age. (2) A person holding the office of Chief Judge of a Region or a Judge of the Supreme Court may be removed from office by the Governor of a Region if – (a) there are presented to the Regional Judicial Council an address from the Legislative House of the Region praying that that person be so removed for inability to discharge the functions of the office in question (whether arising from infirmity of mind or body or any other cause) or for misbehavior; and (b) the address from the Legislative House bears a certificate which is signed by the person who presided at the meeting of that House at which at which the motion for the address was passed and which states that not less than two-thirds of all the members of that House voted in favour of the motion; (c) Upon receipt of the address, the Regional Judicial Council shall cause the allegation to be investigated and may invite the judicial officer to appear before it to defend the allegation contained in the address and where the allegations are duly proved the judicial officer shall vacate the office.

### **Regional Court of Appeal**

95. (1) There shall be a Court of Appeal for each Region,
- (2) The justices of the Court of Appeal for each Region shall be -
- (a) the President of the Regional Court of Appeal; and
- (b) such number of Justices of the Court of Appeal as may be prescribed by the Legislative Houses of the Regions.
- (3) The Governor shall appoint Justices of the Regional Court of Appeal on the advice of the Regional Judicial Council.
- (4) A person shall not be qualified to be appointed as a Judge of the Regional Court of Appeal unless he is qualified to practice law in Nigeria and has been so qualified for not less than twelve years.
- (5) The Regional Court of Appeal shall be a superior court of record and, save as otherwise provided by Legislative Houses of the Region, shall have all the powers of such a court.
- (6) The Regional Court of Appeal may sit anywhere within the Region and shall hear appeals from the Regional High Court
- (7) The Regional Court of Appeal shall be duly constituted by three Justices of the Regional Court of Appeal.

96. (1) The Regional Supreme Court shall have jurisdiction, to the exclusion of any other court of law in Nigeria, to hear and determine appeals from the Regional Court of Appeal.

Provided that nothing in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall confer any right of appeal –

- (i) from any interlocutory decision;
- (ii) from any order relating only to costs;
- (iii) from any order made with the consent of the parties; or

### **High Courts of the Region**

97. (1) There shall be a High Court for each Region of Nigeria, (2) The judges of the Regional High Court shall be -

- (a) the Head Judge of the High Court; and
- (b) such number of Judges of the High Court as may be prescribed by the Legislative Houses of the Region.

(3) The Governor shall appoint the judges of the High Court on the advice of the Regional Judicial Council.

(4) A person shall not be qualified to be appointed as a judge of the High Court of a Region unless he is qualified to practice law in Nigeria and has been so qualified for not less than ten years.

(3) The Regional High Court shall be a superior court of record and, save as otherwise provided by Parliament, shall have all the powers of such a court.

(4) The Regional High Court shall have Judicial Divisions in cities of the Region and in such places as the House of Representatives may prescribe. (5) The Regional High Court shall be duly constituted by one Judge of the Regional High Court.

(6) The Regional High Court shall have jurisdiction throughout the territory of the Region on all matters subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the constitution of the Region or any other law by the Houses of Assembly of the Region.

#### **Part 4: General Establishment of courts**

98. The House of Representatives may establish inferior courts of record for the Federal Capital territory or any part of the territory of Nigeria for the enforcement of any law enacted by the House of Representatives.

99. The Legislative Houses of the Regions may establish inferior courts of record for the Region or any part of the territory of Nigeria for the enforcement of any law enacted by the House of Representatives.

100. No judicial officer shall enter upon the duties of his office unless he has taken and subscribed the oath of allegiance and such oath for the due execution of his office as may be prescribed by Parliament.

### **Armed Forces of the Federation**

101. (1) There shall be an armed force for the Federation which shall consist of an army, a navy, an Air Force and such other branches of the armed forces of the Federation as may be established by an Act of the National House of Representatives.

(2) The Federation shall, subject to an Act of the House of Representatives| made in that behalf, equip and maintain the armed forces as may be considered adequate and effective for the purpose of -

- (a) defending Nigeria from external aggression;
- (b) maintaining its territorial integrity and securing its borders from violation on land, sea, or air;
- (c) suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the President acting on the advice of the Prime Minister, but subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by an Act of the House of Representatives; and
- (d) performance of such other functions as may be prescribed by an Act of the House of Representatives.

102. (1) The powers of the President as the Commissioner-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation shall include power to determine the operational use of the armed forces of the Federation, acting at all time at the advice of the Prime Minister.

(2) The powers conferred on the President by subsection (1) of this section shall include power to appoint, on the advice of the Prime Minister, the Chief of Defence staff, the Chief of Army Staff, the Chief of Naval Staff, the Chief of Air Staff and heads of any other branches of the armed forces of the Federation as may be established by an Act of the National Assembly. (3)

The House of Representatives shall have power to make laws for the regulation of -

(a) the powers exercisable by the President as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation; and

(b) the appointment, promotion and disciplinary control of members of the armed forces of the Federation.

103. (1) The Federation shall establish and maintain adequate facilities for carrying into effect any Act of the House of Representatives providing for compulsory military training or military service for citizens of Nigeria.

(2) Until an Act of the House of Representatives is made in that behalf the President on the advice of the Prime Minister may maintain adequate facilities in any secondary or post-secondary educational institution in Nigeria for giving military training in any such institution which desires to have the training.

## CHAPTER IX: FINANCE

### **Part 1: Public funds of the Federation Establishment of Consolidated Revenue Fund**

104 (1) All revenues or other moneys raised or received by the Federation (not being revenues or other moneys payable under this Constitution or any Act of Parliament into some other public fund of the Federation established for a specific purpose) shall be paid into and form one Consolidated Revenue Fund.

(2) No moneys shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation except to meet expenditure that is charged upon the Fund by this Constitution or any Act of House of Representatives or where the issue of those moneys has been authorised by an appropriation Act or an Act passed in pursuance of section of this Constitution.

(3) No moneys shall be withdrawn from any public fund of the Federation other than the Consolidated

Revenue Fund unless the issue of those moneys has been authorised by an Act of Parliament.

(4) No moneys shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Revenue Fund or any other public fund of the Federation except in the manner prescribed by Parliament.

### **Authorisation of expenditure from Consolidated Revenue Fund**

105. (1) The Minister of the Government of the Federation responsible for finance shall cause to be prepared and laid before both Houses of Representatives in each financial year estimates of the revenues and expenditure of the Federation for the next following financial year.

(2) The heads of expenditure contained in the estimates (other than expenditure charged upon the Consolidated Revenue Fund by this Constitution or any Act of House of Representatives) shall be included in a bill, to be known as an appropriation bill, providing for the issue from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation of the sums necessary to meet that expenditure and the appropriation of those sums for the purposes specified therein.

(3) If in respect of any financial year it is found—

(a) that the amount appropriated by the appropriation Act for any purpose is insufficient or that

a need has arisen for expenditure for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated by the Act; or  
(b) that any moneys have been expended for any purpose in excess of the amount appropriated for the purpose by the appropriation Act or for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated by the Act, a supplementary estimate showing the sums required or spent shall be laid before House of Representatives and the heads of any such expenditure shall be included in a supplementary appropriation bill.

### **Authorisation of expenditure in advance of appropriation**

106. Parliament may make provision under which, if the appropriation Act in respect of any financial year has not come into operation by the beginning of that financial year, the Minister of the Government of the Federation responsible for finance may authorise the withdrawal of moneys from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation for the purpose of meeting expenditure necessary to carry on the services of the Government until the expiration of three months from the beginning of that financial year or the coming into operation of the Act, whichever is the earlier.

### **Contingencies Fund**

107. (1) The House of Representatives may provide for the establishment of a Contingencies Fund for the Federation and for authorising the Minister of the Government of the Federation responsible for finance, if satisfied that there has arisen an urgent and unforeseen need for expenditure for which no other provision exists, to make advances from the Fund to meet that need.

(2) Where any advance is made in accordance with subsection (1) of this section a supplementary estimate shall be presented and a supplementary appropriation bill shall be introduced as soon as possible for the purpose of replacing the amount so advanced.

### **Remuneration Judicial Officers and Other Officials**

108. (1) There shall be paid to the holders of the offices to which this section applies such salary as may be prescribed by House of Representatives.

(2) The salary and allowances payable to the holders of the offices to which this section applies shall be a charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation.

(3) The salary payable to the holder of any office to which this section applies and his terms of office other than allowances shall not be altered to his disadvantage after his appointment.

(4) This section applies all judges of courts created by this constitution, member of the Electoral commission of the Federation, Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General of the Federation, Chairman of the Electoral Commission.

### **Accountant General of the Federation**

109. (1) There shall be an Accountant General of the Federation, whose office shall be an office in the public service of the Federation.

(2) The public accounts of the Federation and of all officers, courts and authorities of the Federation shall be audited and reported on by the Accountant General of the Federation and for that purpose the Director or any person authorised by him in that behalf shall have access to all books, records, returns and other documents relating to those accounts.

(3) The Accountant General of the Federation shall submit his reports to the Minister of the Government of the Federation responsible for finance, who shall cause them to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

(4) In the exercise of his functions under this Constitution the Accountant General of the Federation shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.

### **Public debt**

110. (1) The public debt of the Federation shall be secured on the revenues and assets of the Federation.

(2) In this section references to the public debt of the Federation include references to the interest on that debt, sinking fund payments in respect of that debt and the costs, charges and expenses incidental to the management of that debt.

### **Part 2: Allocation of Revenue Levies on Export and Import**

111. (1) Where under any Act of parliament a duty is levied in respect of the import into Nigeria or export out of Nigeria of any commodity the Federal Government shall, in respect of each quarter, credit to a special account, maintained by the Federal Government and referred to in this Constitution (to be called "the Distributable Pool Account)" a sum equal to fifty per cent of the proceeds of that duty for that quarter.

(2) For the purposes of this section the proceeds of a duty for a quarter shall be the amount remaining from the receipts from that duty that are collected in that quarter after any drawbacks, refunds or other repayments relating to those receipts have been made or allowed for.

### **Mining royalties and rents**

112. (1) There shall be paid by the Federal Government to each Region a sum equal to seventy percent of -

(a) the proceeds of any royalty received by the Federation in respect of any minerals extracted in that Region; and

(b) any mining rents derived by the Federation during that year from within that Region.

(2) The Federal Government shall credit to the Distributable Pool Account a sum equal to twenty per cent.

(a) the proceeds of any royalty received by the Federation in respect of minerals extracted in any Region; and

(b) any mining rents derived by the Federation from within any Region. (3) For the purposes of this section the proceeds of a royalty shall be the amount remaining from the receipts of that royalty after any refunds or other repayments relating to those receipts have been deducted therefrom or allowed for.

(4) Parliament may prescribe the periods in relation to which the proceeds of any royalty or mining rents shall be calculated for purposes of this section.

(5) In this section "minerals" includes mineral oil.

(6) For the purposes of this section the continental shelf of a Region shall be deemed to be part of that Region.

### **Value Added Tax**

113. The House of Representatives shall pass an Act prescribing such sum that may be chargeable on good and services and value added tax.

114. There shall be paid by the Federal Government to each Region a sum equal to seventy percent of the Value added tax collected from the Region.

115. The Federal Government shall credit to the Distributable Pool Account a sum equal to twenty percent of the Value Added Tax Collected.

### **Distribution of funds in Distributable Pool Account**

116. There shall be paid by the Federal Government to the Regions an equal share of the amount standing to the credit of the Distributable Pool Account at that date.

117. Each Region shall in respect of each financial year pay to the Federation an amount equal to such part of the expenditure incurred by the Federation during that financial year in respect of the department

of customs and excise of the Government of the Federation for the purpose of collecting the duties and Value Added Tax as is proportionate to the share of the proceeds of those duties received by that Region under those sections in respect of that financial year.

118. (1) Any sum that is required by this Chapter to be paid by the Federation to a Region may be set off by the Federation in or towards the payment of any sum that is due from that Region to the Federation in respect of any loan made by the Federation to that Region.

(2) The right of set-off conferred by subsection (1) of this section shall be without prejudice to any other right of the Federation to obtain payment of any sum due to the Federation in respect of any loan.

### **Sums charged on Consolidated Revenue Funds**

119. Any payments that are required by this Chapter to be made by the Federal Government to a Region shall be a charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation and any payments that are so required to be made by a Region to the Federation shall be a charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund of that Region.

### **Provisions with regard to payments**

120 (1) Where any payment falls to be made under this Part of this Chapter, the amount payable shall be certified by the Accountant General of the Federation:

Provided that a provisional payment may be made before the Accountant General has given his certificate.

(2) The House of Representatives may make provision as to time and manner in which any payment falling to be made under this Part of this Chapter shall be effected and for the making of adjustments and provisional payments.

## **CHAPTER X: THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE FEDERATION**

### **Establishment of Public Service Commission**

121. (1) There shall be a Public Service Commission for the Federation, which shall consist of a chairman and not less than two or more than four other members.

(2) The members of the Public Service Commission of the Federation shall be appointed by the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister.

(3) A person shall not be qualified to hold the office of a member of the Public Service Commission of the Federation if he is a member of either House of Parliament, a member of a legislative house of a Region, a Minister of the Government of the Federation, a Minister of the Government of a Region or the holder of an office in the public service of the Federation or the public service of a Region.

(4) Subject to the provisions of this section, a member of the Public Service Commission of the Federation shall vacate his office -

(a) at the expiration of five years from the date of his appointment; or

(b) if any circumstances arise that, if he were not a member of the Commission, would cause him to be disqualified for appointment as such.

(5) A member of the Public Service Commission of the Federation may be removed from office by the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, for inability to discharge the functions of his office (whether arising from infirmity of mind or body or any other cause) or for misbehaviour.

(6) A member of the Public Service Commission of the Federation shall not be removed from office except in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(7) A person who has been appointed to be a member of the Public Service Commission of the

Federation shall not thereafter be eligible for appointment to any office in the public service of the Federation.

**Appointment, etc., of officers in public service**

122. (1) Power to appoint persons to hold or act in offices in the public service of the Federation (including power to make appointments on promotion and transfer and to confirm appointments) and to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding or acting in such offices shall vest in the Public Service Commission of the Federation:

Provided that the Commission may, with the approval of the Prime Minister and subject to such conditions as it may think fit, delegate any of its powers under this section to any of its members or to any officer in the public service of the Federation.

(2) This section shall not apply in relation to any of the following offices- (a) the office of Judge or Justice of any court created by this Constitution; (b) except for the purposes of making appointments thereto, the office of the Accountant General of the Federation.

(c) any office in the Nigeria Police Force; or  
Appointment, etc., of principal representatives of Federation abroad.

123. (1) Power to appoint persons to hold or act in the offices to which this section applies (including power to make appointments on promotion and transfer) and to remove persons so appointed from any such office shall vest in the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister.

(2) Before tendering any advice for the purposes of this section in relation to any person who holds any office in the public service of the Federation other than an office to which this section applies, the Prime Minister shall consult the Public Service Commission of the Federation.

(3) The offices to which this section applies are the offices of any Ambassador, High Commissioner or other principal representative of the Federation in countries other than Nigeria.

### **Appointment, etc., of permanent secretaries**

124. (1) Power to appoint persons to hold or act in the office of permanent secretary to any department of government of the Federation and to remove persons so appointed from that office shall vest in the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister.

(2) Before tendering any advice for the purposes of this section the Prime Minister shall consult the Public Service Commission of the Federation.

## **Appointment and tenure of office Accountant General**

125. The Account General of the Federation shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister subject to reactivation by majority vote of the House of Representatives and at least 4 legislative Houses of the Region.

126. (1) No Person shall be appointed to the office of the Account General of Federation, except he is a Citizen of Nigeria and is qualified to practice as a chartered accountant in Nigeria and has been qualified for not less than 10 years.

(2) Subject to the provisions of this section, a person holding the office of Accountant General of the Federation shall vacate that office when he attains such age as may be prescribed by Parliament.

(3) A person holding the office of Director of Audit of the Federation shall be removed from office by the President if a resolution is passed by the House of Representatives recommending his removal from office for inability to discharge the functions of his office (whether arising from infirmity of body or mind or any other cause) or for misbehaviour.

(4) A person holding the office of Accountant General of the Federation shall not be removed from

office except in accordance with the provisions of this section.

### **Powers relating to Clerks of Houses of Parliament**

127. Before exercising any of its powers in relation to the Clerk to the House of Elders the Public Service Commission of the Federation shall consult the Chairman of the House of Elders and before exercising any of its powers in relation to the Clerk to the House of Representatives the Commission shall consult the Speaker of that House.

### **Protection of pension rights**

128. (1) Any person having retired from the public or civil service of the Federation or the defunct states of Nigeria prior to the coming into effect of this constitution, not having been elected into a public office, shall be entitled to the such pension as was due to them prior to the enactment of this constitution.

For the purpose of section above, the Regions shall inherit the pension liabilities of the defunct states forming part of the Region.

## CHAPTER XI: TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

### **Powers and procedure of Federal Commissions**

129. All existing law, that is to say, all law which, whether being a rule of law or a provision of an Act of National Assembly, military decree being in force as an Act of the National Assembly, or laws made by a state House of Assembly or of any other enactment or instrument whatsoever, is in force immediately before the date of the commencement of this Constitution or has been passed or made before that date and comes into force on or after that date, shall, until that law is altered by legislative authority having power to do so, have effect with such modification (whether by way of addition, alteration or omission) as may be necessary to bring that law into conformity with this Constitution and the Constitution of each Region.

130. Where there are laws of the defunct states of a Region on the same subject matter, the Region Assembly shall by Resolution supported by a simple majority of members and published in the gazette of the Region adopt one of the laws for Region wide application and upon adoption all other laws on the subject matter shall be deemed repealed by the Regional Legislative House.

131. (1) Where no resolution is passed by the Regional Legislative House pursuant to clause the law latest in time shall be deemed applicable to the whole region until such resolution is passed.

(2) The legislative authority, for the purpose of Section above, shall be the House of Representatives, with respect to laws made by the National Assembly or military decrees and the Regional House in respect of laws made by the State Houses of Assembly.

### **Civil Service of the Region**

132. Members of the Civil Service of the Region Civil Service of the defunct states shall be deemed to members of the Civil Service of the New Regions, on the commencement of this constitution, provided that the Region shall be at liberty to retain such member of the Civil Service as the New Regions may deem necessary for the operation of the Government of the Region.

### **The Court**

133. Subject to Section of this Constitution, the Federal Court of Appeal shall be the successor of the Court of appeal under the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria and all appeals already filed before the Court of Appeal before the commencement of this Constitution shall continue before the Court of Appeal and appeal

therefrom shall proceed to the Supreme Court of Nigeria.

134. All proceedings commenced before the commencement of this constitution, which by virtue of this constitution or any Act of the House of Representatives or the Legislative Houses of the Region, should have been commenced before any other court, shall continue in such court where the proceeding was commenced as if duly filed before that Court.

### **Region of Origin**

135. Every Nigerian shall be deemed an indigene of the Region of his birth and shall be accorded every right of an indigene of that Region. Provided that upon the attainment of the age of 18, anyone may be declaration sworn before a magistrate adopt of the Region where is father was born as his Region of Origin.

136. Anyone born to a Nigerian father outside the shore of Nigeria shall be an indigene of the Region of his father.

137. Anyone born to Nigerian mother, not having a Nigerian Father, shall be an indigene of the Region of his mother.

138. Every Nigerian shall be deemed to be an indigene of any region where he has lived in and paid tax for three years.



# Index

- Addis Ababa, 388  
Abacha, 94, 142, 158, 161,  
172, 189, 190, 228, 231, 232,  
233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238,  
239, 241, 242, 249, 263, 265,  
268, 272, 273, 289, 290, 301,  
415, 448  
Abadina, 74, 75  
Abdulsalami, 158, 162, 238,  
243, 249, 322  
Abia, 113, 180, 340  
Abiodun, 304  
Abiola, 68, 69, 93, 117, 159,  
231, 238, 241, 243, 249, 265,  
434, 448  
Abraham, 159  
Abubakar, 168, 212, 238, 241,  
246, 304, 353, 424  
Abuja, 147, 258, 267, 271, 451  
Aburi, 183, 184  
ACN, 70, 282, 302, 303, 304,  
312  
Adagun, *xlvi*  
Adamawa, 137, 169, 199, 202,  
246, 432  
Adams, 116  
Adamu, 222  
Adanla, 362  
Addendum, *Viii*, 416  
Ade, *lxi*  
Adebanjo, 278  
Adedibu, 158  
Adedun, 358  
Adegboruwa, *xxxvi*  
Adeleke, 325  
Ademola, 267, 272  
Adenije-Adele, 273  
Adeniji-Adele, 267, 268, 272,  
273, 274  
Adesanya, 159  
Adesina, 291  
Adetoun, *lx*  
Adewusi, 76  
Adhere, 372  
Adjourn, 505  
Aeinstein, 379  
Afenifere, 159, 160, 163, 242,  
243, 269, 272, 273, 274, 284,  
293, 343  
Affray, *xlix*  
Afolabi, *xii*  
Afolarin, *x*  
Africa, 64, 67, 77, 319, 335,  
388, 392, 417, 419  
African, 66, 140, 346, 386,  
388, 402, 418, 419  
Africans, 82, 120  
Afrobeat, *xli*  
Agbaje, 281, 284, 326  
Agbalumo, 237  
Agege, *xxxv*, *xlvi*  
Agenda, 117, 211, 220, 234,  
260, 343, 345, 390, 400, 401,  
403, 427, 437, 440, 442, 443,  
449  
Agitation, 174, 234, 256, 336,  
383  
Aguiyi, 183, 196, 201, 204

- Ahmadu, 128, 132, 141, 142,  
296, 421, 424, 429
- Ahmed, 94, 95, 163, 164, 166,  
180, 263, 264, 266, 267, 268,  
270, 271, 274, 275, 276, 281,  
315, 354
- Airin, 100
- Aisha, xxxiii
- Ajibola, x
- Akande, 160, 271, 272, 325,  
439, 446
- Akenzua, 184
- Akin, 129, 132, 192, 347
- Akinlami, 367
- Akure, 399
- Alaba, 82
- Alao, 158
- Alausa, xxxiii, xxxv, xlviii, l, lv
- Albatross, 252
- Alhaji, 166, 246, 272, 273
- Al-Islam, 126
- Aliyu, 229
- Allah, 300
- Ally, 279
- Aluta, 79
- America, 66, 120, 121, 210,  
329
- American, 120, 121, 189, 196,  
202, 379
- Americans, 120
- Anambra, 324, 340
- Anarchy, 330
- Anglo-Saxon, 120
- Annulment, 68, 69, 93, 117
- Antediluvian, xv, xlv
- Anti-Corruption, 181
- Anti-Igbo, 197
- Apartheid, 64, 388, 392
- APC, 70, 164, 261, 263, 282,  
283, 284, 302, 304, 307, 311,  
312, 329, 447
- Apoplexy, 302
- Appeals, 539, 544, 550, 551,  
578
- Aregbesola, 446
- Aremu, 216, 448
- Arewa, 129, 196, 250, 430, 442
- Arisekola, 158
- Aristocracy, 210, 218, 248,  
403, 419, 421
- Aristocratic, 200, 321
- Aristocrats, 210
- Army, 89, 110, 136, 137, 138,  
140, 146, 153, 169, 193, 194,  
195, 199, 200, 202, 230, 248,  
297, 553
- Asa, l
- Asaba, 153
- Asian, 365
- Asians, xxxviii
- Assimilation, 402, 421
- ASUU, 99, 100, 101, 105
- Ataoja, 305
- Ateke, 115
- Atiku, 241, 246, 247, 249, 250,  
258, 263, 353
- Attorney, 105, 520
- Attorney-General, 105
- Audu, 304, 305
- Avian, 362
- Awodi, l
- Awoist, 325
- Awoists, 163, 268, 277, 278

- Awolowo, 135, 156, 185, 205,  
221, 223, 224, 249, 265, 266,  
271, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279,  
325, 446
- Ayo, 305
- Azikiwe, 135, 198
- Baba, 117, 359
- Baba Enikan Ii, 117
- Babafemi, 204
- Babangida, 80, 97, 98, 99, 103,  
104, 105, 106, 108, 110, 142,  
157, 172, 216, 226, 227, 228,  
229, 230, 232, 233, 235, 236,  
237, 239, 247, 274, 288, 289,  
290, 292, 300, 301, 440
- Babatunde, 270
- Badamasi, 97, 103
- Badamosi, 80
- Bakare, 217
- Bako, 224
- Balewa, 168, 199, 203, 212,  
222
- Ballot, 489
- Bamaiyi, 173
- Banditry, 102
- Bandits, 114, 342, 402, 404,  
412
- Bangladesh, 133
- Barewa, 200, 210
- Barracks, 85
- Barrel, 280
- Barrister, 519, 520
- Base, 119, 237, 301, 429
- Bauchi, 137, 169, 202
- Bayelsa, 399
- Bayo, xii
- BBC, 291
- Beast, *lv*
- Beleaguered, 351
- Bello, 128, 132, 141, 142, 296,  
305, 422, 424, 429
- Benue, 127, 168, 298, 319,  
342, 349, 399, 401, 423, 432
- Beroms, 423
- Bestialities, xxxvii
- Biafra, 145
- Biafran, 111, 340
- Bilateral, 345
- Bill Of Right, 255, 256
- Bill Of Rights, 256
- Binokonu, 160
- Bird, 362, 363
- Birdcage, 362
- Birth, 94, 120, 123, 131, 136,  
165, 167, 186, 192, 226, 232,  
261, 308, 309, 324, 336, 366,  
406, 417, 445, 456, 460, 461,  
462, 463, 481, 579
- Bornu, 125, 168, 319
- Boycotts, 375
- Brahman, 379
- Brigadier, 224
- Brigandage, 175
- Brinksmanship, 355
- Britain, 133
- British, 91, 121, 122, 124, 126,  
127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132,  
133, 134, 135, 141, 151, 154,  
167, 168, 170, 177, 182, 183,  
188, 196, 202, 205, 207, 295,  
319, 321, 335, 400, 428
- Brother-In-Law, 267, 272
- Brutal, 93, 233, 237, 311

- Brutally, 69, 77, 81, 146, 220,  
 233, 234, 235, 277  
 Bryan, 371  
 Buba, 154  
 Buhari, 69, 70, 71, 95, 96, 104,  
 138, 143, 162, 164, 170, 171,  
 181, 188, 217, 224, 225, 226,  
 234, 247, 259, 261, 262, 263,  
 264, 265, 270, 275, 279, 283,  
 284, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290,  
 291, 292, 301, 302, 303, 306,  
 309, 328, 329, 350, 398, 399,  
 400, 403, 422, 426, 427, 433,  
 439, 443, 444  
 Buharididirin, 70  
 Buharist, 70  
 Bukola, 302  
 Bulwark, 430  
 Buratai, Lvi, Lvii  
 Bureaucrats, 210  
 Burgeoning, xxxviii, 355  
 Burma, 133  
 Bwari, 267  
 Bylaw, 469, 478  
 Bypassing, 300  
 Cabinet, 300, 443  
 Cable, Xx  
 Cadres, 212, 390  
 Cadreship, 390  
 Calabar, 340  
 Caliphate, 127, 319, 421  
 Cameroon, 168, 319, 432  
 Campaign, 205, 221, 241  
 Canaan, 396  
 Cancer, 144  
 Candidacy, 224, 263, 305, 326  
 Candidate, 138, 222, 224, 244,  
 263, 268, 304, 306, 327  
 Cannibalised, 258  
 Cannibalistic, 348  
 Cantonment, 215  
 Capital, 153, 470  
 Caravanners, 419  
 Cardinal, 335, 374  
 Cards, 262  
 Cashcow, 235  
 Casualties, 244  
 Cataclysmic, 407  
 Central, 117, 149, 153, 183,  
 238, 261, 342, 418, 423  
 Central Beneficiary, 238  
 Central Body, 153  
 Central Government, 183  
 Central Hegemony, 149  
 Central Idea, xxv  
 Central Proverbs, 117  
 Centrepiece, 295  
 Centuries-Old, 202, 207  
 Chairman, 272, 290, 491, 492,  
 498, 568  
 Chairmanship, 160  
 Charters, 385  
 Cheated, 258  
 Check, 105, 110, 152, 207  
 Chicanery, 305  
 Chief, 179, 448, 519  
 Chief Arranger, 448  
 Chief Of Staff, 179  
 Chief Prosecutor, 519  
 Chief Protagonists, xvii  
 Chiefs, 115, 154, 340, 345  
 Child, 129, 137, 305  
 Childhood, 78, 80

- Childhood Crush, 78  
 Childhood Home, 78  
 Children, 75, 127, 128, 129,  
     139, 170, 172, 437  
 Chinese, 120  
 Choice, 71, 86, 116, 136, 159,  
     194, 205, 215, 224, 229, 244,  
     251, 263, 292, 337, 360, 387,  
     397, 405, 448, 468, 473  
 Chukwumerije, 117, 234  
 Church, 316, 318, 437, 447  
 Ciroma, 222  
 Citizen, 178, 189, 333, 355,  
     456, 457, 458, 460, 461, 462,  
     463, 479, 480, 481, 487, 488,  
     495  
 Citizenry, 331, 371  
 Citizens, 76, 77, 80, 81, 82, 83,  
     92, 123, 154, 179, 181, 186,  
     209, 232, 256, 280, 312, 314,  
     324, 335, 343, 348, 351, 365,  
     366, 456, 463, 466, 476, 480,  
     481, 491, 544, 556  
 Citizenship, 69, 104, 111, 112,  
     123, 125, 178, 189, 242, 256,  
     312, 314, 331, 335, 348, 364,  
     382, 398, 404, 410, 415, 420,  
     433, 460, 461, 462, 463  
 Citizenship Levels, 104  
 Citizenship Rights, 123, 312,  
     314, 348, 398  
 Civic, 466  
 Civil, 83, 98, 144, 145, 146,  
     152, 155, 172, 184, 186, 194,  
     197, 208, 211, 214, 217, 233,  
     250, 298, 314, 328, 330, 337,  
     345, 373, 383, 398, 404, 445,  
     470, 471, 483, 491, 493, 539,  
     540, 544, 545, 554, 575  
 Civil Process, 483  
 Civil Right, 83, 314, 328, 470,  
     471  
 Civil Rights, 83, 314, 328, 470,  
     471  
 Civil Service, 145, 155, 194,  
     493, 575  
 Civil Society, 330, 345  
 Civil War, 98, 144, 145, 146,  
     152, 172, 184, 186, 197, 208,  
     211, 214, 217, 233, 250, 298,  
     331, 337, 383, 398, 404  
 Civilian, 105, 143, 293, 322  
 Civilians, lvii  
 Civilisation, 359, 436  
 CJN, 311  
 Clad, 361  
 Clerics, 295, 299, 300, 327,  
     419, 426, 429, 430, 436, 438  
 Clerk, 502, 503, 574  
 Clerks, 502, 503, 574  
 Clientele, 148, 149, 155, 156,  
     158, 161, 176, 236, 290  
 Coalesce, 96, 164, 195, 292  
 Coalesced, 114, 189, 222, 226,  
     239, 259  
 Coalescing, 71, 96, 122  
 Coalition, 208, 214, 222, 223,  
     224, 226, 516  
 Coalition Of Forces, 224  
 Coalition Of Interests, 214  
 Coalition Of Powers, 208  
 Collectively, 69, 293, 344, 524  
 College, 77, 200, 210, 272, 361  
 Colonel, 244, 245

- Colonial, 103, 192, 194, 297,  
 319, 335, 425, 428, 432  
 Colonialism, 335  
 Colonialists, 317  
 Commander-In, 488, 555  
 Commander-In-Chief, 555  
 Commentators, 184, 192, 234  
 Commission, 111, 519, 561  
 Commissioner-In-Chief, 554  
 Constitution, 70, 72, 150, 159,  
 176, 185, 186, 188, 193, 255,  
 292, 322, 365, 410, 412, 413,  
 414, 415, 434, 450, 452, 454,  
 455, 456, 490, 515, 521, 532,  
 533, 538, 552, 561, 575, 577,  
 578  
 Council, 66, 291  
 Current, 160, 191, 271, 300,  
 307, 308, 309, 310, 325, 339,  
 343, 345, 349, 350, 365, 366,  
 373, 398, 407, 410, 414, 415,  
 418, 422, 430, 439, 440, 443,  
 447  
 Cursory, 342  
 Custody, 467, 468  
 Dangerous, 69, 245, 304, 306,  
 312, 350, 401, 431, 483  
 Dangote, 178  
 Danjuma, 217, 239, 244, 245,  
 249  
 Dapo, 268  
 Dare, 409, 416  
 Daura, 399  
 Death, Lvi, 85, 158, 191, 224,  
 237, 238, 253, 261, 263, 266,  
 285, 291, 349, 388, 448, 485,  
 495, 521, 536, 547  
 Decapitation, 210  
 Dele, vi  
 Delegitimise, 334  
 Delegitimises, 88  
 Delta, Xxxi, Xxxii, 102, 114,  
 115, 153, 233, 235, 342, 349  
 Demands, 93, 101, 183, 333,  
 338, 366, 384, 386, 424, 441,  
 445  
 Democracy, 71, 123, 134, 221,  
 225, 232, 285, 307, 309, 314,  
 322, 350, 352, 411  
 Democrat, 255  
 Demystification, 255  
 Deputy, 159, 217, 246, 251,  
 252, 257, 266, 268, 304, 401  
 Derrière, 331  
 Detention, 87, 468, 469, 470  
 Deziani, xv  
 Diaspora, xviii  
 Dictate, 149, 152, 311  
 Dictator, 219, 236, 237  
 Dictatorship, 80, 232  
 Disenfranchised, 77, 91, 102  
 DSS, 245  
 Dubai, xiv  
 Duke, 252  
 Durotoye, 72  
 Dynamics, 213  
 Eagle, 267, 271, 272  
 Eagle-Eyed, xlv  
 Earlier, 67, 79, 95, 106, 166,  
 168, 177, 182, 184, 191, 249,  
 272, 385, 560  
 East, 95, 102, 131, 150, 324  
 Eastern, 102, 113, 157, 322

- Ebele, 182, 252, 253, 254, 255,  
258, 262, 263
- Ebonyi, 340
- Ebun, xxxvi
- Economic, 68, 106, 127, 275,  
337, 351, 354, 355, 373, 380,  
382, 385, 420, 431, 484
- Economic Interests, 382
- Economic Meltdown, 354
- Economic Power, 127
- Economic Relief, 106
- Economic Stimulus, 351
- Ede-Iwo, 325
- Education, xix, 87, 91, 156,  
168, 194, 319, 322, 351, 382,  
384, 385, 420, 432, 435, 438,  
466, 467, 476, 477
- Educational, 203, 377, 556
- Educationally, 112, 220
- EFCC, 401
- Effect, 112, 118, 193, 227, 247,  
259, 329, 346, 431, 432, 439,  
447
- Efficiency, 335
- Egalitarian, 371, 409
- Egalitarianism, 343, 355, 438
- Egemonies, 124
- Egotistic, 276
- Egungun, 418
- Einstein, 379
- Ejo, 100, 117
- Ekiti, 305, 401
- Ekweremadus, 340
- Elders, 116, 494
- Election, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72,  
76, 92, 93, 94, 96, 117, 162,  
224, 230, 231, 232, 241, 246,  
253, 257, 279, 280, 281, 282,  
283, 304, 305, 306, 392, 488,  
494, 495, 497, 498, 503, 519
- Elections, 67, 231, 239, 267,  
281, 284, 307, 329, 449, 500,  
518
- Electoral, 69, 76, 282, 283,  
304, 305, 355
- Electoral Process, 283
- Electoral Rights, 69
- Electorate, 262
- Elite, 298, 299
- Emir, 141, 142
- Emirate, 188
- Emirs, 138, 139, 141, 295
- Enactment, 575, 576
- Endsars, 407
- Enforcement, 482, 486, 532,  
533, 541, 553
- Enforcement Officers, xi
- Engineer, 369, 387, 388, 389
- English, 121, 122, 287, 505
- Enikan, 359
- Epe, xiv
- Episode, 76, 86, 190, 291, 444
- Equality, 68, 333, 334, 338,  
371, 422, 446, 506
- Equality Of Citizenship, 333,  
335, 338
- Establish, 291, 304, 337, 360,  
427, 456, 477, 552, 553, 555
- Establishment, 132, 160, 161,  
455, 560
- Esther, xi
- Ethiopia, 388
- Ethnic, 68, 71, 171, 180, 198,  
206, 207, 255, 256, 265, 297,

- 301, 320, 326, 328, 334, 335,  
337, 341, 349, 400, 401, 402,  
403, 411, 418, 423, 425, 427,  
431, 438, 442, 480, 481
- Ethnic Group, 206, 207, 255,  
326, 334, 335, 341, 402, 403,  
418, 423, 438, 442, 480, 481
- Ethnic Groups, 206, 255, 326,  
334, 335, 341, 403, 423, 480,  
481
- Ethnic Irredentist, 71, 265
- Ethnic Majorities, 335
- Ethnic Minorities, 207, 297,  
337
- Ethnic Nationalism, 301, 425
- Ethnic Nationality, 180
- Expenditure, 353, 557, 558,  
559, 560, 566
- Extremism, 296, 298, 299, 322,  
326
- Eyin, 413
- Face, 218, 246, 270, 362, 369,  
398, 407, 427, 444
- Face Of The Objective  
Realities, 444
- Fajuyi, 201
- Faleke, 304, 305
- Family, 128, 298, 354
- Fanatical, 265, 290, 301, 303
- Fashola, 270, 311
- Fathi, 445
- Fayemi, 305
- Fayose, 305
- Fear, 65, 66, 197, 198, 206,  
233, 305, 358, 359, 409
- Federal, 96, 145, 147, 148, 149,  
151, 152, 196, 276, 281, 411,  
414, 443, 451, 516
- Federal Capital, 147, 451
- Federal Government, 96, 148,  
281, 516
- Federal Level, 149, 152
- Federal Power, 196
- Federal Structure, 411
- Federalism, 346, 347, 414
- Federation, 105, 107, 134, 135,  
136, 155, 173, 194, 206, 271,  
323, 332, 365, 470
- Fela, 72, 73, 85
- Femi, 160, 271, 272
- FESTAC, 268
- Feudal, 115, 143, 151, 156,  
158, 166, 178, 181, 183, 191,  
219, 220, 229, 270, 275, 289,  
294, 307, 308, 314, 315, 319,  
321, 323, 331, 343, 350, 352,  
400, 412, 419, 420, 425, 426,  
428, 431
- Feudal-Fascist, lix
- Feudalisation, 104, 118, 155,  
157, 163, 196
- Feudalised, 123, 285, 322, 350,  
365, 428
- Feudalism, 109, 123, 141, 144,  
146, 156, 158, 159, 163, 164,  
166, 176, 179, 181, 184, 185,  
249, 264, 275, 320, 328, 365,  
425, 438, 444
- Feudalist, 221
- Feyisayo, xii
- Fischer, 373
- Fragmented, 171, 412

- Franchise, 269, 276, 278, 280,  
303, 307, 312
- Fraternities, 108
- Free, 64, 242, 296, 354, 363,  
386, 410, 424, 441, 527
- Freeborn, 327
- Freedom, 81, 82, 83, 84, 88,  
146, 294, 377, 389, 392, 395,  
476, 477, 485
- Freedom Fighter, xvi
- Fufu, 87
- Fulani-Islamist, 400, 422, 427,  
442
- Fulanis, 113
- Fulanisation, 400
- Funmi,
- Funsho, 278
- Fusion, 157, 427
- Future And Trajectory, 121
- Gandhi, 64, 373, 374, 377
- Ganiyu, 116
- Garba, 213
- Gateway, 436
- Gazette, 576
- GDP, 354
- GEJ, 253, 254, 259, 261
- Ghandi, 370
- Gideon, 235
- Global, 345, 352, 354
- Global Citizen,
- Goodluck, 95, 181, 252, 253,  
255, 258, 262, 263
- Gore, 422
- Government, 64, 67, 96, 98,  
100, 105, 106, 142, 143, 146,  
147, 148, 150, 171, 173, 178,  
183, 185, 186, 188, 193, 201,  
205, 208, 215, 218, 221, 222,  
223, 225, 228, 229, 239, 245,  
253, 257, 260, 278, 280, 281,  
287, 292, 316, 339, 341, 343,  
345, 353, 383, 388, 392, 455,  
456, 470, 471, 472, 480, 494
- Gowon, 136, 137, 138, 139,  
140, 145, 172, 173, 183, 184,  
204, 208, 211, 215, 221, 298
- Gubernatorial, 267, 268, 305,  
340
- Gusau, 288
- Gwadabe, 229
- Haram, 404
- Hassan, 167
- Hausa, 82, 110, 125, 145, 146,  
169, 170, 194, 199, 200, 207,  
209, 210, 227, 229, 289, 291,  
292, 298, 318, 402, 403, 419,  
421, 426, 428, 429, 442
- Hausa-Fulani, 145, 146, 194,  
199, 200, 207, 209, 211, 227,  
229, 289, 292, 318, 403, 426,  
442
- Headquarters, 210
- Hegemonies, 120, 121, 123,  
130, 144, 146, 153, 158, 182,  
188, 192, 246, 258, 259, 265,  
296, 302, 308, 341, 412, 426,  
439
- Hegemony, 120, 121, 122, 123,  
124, 127, 131, 132, 134, 136,  
138, 139, 140, 142, 146, 149,  
151, 152, 161, 174, 185, 186,  
190,
- Helen, x
- Herders, 405

- Herdsmen, 254, 291, 320, 342,  
 399, 401, 402, 404  
 Herdsmen Crises, 254  
 Herdsmen/Bandits, 399  
 Herdsmen/Militia, 399  
 Hierarchy, 136  
 Hijab, 441  
 Historical, 129, 136, 170, 192,  
 194, 195, 215, 255, 264, 278,  
 304, 319, 325, 354, 400, 421,  
 428, 436, 437, 440  
 Historical Enslavers, 319  
 Historical Parallels, 264, 278  
 Historical Perspective, 194  
 Historical Realities, 170, 215,  
 436  
 Historical Sociopolitical, 428  
 History, 65, 67, 92, 103, 108,  
 111, 113, 119, 120, 124, 125,  
 131, 145, 152, 159, 164, 184,  
 192, 193, 206, 207, 224, 227,  
 231, 239, 266, 269, 279, 296,  
 300, 306, 308, 318, 319, 320,  
 326, 337, 418, 421, 422, 447  
 History Of Brutal, 296  
 History Of Colonisation, 319  
 History Of Feudalism, 320  
 History Of Venal, xxxvii  
 Hitler, 288  
 Hoodlums, xxxvi  
 Hostage-Takers, Li  
 Hubris, 247, 255, 260, 422, 426  
 Ibadan, 74, 75, 78, 180, 201,  
 208, 291, 339, 438  
 IBB, 81, 103, 110  
 Ibogun, 399  
 Ibrahim, 80, 97, 98, 172, 216,  
 224, 247, 288, 290, 311  
 Idiocy, 86, 88, 331, 361  
 Ife, 78, 79, 272, 361  
 Igbati, 80  
 Igbayilola, x, xi  
 Igbo, 82, 108, 110, 111, 112,  
 113, 135, 145, 146, 150, 154,  
 170, 183, 184, 194, 195, 196,  
 197, 198, 201, 203, 206, 207,  
 208, 209, 211, 220, 223, 234,  
 236, 324, 327, 330, 331, 337,  
 338, 340, 349, 383, 428  
 Igboho, xvi, xvii  
 Igbos, 145, 337  
 Ige, lx, 76, 159  
 IGP, Xli  
 Ija, 359  
 Ijaw, 253, 337  
 Ikeja, 196, 215  
 Ikenne, 266, 277  
 Ikire, 438, 446  
 Ikirun, 438, 446  
 Ikorodu, liv, 340  
 Iku, 100  
 Ikwere, 340  
 Ilabe, xli  
 Ila-Orangun, 439  
 Ile-Ife, 77  
 Ile-Oluji, 399  
 Ilorin, 337  
 Imams, 318, 321, 322, 426  
 Immigrant, 463  
 Immunities, xlii  
 Incarcerated, 205, 371  
 Independence, 134, 137, 138,  
 141, 151, 169, 212, 255, 322,

- 346, 370, 412, 414, 430, 432,  
437, 456, 457, 463, 471, 478
- India, 133
- Indian, 64, 133, 189, 237, 370
- Indigene, 579
- Indigene-Ship, Xxi, Xxii
- Injustice, 104, 111, 112, 134,  
206, 214, 348, 376
- Injustices, 333, 341
- Insanities, 250
- Insanity, 349, 434
- Insecurities,
- Insecurity, 330, 342, 350
- Institutional, 213, 262, 309,  
333, 339, 350
- Institutional Hegemony, 213
- Institutional Inequities, 351
- Institutional Levers, 262
- Institutional Wickedness, 333
- Insurance, 241
- Insurgency, 349
- Insurrection, 464, 554
- Interim, 448
- International Community, 241
- International Terrorist, 443
- Intra-Hegemonic, 250
- IPOB, 112
- Ireland, 122
- Irish, 120, 122
- Iron, 361
- Ironsi, 183, 193, 195, 196, 201,  
202, 204
- Irredentism, 169, 286, 398
- Irredentist, 160, 226, 234, 259,  
329, 433
- Irredentists, 162, 167, 339, 422
- Isa, 443
- ISBN, vi
- Ishak, 440
- ISIS, 345
- Islam, 125, 126, 251, 292, 295,  
299, 318, 321, 325, 326, 327,  
418, 419, 421, 422, 425, 426,  
428, 429, 430, 433, 434, 435,  
438, 440, 442, 445, 447
- Islamic, 98, 125, 126, 295, 301,  
319, 321, 322, 326, 342, 396,  
419, 423, 424, 426, 432, 436,  
440
- Islamise, 296
- Islamised, 431
- Islamist, 325, 349, 400, 402,  
403, 421, 427, 429, 430, 433,  
434, 437, 439, 440, 443, 444,  
446
- Islamists, 397, 403, 405, 437,  
439, 441, 442, 446
- Ivy, 210
- Iwaju, 413
- Iwo, 325, 438, 446
- Iya, L
- Iyale, 331
- Iyawo, 331
- Iyiola, Lxi, 306
- Jagaban, 280, 307, 313, 315,  
327, 344, 441
- Janus, 293
- Jihad, 125
- Jihadist, 318
- Jihadists, 125
- Jimi, 281, 284, 326
- Joda, 166
- Jonathan, 71, 95, 182, 252,  
253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258,

- 261, 262, 263, 281, 283, 302,  
307, 329, 415
- Jos, 298, 399
- Joseph, 213
- Judicial, 187, 311, 549, 553
- Judiciary, 150, 187, 188, 269,  
304, 307, 309, 310, 311, 312,  
316
- Jukuns, 432
- Jumaat, 437
- June, 69, 92, 94, 230, 231, 232,  
234, 239, 352, 353, 384
- Junta, 82, 85, 339
- Jurisdiction, 469, 475, 482,  
486, 487, 502, 537, 538, 541,  
542, 543, 544, 551, 552
- Justice, xxvii, 68, 150, 208, 250,  
312, 371, 376, 378, 472
- Kaduna, lvi, 65, 107, 139, 142,  
195, 210, 212, 213, 214, 220,  
222, 223, 238, 271, 323
- Kaffir, 435
- Kagara, 399
- Kalakuta, 85
- Kalu, 158, 309
- Kampala, 140
- Kanem, 125, 168, 319
- Kankanfo, 116
- Kankara, 399
- Kano, 142, 166, 200, 290, 435
- Kano-Born, 290
- Kanu, li
- Kanuri, 110, 127, 171, 205,  
228, 290, 301, 341
- Kanus, 113
- Karambosa, 82
- Kashimawo, 434
- Katsina, 251
- Kayode, 245
- Kebbi, 173, 298, 432
- Ken, 114, 233, 235
- Keturahs, 128
- Kogi, 112, 304, 305, 337
- Koja, 117
- Kokori-Led, liii
- Koran, 300
- Kotun, 272, 273
- Kukah, 167
- Kukuma, x
- Kunle, 84
- Kwame, 90
- Kwara, 112
- KWENU, 340
- Ladipo, 272
- Ladoke, 164, 266
- Lagos, 80, 95, 96, 102, 154,  
164, 267, 268, 269, 270, 272,  
274, 280, 281, 311, 326, 328,  
340, 362, 426, 439, 445
- Lam, 291
- Lamidi, 158
- Lamido, 142, 166
- Lanka, 133
- Lanko, 117
- LASU, xii, lii, 82, 83, 84, 267,  
362, 440
- Latin, 64, 66, 294
- Legal, xii, 311, 364, 413, 468,  
472, 473, 487, 491, 535, 537,  
546
- Legislative, 172, 187, 323, 452,  
453, 455, 456, 494, 496, 499,  
506, 511, 546, 569, 573, 576,  
577

- Legislature, 454, 455, 511, 515, 527  
 Legitimacy, 139, 225, 240, 250, 264, 330  
 Lekki, vi, xxxiii, xxxv, xxxvi, xxxvii, xxxviii, xxxix, xlviii, xlix, lv  
 Lekki-Ikoyi, xxxvi  
 Liberalism, 436  
 Libya, 406  
 Lieutenants, 200, 237  
 Lingua, 429  
 Linguistic, 63, 91, 151, 198  
 Lion, 85  
 London, xv  
 Loot, 218, 288, 339  
 Louis, 373  
 Lowowo, 100  
 Luther, 374  
 Maami, ix, 360  
 Maccido, 142, 236  
 Machinery, 276, 281, 328, 369  
 Mafia, 223  
 Magistrates, 187  
 Mahmud, 424  
 Mainstream, lvi, 155, 159, 297, 441  
 Make-Up, 151, 243  
 Malaise, 329, 404  
 Malians, 326  
 Mama, 87  
 Mamalari, 200  
 Mambila, 298, 349  
 Mambilla, 297, 432  
 Mandela, 64, 247, 370, 386, 387, 388, 392, 394, 448  
 Maria, ix  
 Martyr, 387  
 Martyrdom, 388  
 Marwa, 154  
 Maryanne, xii  
 MASSOB, 112  
 Matthew, 167  
 Maverick, xli  
 Mazi, li  
 MD, xli  
 Mediterranean, 406  
 Mercantilism, 309  
 Messiah, 367, 384  
 Middle-Belt, 199, 204, 215  
 Middle-Class, xviii  
 Militant, 299  
 Misconduct, 490, 491, 500, 521  
 Miscreants, xxxiv, xlvi  
 MKO, 290, 435  
 Mobola, xii  
 Modakeke, 78  
 Moghalu, 72  
 Mohammed, 136, 137, 139, 140, 211, 213, 214, 215, 216, 218, 221  
 Mohammed's, 140  
 Mokola, 75  
 Monaco, xv  
 Monafik, 435  
 Monarchy, 120  
 Montgomery, 376  
 Mother-Hen, 81  
 Muhammadu, 95, 104, 138, 164, 169, 181, 217, 224, 263, 264, 265, 275, 284, 286, 287, 288, 303, 422, 433  
 Muhammed, 140, 173, 200, 205, 299

- Muhammedans, 168  
 Multiethnic, 424  
 Multilateral, 345  
 Murtala, 136, 139, 140, 172,  
 173, 200, 205, 211, 213, 214,  
 215, 216, 218, 220, 223, 239,  
 287, 299  
 Murtala-Obasanjo, 218, 239,  
 287  
 Musa, 217, 223, 226, 249, 251,  
 252, 257  
 Muslim, 68, 93, 109, 126, 180,  
 203, 297, 299, 302, 429, 430,  
 437, 438, 439, 441, 443, 444,  
 445, 446  
 Muslims, 137, 169, 202, 291,  
 317, 324, 327, 426, 430, 435,  
 439, 441, 444, 445  
 Mustaphas, 250  
 Myanmar, 133  
 Myth, 213, 303, 403, 426  
 NA, 81, 270, 300, 331, 362,  
 403, 405, 451, 453, 495  
 NADECO, 93, 315  
 NANS, 99  
 NASFAT, 445  
 Nasrul-Lahi-Li, 445  
 Nationalism, 122, 286, 336  
 Nationhood, 338, 348  
 Naturalisation, 458, 460  
 Navy, Lii  
 NBA, 105  
 NCNC, 198  
 Ncos, 201  
 Ndi, xxxi, xxxii  
 Nelson, 64, 370, 386, 388, 392  
 Nepotism, 306  
 Niger, 102, 114, 115, 124, 169,  
 170, 224, 233, 235, 342, 349  
 Nigeria, 65, 66, 67, 68, 72, 73,  
 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84,  
 88, 89, 91, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98,  
 99, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106,  
 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112,  
 113, 114, 115, 117, 118, 123,  
 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129,  
 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 136,  
 140, 142, 143, 144, 146, 147,  
 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154  
 NIN, 443  
 Niyi, 361  
 Nko, 339, 340  
 Nkrumah, 90  
 Nnamdi, 113, 135  
 NNPC, 114  
 Nomadic, 419  
 Non-Muslim, 203  
 Non-PDP, 301  
 Non-Poisonous, 65  
 Non-Profit, 379  
 Normalisation, 175  
 North, 95, 102, 131, 139, 143,  
 144, 149, 153, 155, 162, 168,  
 169, 170, 171, 172, 185, 194,  
 195, 198, 201, 211, 213, 225,  
 244, 265, 283, 287, 290, 296,  
 297, 298, 300, 318, 319, 320,  
 321, 322, 342, 410, 423, 424,  
 425, 426, 429, 430, 431, 433,  
 435, 438, 444  
 Northeast, 342  
 North-East, 95, 102  
 Northern, 98, 107, 109, 125,  
 128, 130, 131, 132, 136, 137,

- 138, 142, 143, 145, 152, 167,  
168, 196, 197, 201, 203, 205,  
207, 213, 224, 228, 239, 261,  
262, 289, 293, 294, 297, 298,  
299, 301, 303, 318, 321, 322,  
341, 354, 401, 419, 422, 423,  
425, 429, 430, 431, 432, 434,  
436, 440
- Northermer, 251
- Northermers, 110, 112, 129,  
136, 137, 298, 341
- Northernise, 199
- Northwest, 342
- North-West, 102
- NPC, 138, 145, 193, 201, 212,  
218, 421, 424
- N-PDP, 302
- NPN, 77, 222, 224
- NPN-Appointed, 77
- Nwoke, 413
- Nzeogu, 65
- Nzeribe, 158
- Oba, 184, 252, 253, 257
- Obafemi, 135, 156, 185, 205,  
221, 223, 224, 249, 265, 266,  
275, 325
- Obama, 329
- Obas, 340
- Obasanjo, 85, 94, 140, 149,  
162, 166, 172, 180, 190, 192,  
201, 209, 211, 216, 217, 218,  
219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 228,  
238, 239, 240, 241, 244, 245,  
246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251,  
252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257,  
258, 259, 260, 261, 269, 270,  
275, 276, 280, 281, 283, 284,  
287, 292, 293, 294, 296, 299,  
302, 307, 315, 344, 346, 415,  
434, 441, 448
- Obembe, 361
- Ode-Olo, 75
- Odili, 252
- Ogoni, 115, 235
- Ogun, 180, 291, 339
- Ogundipe, 204
- OIC, 440
- Oil, 280, 343, 349, 354, 565
- Oil-Soaked, 343
- Ojo, 82
- Ojoo, 74
- Ojota, 94, 95
- Ojukwu, 183
- Okeho, 339
- Oke-Ogun, 180, 291, 339
- Okokomaiko, xii
- Okomaiko, lii
- Okun, 337
- Okuntimo, 235
- Okutimo, 115
- Okuwobi, lvii, lviii
- Oladele, 359
- Olatunde, xii
- Olawale, 434
- Ole, 316
- Oleh, 166
- Oligarchy, 218, 222, 264
- Olooyi, 80
- Olorogun, 76
- Olufunmilayo, x
- Olufunmilola, x
- Olukole, lx
- Olusegun, 192, 219
- Omisore, 306

- Omo, 100  
 Omolara, x  
 Omoyele, 63, 72  
 Ona, 116  
 Ondo, 78, 281, 337, 401  
 Onifufu, 87  
 Oniyanrin, 75  
 Onnoghen, 311  
 Oodua, 339  
 Origin, 154, 180, 191, 227,  
 238, 256, 333, 401, 480, 481  
 Orji, 158, 309, 340  
 Orlu, 399  
 Osama, 443  
 OSCAS, 77, 78, 79, 361  
 Osha, xlviii  
 Oshiomhole, lxi  
 Oshogbo, 305  
 Osibajo, 443  
 Osogbo, 86, 446  
 Osun, 160, 271, 305, 325, 438,  
 446  
 Osuntokun, 129, 132, 192, 347  
 Otueke, 399  
 Otuoke, xiv  
 Oyingbo, lii  
 Oyinlola, 446  
 Oyo, 76, 77, 180, 208, 272,  
 281, 339, 361  
 Pa, 70, 100, 130, 131, 137, 168,  
 199, 413  
 Pacifism, 360  
 Pagan, 126  
 Pagans, 137, 169, 202, 204,  
 298, 432  
 Pakistan, 133  
 Pan-African, 388  
 Pandemic, 178, 179, 307, 342,  
 350  
 Pan-Nigeria, 68, 143, 198, 234  
 Pan-Nigerian, 68, 198, 234  
 Pan-Northern, 430  
 Pantami, 443, 444  
 Passports, xvi  
 Patriotism, 404  
 Paucity, 411  
 Pawns, xlvii  
 PDP, 71, 95, 159, 160, 161,  
 162, 163, 243, 244, 258, 259,  
 260, 261, 268, 273, 276, 278,  
 280, 281, 282, 284, 301, 302,  
 304, 307, 311  
 Pecking, 129, 218, 304  
 Pecking Order, 129, 218, 304  
 Pedigree, 116, 274, 410  
 Penal, 297  
 Penalties, 483  
 Penalty, 292, 474, 475, 512,  
 528  
 Penury, xli  
 Pesky, 340  
 Peter, 252  
 Populist, 288  
 Potomac, xiv  
 Poverty, 201, 322, 323, 371,  
 434  
 Power, 66, 67, 71, 77, 85, 96,  
 104, 105, 108, 113, 124, 132,  
 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143,  
 145, 146, 149, 153, 161, 163,  
 167, 172, 174, 175, 176, 181,  
 183, 184, 193, 196, 199, 205,  
 209, 211, 214, 217, 218, 219,  
 220, 221, 222

- Power Concentric, 205, 211,  
 218, 219, 223, 233, 253, 261  
 Power Dynamics, 217, 283,  
 429  
 Power Elite, 174  
 Power Game, 108, 228, 229,  
 253, 305  
 Power Plays, 175, 229, 447  
 Power Structure, 161, 172, 174,  
 236, 321  
 Presidency, Xiii, 71, 72, 105,  
 187, 252, 254, 270, 275, 299,  
 305, 307, 308, 329  
 President, 73, 100, 138, 139,  
 179, 189, 219, 244, 245, 247,  
 250, 253, 258, 260, 283, 293,  
 323, 449, 489, 490, 491, 507  
 Presidential, 72, 162, 185, 188,  
 224, 258, 302, 323, 399  
 President-In-Waiting, 139, 247  
 Press, 87, 270, 282, 303, 306,  
 307, 309, 311, 316, 328, 330,  
 354  
 Presumption, 89, 420  
 Primary, Xxvii, 74, 163, 180,  
 196, 214, 228, 230, 240, 282  
 Prism, 286, 311, 420, 421  
 Pro-Democracy, 309, 314  
 Pro-North, 221  
 Protestations, 317, 433, 437,  
 448  
 Protesters, xxxiv, xxxv, xxxvii,  
 xliii, xlv, xlvi, xlvii, xlviii,  
 xlix, li, liv, lvii  
 Protesting, 87, 319  
 Protests, 77, 80, 82, 107, 372,  
 383, 407  
 Public Affairs, 146  
 Public Debt, 563  
 Public Domain, 153, 216, 287  
 Public Fund, 556, 557  
 Public Health, 351, 485  
 Public Morality, 472, 485  
 Public Policy, 461  
 Public Safety, 472, 485, 533  
 Public Service, 496, 499, 503,  
 526, 528, 533, 562, 569, 570,  
 571, 572  
 Pulaku, 290  
 Quarter, 563  
 Quota, 200  
 Quran, 435, 438  
 Quranic, 437  
 Race, Xix, 72, 330, 365  
 Racial, 376  
 Racism, 329  
 Racist, 120, 329  
 Raji, 270, 311  
 Rally, 325  
 Ratification, 346  
 Realpolitik, 205, 217, 223, 430  
 Recall, 73, 116, 164, 267, 361,  
 362  
 Recommendation, 199, 336  
 Recruitment, 137, 200, 437,  
 441  
 Re-Election, 76, 224, 241, 246,  
 279  
 Regime, 91, 94, 220, 221, 223,  
 231, 232, 234, 237, 238, 249,  
 256, 306, 398, 399, 400, 433,  
 439, 444, 447

- Republic, 159, 161, 214, 300,  
 314, 339, 434, 439, 447  
 Retribution, xlii  
 Riot, 81, 260, 464  
 Rivers, 376  
 Rohingya, 133  
 Rule Of Law, 150, 304, 371,  
 575  
 Rwandese, 349  
 Sacrifice, 216, 387  
 Sahara, 406, 419  
 Saheed, 267, 272  
 Sahel, 168, 402, 419  
 Sahistory, 373  
 Saki, 339  
 Salawe, 267, 272  
 Sani, 189, 300  
 Sanusi, 142, 166  
 SAP, 82, 106  
 Saraki, 71, 302  
 Sardauna, 138, 141, 191, 209,  
 212, 264, 429, 433  
 Saro-Wiwa, 114, 233, 235  
 SARS, xxxii, xxxix, xliii, xlv, xlv,  
 xlv  
 Sarumi, 268  
 Satan, 266  
 Satyagraha, 373  
 Saudi, Xv, 430  
 Savannah, 272  
 Scamdemic, 351  
 Secession, 136, 196, 202, 334,  
 337, 341  
 Secessionism, 341  
 Secessionist, 135, 207, 331,  
 333, 334, 336, 337, 342  
 Secular, 433  
 Secularism, 430, 433  
 Seyi, Xii  
 Shagari, 105, 222, 223, 225,  
 439  
 Sharwood, 130, 131, 137, 168,  
 173, 184, 191, 192, 199, 203,  
 212, 297, 432  
 Sharwood-Smith, 297, 432  
 Shehu, 105, 217, 222, 223, 226,  
 249, 252  
 Sheiks, 321, 436  
 Shenanigans, 221  
 Shia, 430  
 Shiite, Lvi  
 Shinkafi, 161, 271  
 Silhoun, 192  
 Smith, 130, 131, 137, 173, 184,  
 191, 192, 199, 203, 212, 297  
 Sociopolitical, 418, 420, 436  
 Soetan, xii  
 Sokoto, 142, 264, 295, 319,  
 420, 421, 426, 429  
 Sola, 358  
 Solebo, xii  
 Somalia, 349  
 Sonowo, 84  
 South, 102, 157, 342, 411, 431,  
 435, 439, 440, 448  
 Southeasterners, 146  
 Southern, 102, 108, 109, 126,  
 128, 129, 131, 136, 150, 153,  
 157, 169, 195, 233, 255, 324,  
 332, 341, 423, 430, 434, 435,  
 439, 440, 441  
 Southerner, 435  
 Southerners, 110, 287  
 Southerners-Owned, xlvi

- South-Southern, 102, 157  
 South-West, 102  
 Sowore, 63, 72, 86  
 Strategy, 279, 372  
 Stratification, 420  
 Sudan, xv  
 Tafawa, 168, 199, 203, 212  
 Tailor-Made, 197, 293  
 Taiwo, 367  
 Taraba, 432  
 Tax, 280, 482, 565, 579  
 Taxation, 280, 319  
 Thanopiates, 308  
 Theocracy, 420, 421, 428  
 Theocratic, 428, 431, 440, 444  
 Tinubu, 69, 94, 95, 96, 163,  
     164, 180, 263, 264, 266, 268,  
     269, 270, 271, 274, 275, 276,  
     277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282,  
     283, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306,  
     307, 309, 311, 312, 315, 325,  
     328, 330, 339, 354  
 Tollgate, xxxiii, xxxv, xxxvi,  
     xxxvii, xxxviii, xlix, lv, lvii  
 Tom, 115  
 Tompolo, 115  
 Trajectory, 119, 122, 159, 173,  
     174, 186, 230, 240, 248, 265,  
     286, 441  
 Tran-Saharan, 126  
 Trans-Saharan, 318, 419  
 Tribal, 117, 162, 169, 171, 198,  
     277, 318, 333, 341, 431  
 Tribalism, 121, 203, 291  
 Tribunal, 462, 470, 471, 472,  
     473, 474, 475, 482  
 Tsunami, 162, 269, 344  
 Two-Thirds, 452, 453, 455,  
     498, 513, 549  
 Tyranny, 313  
 Uche, 117  
 Uganda, 140  
 Uhuru, 395  
 UK, 210  
 Umar, 229, 251, 252  
 Ummah, 321  
 Unions, 100, 101, 110  
 Unitarisation, 193  
 Usman, 125  
 Uthman, 419, 422, 426, 430,  
     442  
 Utomi, 276  
 Utopia, 340  
 Utopian, 339  
 Uzor, 309  
 Vagabonds, 408  
 Vanguard, 83  
 Vatsa, 229, 235  
 Venal, 404  
 Veto, 129, 130, 132, 133, 134,  
     135, 138, 139, 143, 144, 147,  
     150, 152, 158, 161, 163, 170,  
     171, 172, 173, 184, 191, 196,  
     204, 205, 211, 212, 218, 228,  
     233, 244, 321, 323, 422  
 Veto Power, 161, 172  
 Vice-Presidential, 224  
 Vote, 70, 71, 208, 263, 267,  
     268, 273, 306, 433, 463, 506,  
     507, 509, 516, 517, 518, 521,  
     573  
 Voted, 68, 70, 549  
 Voter, lx  
 Voters, 281, 500

Index

- Votes, 68, 449, 452, 453, 455,  
498, 506, 513  
Voting, 95, 506  
WAEC, 79  
Wahhabi, 403  
Wahhabis, Lvi  
Washington, Xiv  
Wemimo, Vi, 367  
West, 102, 120, 150, 264, 283  
Western, 131, 156, 157, 168,  
194, 242, 282, 319, 432, 445  
Wikipedia, 372  
Willink, 412, 414  
Willinks, 336  
Ya, x  
Yahaya, 305  
Yakubu, 145, 183, 204  
Yele, 86  
Yesufu, xxxiii  
Yewa-Awori, 339  
Yorubaland, 116, 279, 282,  
325, 326, 343, 350, 437, 438,  
440, 441, 445, 449  
Yorubas, 278  
Youth, 81, 87, 406, 407, 409  
Yunfa, 428  
Yusuf, lvi  
Za, 373  
Zamfarastan, 434  
Zaria, lvi  
Zealotry, 326  
Zuru, 137, 169, 173, 202, 205,  
298, 432

“The Imperatives of the Nigerian Revolution” is an engaging laborious, if disturbing, work which presents a contemporary understanding of the disintegrating Nigerian country in an interpretative analysis of socio-political forces, their emergence, metamorphosis, dynamics, effects and consequences from the viewpoint of a citizen deeply concerned to save the entity from her entrenched and mushrooming insanity. Farotimi has not only brought great insights into understanding and explanation of Nigeria’s calamitous condition, but offers prescription for its redemption, essentially on a Ghandian Pacifist Model, as so admirably presented by Taiwo Akinlami, the well-known Child Rights protection activist and promoter, an age-long collaborator of Farotimi... I salute the patriotic passion and intellectualism of the writer even as I have reservations about his redemptive prescriptions. Nonetheless, the work is a strong nod that Nigeria despite her grievous afflictions caused and foisted on her by a destructive and disruptive elite class is not yet a lost cause.”

-- Adesina Ademola Ogunlana, Lawyer, Civil Rights Activist,  
ex-Chairman Nigeria Bar Association, NBA (Ikeja Branch)



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