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Authoritarian Legacy of the Colonial State: Subsisting Impact of Nigeria's Colonial Experience

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ABSTRACT

The colonial masters left lots of things that have become bane of Nigeria today; of paramount importance is the compulsion of the diverse nationalities that make up Nigeria state to be together and the prevalent socio-political disorder and economic misfortune in the country. This led to the problems of identity and ethnicity which she has been managing over sixty years after independence. Consequently the British colonial involvement in Nigeria, and continued western political, economic, and religious influence over the affairs of formerly colonised Nigerian territory, warrants critical examination, if proper context of the subsisting impact of colonial experience is to be understood. This paper is purely descriptive and qualitative and relied on secondary sources of data. It adopted the realist, dependency and Marxism theory for its analysis. The paper found that the disadvantaged position of Nigerian state amongst its peers in the international scene is traceable to the legacy of colonial dominance, exploitation, imperialism and subsequent postcolonial political regimes in the country, where a few individuals wield power and manipulate the citizens arbitrarily without accountability. The study concluded that for Nigeria to be freed from the shackles of colonial bequests and underdevelopment, there is the need for the citizens and the leadership to restructure the polity and create their own indigenous identity, culture, technology, and general ways of doing things that would be intertwined in good governance to accommodate present realities.

Key words: Authoritarianism, Colonialism, Nigerian State, Imperialism, Nation Building.

INTRODUCTION

In offering a clearer understanding of colonialism, Awosika (2014) notes that the colonial powers in their voracious and acquisitive wisdom, arbitrarily carved Africa into various areas of commercial and exploitative interests. Nigeria was designated as a territory

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under British colonial rule, which lasted from 1900 to 1960[xlvii]. Home to over 250 ethnic nationalities with distinct languages, Nigeria's linguistic diversity posed significant challenges to national cohesion[xlvii] (Afonja, 2013; Awosika, 2014). Colonialism entails the complete domination of one nation by another, and in Nigeria's case, this included both political and economic exploitation[xlvii]. The political hegemony established by the British and their economic control were defining characteristics of this period, which affected many African nations from the 1800s through the 1960s.
A general understanding of colonialism is that it is the setting up of a new land settlement by colonisers in another clime. Ocheni & Nwankwo (2012) aver that imperialism is a resultant effect of colonialism[xlvii]. Deviating from the perception that colonialism and imperialism are substitutable, Young (2001) advocated that the latter is the concept while the former is the practice[xlvii]. Colonialism is premised on dominance stance, thus establishing a significant link with imperialism.

Apparently, Nigeria was not in existence until 1914 when the amalgamation of the ethnic groups for the colonial administrative convenience of the British Government took place. The merger aimed solely at maximizing British economic gains. Nigeria became a British colony in the 19th century, but Christianization and extensive trade had begun long before colonialism. These activities laid the groundwork for the formal political structures that would emerge later. Lagos served as the initial point of contact in 1861. By 1914, Nigeria was officially established through the merger of Northern Nigeria with the Protectorates of Southern Nigeria and the Colony of Lagos. Amusan, Jegede, & Saka (2017) conceived the amalgamation of 1914 as a travesty noting that it was intended for the purpose of using the resources of the Southern Nigeria to take care of the cost of administering the Northern Nigeria. The ripple effect of which subsists till date[xlvii]. The question of amalgamation was not really a big issue but the inherent problem attached thereto was not taking careful and sincere efforts to address the socio-political and cultural gap of the two entities, consequent on the colonial insight and experience.

Indirect rule policy was adopted by the British colonialists to govern Nigeria. The policy was a huge success in the Northern Protectorate. The native authorities and warrant chiefs were used to advance the interests of the British intentions continuance dominance over the local populace. The focus of British colonial activity involved: expansion of British business opportunities in Nigeria – accomplished through stoppage of slave trade, diplomacy, and military force in coercing the people to obey their laws.

There is no doubt that the British colonial style of administration has filtered into the Nigerian state system of government, and it has ripple effects on the politics and economies of the indigenous people of the country. It is in this way that political dominance of the colony, through colonisation, pervaded administration, faith system, economy and the general ways of life of the Nigeria people.

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The aftereffects of colonial rule, established during the partition of Africa, continue to haunt Nigeria. The Republic of Cameroon to the east was once intertwined with Nigerian territory due to colonial grouping. Although the two territories later separated, Nigeria retained the Sardauna Province following a plebiscite. The disputed Bakassi Peninsula became a contentious issue, leading Cameroon to bring the matter before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague. The verdict favoured Cameroon, causing dissatisfaction and embarrassment among Nigerians who had lived in the region for generations and found themselves entangled in international politics.

This paper explores the key problems threatening Nigeria's sovereignty, focusing on the lingering effects of colonialism and the challenges inherent in managing ethno-religious tensions. Colonial legacies have not only shaped Nigeria's political landscape but also contributed to a fragmented national identity. The arbitrary borders drawn during colonial rule grouped diverse ethnic and religious groups together, often igniting conflicts and fostering a sense of division rather than unity.

Statement of the Problem

Colonial rule had an array of weighty influence on the Nigerian state and her citizens. The impacts comprised but not limited to the dislodgment of Nigerian political economy, religion and cultural values. It goes without saying that the prevailing situations in Nigeria could be acclaimed to colonialism, such as, the interruption of the system of government suitable for Nigeria citizens. Foreign rule occasioned hardship and fall in the standards of living of Nigeria.

The central focus of this paper is on the analysis of the authoritarian nature of colonial bequests in Nigeria and its impact on the body politic of the country's structures. An authoritarian government perceptibly has unlimited powers, otherwise known as unlimited government. The government has absolute powers over her citizens. What constitute the citizen's rights are determined by such government. Hence, according to Encyclopaedia Britannica, Authoritarianism is defined as "any political system that concentrates power in the hands of a leader or small elite that is not constitutionally responsible to the body of the people" **(**https://www.britannica.com/topic/authoritarianism**).** Apparently, leaders of such people may claim they are exercising power according to the wishes of the people but they are actually exercising power not in line with the rule of law.

Authoritarian source of power is premised on oligarchic manipulation of the political system in Nigeria. The wealthy elite tend to suppress the masses' demands for equity and justice. However, an expanding middle class makes authoritarian rule less feasible. With more educated individuals in society, there are greater opportunities and resources

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for them to engage in and influence the political system, pushing for change and accountability.

Authoritarian government is usually not accepted in decent societies. Osundare (2013) describes some characteristics of authoritarian system as 'abomination'. He notes that:

> [xlvii]Abomination is one word which captures the essence of devaluation and desecration which this unfortunate country and we, its people, have been going through in recent times. We have been lied to, cheated, swindled, denied our rights, hanged and dehumanised in countless ways buy those who have imposed themselves on us. The person we elected to lead us is imprisoned by another one we never elected but who now decrees our lives from the seat of power. This unelected government hanged nine human beings in one day, sentenced Nigeria to international shame and pariahood, then facilitated rented crowed at home to thank it for and congratulate it on its supremely patriotic act.

This corroborates use of coercion, brute force by security forces of the Nigerian state, in surveillance and elimination of critics including political assassination. Co-optation or bringing in individuals into the regime and establishing a beneficial relationship with them in order to maintain legitimacy is a common prank by the authoritarian regimes in the country. The Nigerian state oftentimes choses which groups are allowed to represent the interest of the people. On November 19, 1960, a motion presented by Minister of Defence Alhaji Mohammed Ribadu sought approval from the House of Representatives for the Anglo-Nigerian Defence Pact. This motion faced opposition from the Action Group, led by Chief Awolowo, who raised a point of order and warned the Prime Minister that Nigeria would not achieve peace unless the opposition leader was imprisoned (Awolowo, 1987). A few years later, Chief Awolowo was indeed jailed for treasonable felony, highlighting the state's use of force against perceived enemies[xlvii].

The judiciary is not spared either, it is now under siege and subjugation by the executive arm where disobedience to the rule of law holds sway (Igwe, 2021). The legislative and judicial arms of government are constrained to the servitude of the executive[xlvii]. They are perceived by the masses as mere rubber stamp. This implies that these two organs of government are not independent. Pseudo democracy (autocracy) is now the order of the day in Nigeria. Nigerian state does not fend for the citizens but tries to subjugate them, using poverty as a weapon to supress the people, whereby they would not be able to seek for their rights. Rather, running around for what they would eat.

Moreover, operating democracy without democrats, rapid deterioration of press freedom; intolerance of opposition; abuse of human rights; using anathema to destroy

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solid cases on the basis of technicalities and wielding of power by a few oligarchs are clear indications of the subsisting impact of the Nigeria's colonial experience. Apparently, effectiveness of the Nigerian state or its fragility could be established if unbiased inquiry is focused on: (i) the interaction of the Nigerian society, polity, and state; (ii) the relationship between the Nigerian state and the actors in the polity; and (iii) evaluation of how the Nigerian state encompasses its several component units.

Theoretical Background

This study is anchored on the Realist International Relations Theory, Dependency Theory and Marxism. They are considered adequate to explain the phenomenon of the colonial state's authoritarian legacy and the ongoing impact of Nigeria's colonial experience. The realist international relations theory was adopted to explain the cause or what motivates colonial rule. Because survival is the primary purpose of every state, foreign invasion and occupation are the most serious concerns that governments confront, and as a result, they continuously ensure that they have enough power to defend themselves and pursue their material goals.

Ocheni and Nwankwo (2012) posit that Colonialism arose as a result of shifts in Europe's manufacturing mode (notably, the emergence of industrial revolution). In place of the previous slave-based economy, the industrial revolution ushered in a new technique of production[xlvii]. In the history of mankind, the industrial revolution was a revolutionary trend. With the advent of the industrial revolution, the issue of how to lubricate machines arose. By this time, the slave trade and slavery had completed their main duty of delivering the founding capital. The conquest of Africa resulted from a desire to invest acquired cash and a demand for raw materials.

Colonialists are rational actors and because they possess some military capacity, decided to extend their economic frontiers to Africa and other continents for the purpose of acquiring more economic gains over their fellow colonial counterparts. In the process of exploiting their colonies, the colonial masters Britain and France implemented distinct approaches to their colonial rule, with Britain favouring a system of association and France opting for assimilation. These differing methods shaped their relationships with the colonies and contributed to various conflicts. Overall, the colonial activities led to significant tensions and challenges within the affected regions.[xlvii]

Dependency Theory draws on just the fact that most of the world's poorest countries were once colonial possessions of Imperial powers. It is a world stratification theory that concentrates on the processes and outcomes of European colonialism and empire. Dependency theory aims to explain why poverty persists around the world. It claims that low-income countries' poverty is a direct outcome of their socioeconomic and political reliance on richer countries. According to dependency theory, many countries' poverty is the result of powerful states' extortion. This thesis is based on Karl Marx's predictions

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that a capitalistic society system would produce an impoverished class of dependent countries, just as capitalist had produced an exploited class of workers inside countries.

The historical evolution of this system of inequality is examined first in dependency theory. In the 1600s, when European countries began to industrialize, they needed raw resources for their industries and markets to sell their goods. To do this, European states invaded and conquered a large portion of the globe, as well as most of Africa, Asia, and the Americas. As a result, colonialism is a system wherein the Western powers became affluent by obtaining raw resources from colonized populations and earning revenues from items manufactured in their own countries.

Colonialism worked best for the powerful states when colonies were kept impoverished to minimize competing with the imperial powers. Nigeria, for example, was a Part of the British Empire until 1960. During that time, the United Kingdom and the rest of the Western world purchased inexpensive Nigerian crude oil and processed it into refined goods such as Petroleum Products. etc. in British and Western countries refineries, and remarketed to Nigeria creating large earnings. Nigeria was able to obtain crude oil at a significantly lower cost than the United Kingdom. Despite this, the United Kingdom will not allow Nigeria to expand its refineries. As long as Nigeria was reliant on the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom prospered while Nigeria remained impoverished.

The direct political and diplomatic domination of poor countries by wealthy rich countries generated dependency under colonialism. Colonization came to a halt shortly after WWII, owing largely to colonial people's complaints and the following independence movement. The dominant core countries have been keen to give money to noncore countries, but only on conditions that place great economic burden upon those countries, such as exorbitant interest rates. This borrowing reliance is a type of relational system that the core countries have used to dominate and keep the poor countries reliant. (Emeh[xlvii], Olise, Oluwole and Onwuka, 2018; Rodney, 2017) have contended that such a trend of vulnerability is to blame for a number of African countries' extreme underdevelopment. Colonial powers continue to engage directly in the affairs of independent states, either by sending troops or, more commonly, by placing political and economic limitations and sanctions. Other, mostly economic, techniques of controlling dependent impoverished countries have been created, such as price restrictions, tariffs, and, most importantly, credit control. Indeed, the amount of debt accumulated by some countries is a large contributor of disparity.

According to dependency theory, affluent industrialised nations can set relatively low prices for raw materials provided by underdeveloped countries, preventing the poor countries from accumulating enough profit to industrialize. As a consequence, the weak, indebted states are forced to borrow from the wealthy. Debt, on the other hand, simply increases dependency. Many impoverished countries are so heavily in debt to the major

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industrial countries that they are forced to follow the economic dictates of the wealthy nations who lent them the money, deepening their reliance. From dependency theory perspective, one can submit that Nigeria became 'third world' as a result of Britain's imperial dominance and forced integration into the global economy Dependency relationships have persisted long after official occupation has stopped, and Nigeria is tailored to meet the demands of the colonialist counterparts and not her own domestic needs.

Marxism conceives colonialism, as a kind of capitalism that enforces exploitation and structural transformation. Colonialism is intimately related with unequal growth since it operates inside the global capitalist system. According to the Dictionary of Human Geography, colonialism is an "instrument of wholesale destruction, dependency and systematic exploitation producing distorted economies, socio-psychological disorientation, massive poverty and neo-colonial dependency." [xlvii]To the Marxists, Colonies are organised into producing modes. Inter-capitalist rivalry for wealth creation has resulted in the search for raw materials, natural resources, and the current search for fresh alternative investments. Because imperialism was differentiated by neoliberal capitalism via colonialism, Lenin saw colonialism as the primary cause of imperialism (Young, 2001).

Methodology

The study is purely qualitative relying extensively on secondary sources of data sourced from books, journal publications, magazines, internet materials and other documented materials relevant to the subject matter.

The study employed textual analysis of some literature on the reasons for colonialism and amalgamation of separate entities that made up the Nigerian state by the colonial power. It assessed the after effects and inherent problems attached to African and the Nigerian statehood and ingredients of a viable political system. The study further appraised instances of authoritarian legacies as evident in the interaction of the Nigerian society, polity, and state vis-a-vis the relationship between the Nigerian state and the actors in the polity. The findings of the study were content analysed.

Colonial legacy and its impact on the Nigerian State

This paper is concerned about how the legacies of British authoritarian regime inhibit delivery of public good and democratic values in the present day Nigeria. Defining authoritarianism is therefore, an indispensable condition for understanding the topic as a whole. By authoritarianism, we mean power structures with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology, but distinct mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political engagement, except at certain points in their advancement, and in which a ruler or occasionally a select minority exercises power

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within formally ill-defined but actually quite predictable limits[xlvii] (Stepan & Linz, 1996). One of Nigeria's esteemed founding fathers, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, referred to the country as a "geographical expression." He, possibly, had in mind the varied nature and cultural diversity among Nigerian various tribes. Awolowo had anticipated the development of a state structure that would not be easy to classify. Would it be a unitary system of government or a confederation of states? Was it meant to be a permanent proposal or a transient arrangement? When British arrived it came across different ethnic groups, cultural groups, and villages that had created their own local governments over generations. The colonialists were well aware that they were bringing together incompatible nationalities into one union. Osaghae (2018) notes that the British implemented indirect rule primarily in the Northern territories, leveraging existing local power structures and traditional authorities[xlvii]. In contrast, the Southern regions experienced a more direct form of colonial administration. This approach has been criticised for fostering divisions and reflecting authoritarian practices, as it imposed external control and undermined local governance (Crowder, 1968). Overall, the arrangement is often viewed as flawed, contributing to long-term socio-political challenges in Nigeria.

Thus, when Nigerian state was being planned, British knew exactly what she wanted: the thoughtful avoidance of the seeming Indian mistake. The colonial did not want Nigeria in one whole as had happened in India. Thus, the singular voice of Ghandi in India contrasted with disagreeing voices from the three regional premiers within Nigerian territory, during the period of the struggles for the country's independence and thereafter. The amalgamation was structured in a way that there were two legislative bodies and enactments of two separate laws for the two provinces. The Southern province imbibed Western education and culture while the Northern Province embraced and welcomed the Islamic and Middle Eastern education and cultures. The confusing dissimilarities came to be known as 'divide and rule' system, which gave rise to indirect rule through devolution of powers to the native authority.

Some Europeans and local comprador elites claimed that colonial rule introduced formal education to Nigeria. However, it is important to note that this colonial education lacked a genuine connection to African heritage, which hindered meaningful development within the African context. Ocheni and Nwankwo (2012)[xlvii] point out that colonial education was mainly literary and lacked a methodological foundation, rendering it incompatible with real industrial progress. The limited technological base of contemporary Nigeria, which has contributed to its underdevelopment, stems from the inadequate educational foundation established by the colonialists.

The colonial structures are still very much around and very active. It was vividly captured by Rodney (2017, originally published in 1972) to the effect that these capitalist economies in the Western fold still determine what happens economically in this part of the world. To a large extent, and in my considered opinion, they are the ones that define our essence and beings economically through financial institutions in the West.

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Nigerian State: Narratives of an Uneasy Union

Ajayi (1961) revealed the rupture created by colonialism by linking its oppression to the middle of the nineteenth century when the call to create new nations along the European pattern first began to be heard in African continent[xlvii]. Apparently, the advancement was majorly supported by Christian Missionaries from Europe who articulated that only a new social and political order similar to that of Europe could allow Christianity to flourish in Africa (p.206). The development led to what Nnoli (1976) described as disruption of the "organic link between the precolonial pattern of social relations, symbols technology and physical environment of the Nigeria population"[xlvii]. Specifically, the imported values did not in any way act to modify the indigenous ones but completely ignored them. Consequently, it was a disconnection from the wishes, aspirations and resources of the Nigerian people (p.206).

In the same vein, Ekeh (1975) substantiated the subsisting impact of the colonial experiences that

created the presence of instead of one, like in the West, there are two publics[xlvii]. He attributed African political problem to the dialectical relationships between two publics (p. 91). Ekeh contends that the colonists' ideological justification of their rule was more important than the sheer cruelty of weaponry in achieving effective colonisation of Africa (1975, p. 96). One of the most creative viewpoints for locating and comprehending the character of modern civil society as a result of colonialism is his thesis of colonialism and the two publics in Africa. The thesis, in particular, explains why primordial attachments have remained fundamental to why the Nigerian state has remained mainly divided and dialectical even after colonialism. The scenario actually informed why Nigerian social commentators, human rights activists and scholars argue that African nationalism disregard what actually adds beauty and sustainability to most African lives.

Nigerian state has many national groups within her, called nations. Nations are cultural identities. These nations have different religion and different traditions. The cultural groups could create tensions as evident in Myetti Allah, Oodua People's Congress, Boko Haram, Niger Delta Avengers etc. Arising from the thinking that the Nigerian state does not recognise their language, religious right or giving undue advantage to specific groups. What seems dominant across the country is ethnic based nationalism. But blurring the lines between good and bad loyalty for one's ethnic nationality can lead to radicalisation. Incidentally, Nigerian state wants to ensure loyalty from her citizens and she is poised on creating state nationalism.

However, the situation in Nigeria is in fact worse than being unpatriotic. Many do not even seriously think or see themselves as Nigerians. Thus, probably, only few of the literate Nigerians can recite the national anthem. And the few or so is only due to the unquestionable obedience and courtesy of the student population, the Armed Forces and

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others who have the official compulsion to commit the anthem to memory. Sadly, but truly, the allegiance of most Nigerians today is primarily either towards their various tribes or at best to their states of origin.

The leadership question has been responsible for every degradation that this system has suffered politically and socially. According to Festus Oguche (2018) in an interview with The Guardian, he observed that beyond the expectation of our national policy, objectives and national identity as a people, do we really have[xlvii] leaders that possess the requisite traits, sufficient to lift this country out of the doldrums and into the limelight? The answer is yes, they are there, but lack of leadership structure is what is making it difficult for the right people to emerge both under the military and the civilian rule. First of all, religion has become one factor of dissention because sentiments are involved. Secondly, there are the political and military elites that are very desperate for political power. Militarism has been done away with and democracy enthroned, the question is if it is true democracy or a political system where you have political elites that act like predators whose objectives are predominantly selfish accumulation of wealth. They are there for self-serving purposes. There is no need refuting the fact that the unpatriotic attitude of most Nigerians can be accredited to the belief that there are no equal opportunities available to them in the country and that the country is not really one.

Nothing gladdens a citizen's heart better than the greatness of his nation. Imagine the patriotism of say, an American or a Briton, and consider the way he adores his country's obvious greatness. Nigerians most unfortunately are yet to develop that sense of pride or patriotism typical of their counterparts in the civilised world. This is no doubt an aftermath of colonialism. Nigeria is structurally yoked to remain underdeveloped in perpetuity.

X-raying Nigeria's disunity and non-patriotism from another angle, imagine, "Biafra" was said to have made bombs and mortars. Why? Because there was not only necessity but also patriotism and total commitment on the part of the people for their chosen cause and course! But sadly, Nigeria, put together, is yet to produce any of such scientific wonders not because she lacks the resources, human and material, but because her development programme is devoid of any nationalistic ambition. The non-patriotism of Nigerians may sound exaggerated but it happens to be the bitter truth which ought to be a food for thoughts particularly for those who rule or aspire to rule this country.

Genuine patriotism in Nigeria will remain a mirage unless and until deliberate and serious efforts are made to achieve it. The present downward trend in the standard of living of the generality of the people has made matters even worse. A hungry Nigerian sees no reason dying for any Nigeria. To be realistic is to say that the apathy of Nigerians to their country is so complex a problem that it cannot be explained without recourse to the historical origin as well as the development of the body polity of Nigeria through the amalgamation process and the political structures put in place by the colonialists.

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Evidences of Subsisting Impact of the Nigeria's Colonial Experience

The majority of European colonies acquired their institutions of government explicitly from the colonial state, and there is strong evidence that colonial structures influenced a wide range of associated results (Lindberg and Smith, 2014). The crookedness and corrupt designs established by the British gave the Northern Nigeria a superlative political advantage over their Southern counterpart[xlvii]. This lend credence to the fact that even the decolonisation concept of handing power to colonies as soon as a legitimate representative could be formed was widely supposed to reflect the British national desire. It was also a deliberate and retrogressive step that was selfishly planned.

The lopsided design was indeed a signal to the present-day reality that the Hausa and Fulani would continue to dominate decision making in Nigeria as a territorial entity. Ugbem, Omobowale and Akinpelu (2019) argue that sixty years after the colonial rule, despite identity conflicts and recreation by Northern Nigeria's ethnic tribes, Fulani domination remains a societal fact. Omotosho (1988) noted famous speech of the late Sardauna of Sokoto, Ahmadu Bello on the 19th December, 1959 in the Government House, Kaduna, where Sardauna indicated that he had remained in politics in order to get a few things done for the North and that some of them are already bearing fruit. The late Sardauna who was the Premier of Northern Region said 'when the political battle is over, he would divide Nigeria between two of his trusted lieutenants, one for the North and one for the South. The Sardauna thereafter introduced Tafawa Balewa as his representative in the South'.

Adekoya (2018) views Bello's emphatic pronouncements of a post-independence Nigeria as the historical continuity of the Sokoto Caliphate, saw himself as the modern Usman dan Fodio[xlvii] (p.287). Some social critics said the speech by late Ahmadu Bello, for making that famous speech does not in any way make him more a tribal bigot than Dr. Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo, from the South. Given the same condition and opportunity, one could infer that Dr. Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo would perhaps have done more for their own regions at the expense of the Fulani. Reference was made to a renowned Jurist of Ibo extraction, Mr. Dadi Onyeama who once said that an Ibos' rule over the whole of Nigeria was only a question of time. Specifically, Dadi Onyeama was quoted as saying "you may despise the Igbo, you may persecute him all you want but you can't put him down. You wait – Igbo domination of this nation is but a matter of time" (https://joliba-africa.com/2019/07/16/book-review-dadi-the-man-the-legend-his-excellency-judge-charles-dadi-onyeama-of-the-international-court-of-justice-the-hague-by-dillibe-onyeama/). This statement attests to ethno-regional strains bequeathed by the colonialists, which divide Nigerians and their politics till the present day, consequently, accusing a particular leader for speaking out his mind of championing the course of his

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own people does not arise[xlvii]. This is sequel to the fact that Nigerians do not see themselves as belonging to one country, and is not yet one country in reality.

Olutayo (2018) established the devastating setback of colonialism and the development of underdevelopment in Nigeria. He posited:

> [xlvii]With colonialism, 'things fell apart' and the hitherto existing survival and developmental strategies could no longer hold. In summary, the advent of colonialism relocated the centre of the pre-existing empires outside their territories and the 'professionals'/'bourgeoisie' are being produced to maintain the new external empire, as such, what we now do in the 'new empire', is determined by those controlling it outside our territories. This is why some authors have described us as living in the 'periphery of the periphery'. In this circumlocution, the 'professionals' have been referred to as 'lumpenbourgeoisie' who are made to go round about the so called developed nations' development dictates. This is because their 'new' ways of doing things and, hence, their survival efforts are to ensure the sustenance of the new, external, empire rather than be in the interest of the old empire (p.5)

Above clarification is not just a pointer to the distortions and pervasive tentacles of colonialism as witnessed by Nigerian state, but also the answer to the question of why the country has not developed since independence.

The concept of Nigeria's marginalization in the world politics is being used by conflicting stakeholders for various objectives[xlvii]. It was reduced for the international bodies to a potent tool that was used only as another argument in support of the essential policies at the heart of the economic transition that they were promoting[xlvii]. In fact, for some African leaders grappling with policy inefficiencies, it constituted a persuasive argument in favour of increased development aid[xlvii]. It also provided a venue for some corporate organizations to pressurize the Nigerian government to adopt policies that were beneficial to the[xlvii]m, including subsidies and tax holidays (Olukoshi, 2004; Adeniyi 2017; Goodluck, 2018; Okonjo-Iweala, 2018).

However, marginalisation is a notion that must not be taken at face value, or tackle only on which debate has been organised around it. The notion has been robustly challenged by Mkandawire (2001) that the real issue at stake is how to overcome the maladjustment of African economies that has been the direct outcome of about three decades of the imposition of the IMF/World Bank neo-liberal economic reform policies. Structural Adjustment programme (SAP) in Nigeria, in its plan and implementation entails deflationary policies that have simply resulted in adding pressures to economies that were already depressed. The consequence was that Nigeria experienced several years of very slow or negative growth. Moreover, the economies were also systematically

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maladjusted to the point where they were no longer able to respond to the policy incentives and signals. Hence, overcoming maladjustment is, therefore, a prerequisite for improving both Nigeria's political economy and its place in the international economic order. Also, a country that does not keep pace with the changes in the international economy would always be hurt by improvements in efficiency of other countries.

Colonialist's designs for Nigeria, being a rich source of mineral resources, is to make it an essential ground for consumerism and marketing of finished products in perpetuity. It is in this light that Soriwei (2012) asserted that the rentier culture that afflicts Nigeria's state and citizens is to blame for the oil refineries' careless collapse, to the point that Nigeria produces crude oil and imports refined fuels at a higher cost while purportedly going to subsidize the price at the pump for Nigerian local customers.

Unfortunately, Nigeria's economy and way of life are being taken captive to the whims of global oil multinationals, whose stance is bolstered by Nigeria's lack of crucial technical expertise to maximize her reserves. It is not surprising that Ebohon, (2013) lamented that Nigeria which is those who are utterly reliant on oil must ultimately rely on foreign big firms to plunder the resource according to their whims[xlvii].

However, Okonjo-Iweala (2018) noted that for over three decades, Nigeria had subsidised the price of gasoline at the pump to make it cheaper for its population. The world's thirteenth-largest oil producer at the time had limited refining capacity, so crude oil was exported, and refined petrol products were imported and sold to the at below market prices. The government covered those subsidies and paying them to the marketers and importers who brought in the products, including its own company, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)[xlvii].

One of the major problems fettering Nigeria is that she is gradually becoming a rentier state and currently in the process of becoming a rogue state due to enormous corruption aided and abetted by power elites and the ruling class in collaboration with multinational oil firms. (Mbao & Osinibi, 2014; Adogahme, 2011). What the system does is to perpetually make Nigeria a rentier state wherein the rent of local raw materials to external clients' accounts for almost all or a significant percentage of its government income. A rentier state and economy are considered to foster a rentier mindset, which has a negative impact on a state's financial and long-term prospects. Nigeria's Federal Government is viewed as a rentier state's revenue distribution organ. The fact that oil accounts for over 90% of Nigeria's exports and around 75% of consolidated budgetary income significantly supports Nigeria's classification as a rentier state (World Bank, 2013)[xlvii].

As Okonjo-Iweala (2018) further noted, the rentier system created by the seeming monolithic economy and the States, being major beneficiaries of the proceeds emanating from sharing the revenues were fully in support of total phase-out of subsidies because

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the subsidy payments amounted to substantial reduction in the both state and federal government revenues, given that the subsidies, which were supposed to benefit all Nigerians, were paid off the top of total revenues before those revenues were shared among the many levels of governance[xlvii]. Alas, subsidy payment is nothing but a sham. Nigeria is among the most impoverished nations on earth. Paradoxically, she's an oil rich country where most of the people are poor. The consensus is that the outcome had been chequered and the benefit of oil far below expectations.

Dankofa (2008) advanced the notion of Nigeria's rentier state to the problems of colonialism, ethnic conflagrations and the parasitism of the ruling class. On balance, oil has been more of a curse than a blessing. The disappointing oil legacy of the post 1970 period and the need of oil wealth generation to support sustainable development raise a number of key questions which demand systematic consideration. Some of the questions, according to Iwayemi (2006), are: (i) What are the conditions for reversing the past squandering of hope associated with oil wealth utilisation in Nigeria? (ii) What are the requirements for affording a more prosperous economy and social future in a society that would be dependent on oil in the medium term? (iii) Who should have property rights to oil (Federal, States or Local Governments/ communities)? (iv) How should the resource rent from oil and gas be shared? These are some of the many questions raised by Iwayemi which are indicative of a need for restructuring of the whole gamut of the connected series of exploring, finding, producing, distributing, exporting the economic surplus from oil and gas exploitation in Nigeria.

The colonialists also use surveillance as a strategic tool to superimpose itself upon formerly colonized territories.[xlvii] Through the process of observation and strategic surveillance, the colonial powers have comparative advantage to process and understand that which is gotten, and can interfere in the activities of the colonised territories[xlvii]. Surveillance techniques and practices were born out of old colonial and imperial strategies of subjugation and administration. (Kizito, 2017; Zureik, 2013; Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2003). Colonialists sent undercover agents as academics and even funded research in tertiary institutions in Nigeria in order to unravel contentious issues. Foreign and even local journalists were used at crucial times to obtain crucial and classified information for the purpose of planning or undermining effective running of the Nigerian state to the advantage of the colonialists[xlvii]. Recently, there was a protest by women in the Northeast Nigeria where the French deployed mercenaries as aid workers to the Internally Displaced Camps (IDPs) and surreptitiously sell arms to the insurgents.

One of the most unpleasant colonial experiences bedevilling the Nigerian state till date is the issue of democratisation. According to Amusan, Jegede, & Saka (2017), when viewed in context of the present pretensions of most African republics, it is acceptable to say that democratization is Africa's most endangered political undertaking[xlvii]. This is more evident of Nigerian state because of inherited colonial political structures. Prominent

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structures that are fundamental to the democratic agenda as noted by Amuwo (1992) are: [xlvii]the ability of citizens to participate in the administration of their society's affairs; and the engagement of all important political groups in the governance system. In the same vein, Ember and Stevens (2020) corroborate Amuwo's broadly accepted liberal policy for democratisation as espoused by President Joseph R. Biden. This principle is in line with the Democrats Party's agenda and values the USA. The reality on ground is that these structures remain practically difficult to realise, or even impossible in the present Nigerian state.

Genuine democratisation and good governance seem like utopia to the Nigerian state owning to the manipulated population figures of the regions bequeathed by the by the colonialist. Another factor that makes democratisation difficult is all form of election rigging, including underage voting in some parts of the country. Many scholars have argued that in many parts of Africa, democracy at national level is glorified with authoritarianism. People could go out to vote, but the opposition party is not going to win. Although the police and the army exist, but they are answerable to the person in power. Whereas, credible processes in elections and commitment of the leaders to the welfare of the citizens remain the hallmark of true democracy which is invariably anchored on the enabling avenue for the public to take an active role in the running of the state's affairs.

Perceptions of Nigeria as a Failed State

This is one of the most debated questions about the Nigeria Nation-State. According to Okotoni, (2017), many have argued that Nigeria is a failed state; others believe that it is in the process of failure while some even predicted the disintegration of the nation in 2015. There are others who refer to her as a mafia state. By and large, the general understanding is that Nigeria is in a dilemma, hence hardly knows what it wants to do with herself. Many scholars and public commentators are not in agreement as to the way the country should go. This description is regardless of the fact that Nigeria is rich with both human & material resources within its borders.

Atypically, most of the opinions are however not based on tangible fact that can be substantiated with evidence, but on political sentiment, personal interest, ethno-religious prejudices and beliefs. Notably a former US ambassador to Nigeria, John Campbell gave an in-depth analysis of how Nigeria was drifting towards a failed state due to inherent corruption, ethno-religious tension, increasing Islamic radicalism, power tussle by elites and the tension of the 2015 presidential election.

Meanwhile, Rotberg (2013) explained that a failed state is one in which the government is unable or unwilling to provide fundamental political goods (public services) to its population[xlvii]. He argued further that failed states lack stability, are unsecure, violate the legal system, and are rife with corruption; they deny most citizens political involvement

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or a voice; they allow discrimination against groups and classes of citizens within their states; they offer a viable economy, but only to the political classes and their stooges; and they provide social development (healthcare and education services) infrequently or not at all. Going by Rotberg's debate, one can conclude that Nigeria fits into an almost all the features that characterised a failed state[xlvii].

A nation-state success is sometimes judged by how well it delivers public benefits that is, protection, legislation, modern healthcare, schools and academic facilities, essential infrastructural facilities, money and banking systems[xlvii], a positive business atmosphere, and a civil society forum and method for regulating environmental commons.

Findings

Colonial authoritarianism in Nigeria involved the imposition of strict control by colonial powers, often bypassing traditional governance structures and local authority. The British implemented direct and indirect rule, favouring certain ethnic groups while marginalizing others, which exacerbated existing divisions and tensions among Nigeria's diverse ethnic communities. This manipulation of ethnic identities created a legacy of favouritism and resentment that continues to affect Nigerian politics.

As Nigeria transitioned to independence, the absence of a strong democratic foundation and the reliance on authoritarian practices led to significant challenges in the democratization process. The entrenched power dynamics and ethnic rivalries have complicated political stability, often resulting in military coups and authoritarian regimes. These legacies of colonial rule hindered the development of a cohesive national identity, making it difficult for Nigeria to foster genuine democratic governance. Thus, the effects of colonial authoritarianism are deeply intertwined with the country's ongoing struggles for democracy and unity among its various ethnic groups.

In view of the foregoing, the study found that colonialism left an undesirable legacy of rentier state issues, regional violent conflicts, as well as the political elite class's parasitism. Thereby positioning the Nigerian state as a country whose leadership is unable or unwilling to provide inhabitants with common political goods and social welfare. Also that colonialism factored Nigeria into a rent seeking nation on the brink of being a failed state due to enormous corrupt practices committed by politicians and the economic elite in collaboration with multinational oil firms.

The study further discovered that the issue of democratisation is one of the most unpleasant colonial experiences bedevilling the Nigerian state till today owing inherited colonial political structures and manipulated population figures of the regions bequeathed by the British. In order cover-up this irregularity, election rigging; voting by underage became institutionalised in some parts of the country[xlvii].

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Of course the literature reviewed showed that besides the much touted reason of administrative convenience for the British government, amalgamation of Southern and Northern Protectorates 1914 was intended for the purpose of using the resources of the Southern Nigeria to take care of the cost of administering the Northern Nigeria. Today, more than half of income generate from petroleum products extracted from the Southern states, and the Internally Generated Revenues (IGR) is allocated to the Northern states[xlvii]. Another finding was that the Nigerian state inherited her national structures derived directly from the colonial authorities, and extensive evidence suggests that colonisation systems influenced a wide range of social, geopolitical, and economic results. Last but not the least is the fact that Nigerian rulers are willing to sacrifice meritocracy, national development and progress to favour protection of tribal and religious loyalty despite the recycling consequences before us since independence. Similarly, Nigerians are not enthused by the quality of their leaders or how they are being ridiculed worldwide provided their tribe, political party or religion control political power.

Conclusion

It has been purportedly acclaimed variously that colonialists developed Nigeria in regard to social order, patriotism, and industrial growth. while in reality reverse is the case, because during the colonial era, the kingdoms in Nigeria lost power. Apparently, power is the overall major predictor of opportunities and determinant of progress in the state. It refers to one's ability to safeguard one's interests and, if required, enforce one's will via whatever means possible, as well as the extent to which a people can endure as a racial and social unit. As a result, when one civilization is forced to hand over all control to some other, that really is a sort of underdevelopment in and of itself (Rodney, 2017)[xlvii].

Indirect rule policy which has to do with people being ruled by their own people or institutional arrangements, with the British authorities keeping a close watch on things, still exists in attenuated form till today. Political elites often use religion and ethnicity to manipulate the citizens (Philpott 2020; Haynes 2020; Agbiboa 2017). Even the media and intellectuals keep a blind eye on the reality of the Nigerian state for tribal and personal enrichment considerations[xlvii].

It is not an overstatement that colonialism is undoubtedly responsible for the forced union of the several ethnic groups that now make up Nigeria, ethnic antagonism and hostility have become institutionalized. The Nigerian state is practically divided, with Christian towns in the north under attack. In Africa, the translation of class strife across religious, tribal, and ethnic boundaries has essentially torn up the old "colonialist" map (Global-trends-2030-november2012). Several decades after Nigeria got independence, the challenges of ethnicity is largely attributed to the impacts of colonial rule[xlvii].

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Nigeria is rapidly becoming a pariah state, as seen by the fierce ethno-religious conflict that has taken countless lives of innocent people. Nigeria has survived a horrific civil war triggered by an ethnic genocide in Northern Nigeria, which resulted in separatist aspirations by the Igbo of South-East Nigeria, one of the country's most populous ethnic groups. As long as ethno-religious disputes exist, the country's cohesiveness is in jeopardy.

Nigeria is regarded as a rentier state on the verge of becoming a failed state ascribed to the discovery of oil and the ensuing oil curse. This is believed to have been exacerbated by ethnic tensions worsened by colonialism, as each ethnic group in Nigeria competes for the biggest proportion of the oil revenue. COVID-19 has exposed the state of our nation and the cumulative impact of the quality of our leadership over several years. Nigerian leaders are mortgaging freedom, survival and progress of generations for short time worthless, stage managed, red carpet reception, handshake and cheap collateral loans. Better governance to strengthen the economy, social development, and scientific advancement will be the key to Nigeria realising her best extent in terms of overall national strength.

Recommendations

Nigeria's government should take a sincere approach to fighting corrupt practices and invest in relevant development initiatives that would enhance the lives of millions of Nigerians. There will be fewer protests of marginalization from various ethnic groups as a result of this, as well as reduced ethnic intolerance.

The viability of every state and the control of its resources bother politics. Apparently, political restructuring is of essence, especially when there is a damaged component in the wheel of the politics of the Nigerian state. Peaceful coexistence of Nigerian multi-ethnic nationalities as one peaceful entity requires that a level playing ground for competitive development of the different regions of the country be enhanced through political restructuring and fiscal federalism. There is no doubt that ruling elites' inordinate interests, fear of ethnic dominations, political peculiarity among others construe the challenges facing political restructuring in Nigeria. It is recommended that value reorientation, strengthening of the country's institutions, and ethnic representation should be considered in addressing restructuring issues in Nigeria.

Equity and justice founded on devolution of powers to the federating components obtainable in civilised countries must be emulated by Nigerian power groups and also enshrined in the constitution. Genuine re-organisation and re-arrangement of the nature of resource control by Nigerian state is essential to fostering unity and development. We must identify, develop and embrace competent and patriotic leaders whose desire to see the Nigerian state free and develop confidence in the country and get full control of her natural resources.

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