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NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONSHIP IN NIGERIA: A SOCIO-POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS RE-APPRAISAL

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ABSTRACT

This paper navigates on North-South relationship in Nigeria: A socio-political and religious reappraisal. Nigeria is a country with different cultural, linguistic, political and religious backgrounds which have interaction among themselves via trade, commerce and other levels of interactions that characterize human relations. One of the memorable periods of her history is footnoted by the event of 1st January, 1914, when Lord Lugard on behalf of Britain, amalgamated the Southern and Northern protectorates into one geographical entity called Nigeria. Forty-six years later in 1960, Nigeria became an independent state. Given that today, just over 107 years' amalgamation and 61 years after independence, the country is still grappling with national identity and has remained in controversy. This study takes a look at Nigeria's contemporary national issues especially those that emanated from the obvious domination of the polity by the Northern Hausa-Fulani extraction, lack of respect for true federalism and federal character principles. The study adopted qualitative and sociological methods to juxtapose the link between Nigeria's contemporary national issues and the 1914 amalgamation. It notes that before Europeans arrived in the territory that is now Nigeria, a number of different civilizations existed whose presence is still felt today. The Study found that this marriage call amalgamation made the political management of the country very difficult. It observed that the implication of the 1914 unification of the protectorates of Nigeria was for administrative convenience of the colonisers and not for the people. The study also observed that the emergence of ethnic militias; the struggle and agitations for recognition and self-determination; as well as religious, ethnic and communal conflicts; evident in the activities of Boko Haram and ISWA terrorist groups; Fulani Herdsmen, unknown Gun men and the Niger Delta militia groups and the more recent case of the revived movement of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), from the South -Eastern part of the Country are the consequences of the fusion of the protectorates of Nigeria. It further established that the root cause of some of these national issues to the disaffections, marginalisation and failure of the central government to fully integrate the people of these regions into the affairs of the state and recognise the fact that the country is made up of people of diverse ethnic nationalities, religious groups and located in different geographical environment and must be treated alike and equally. It concludes that to address the problem of North-South relationship in Nigeria, Nigerian leaders should de-emphasize ethnic consciousness and should encourage postings of civil servants to other areas outside their states of origin to encourage unity of purpose among others.

Keywords: Assessment, Relationship, Socio-political indices, Re-Appraisal, North-South Nigeria.

Introduction

Scholars and political analysts are of the view that, "the present political power sharing crisis and other sundry national issues are as a result of the failure of the British colonial authority not to have consulted with the diverse cultural, religious and ethnic grouping in the country before amalgamation" (Obiajulu et al., 2016:1-16).

> The continued insecurity issues in the form of Fulani herders and sedentary farmers' conflict; and banditry, kidnappings, armed robbery and terrorism; and previously in the form of agitations for resource control and militancy in the Niger Delta region are regarded by scholars as consequences of the forceful marriage called amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria by Lord Frederick Lugard in 1914. As a matter of fact, the political structure and superstructure built and left behind as a vestige by the colonial masters are often cited by scholars within and outside the country as the major source of the problems of the country. (Obiajulu et al., 2016:1-16).

In affirmative, Akinola (2013) cited in Oluwatobi (2018:35), argued that "the ethno-religious diversity of the various groups that presently constitute the modern day Nigeria was not given favourable consideration by the British colonisers before amalgamation or fusion of the Southern and Northern protectorates into one entity known as Nigeria." Akinola, thus, places the root cause of the political rivalry and disunity among the ethnic groups in the country to the unification of the protectorates of Nigeria. Complementing this stand point, Paul (2016:66) argued that, "the aftermath of colonialism also affected the country's socio-political development particularly that concerning the false marriage called amalgamation where different entities were fused together as one without the consent of the indigenous people whether it was comfortable for them to live together as one and an enlarged nation known as Nigeria today." He therefore, "leaves this to the Berlin Conference of 1884 to 1885 chaired by the pre-World War II Germany's Otto Von Bismarck often regarded today as the Balkanization of Africa by the European powers including Great Britain."

Akinjide (2001) and Abubakar (2003) argued that, "the merger of the protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria by the British, fundamentally, was for the administrative convenience of the British colonialists and not for the people as was alleged." They also maintained that, "the uneven development amongst the various ethnic nationalities especially, at the level of education that instigates the fear of dominance in the post-colonial polity to this fusion called amalgamation." All of these factors do not in any way undermine the fact that there were no organised precolonial traditional Nigerian states of the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo and the other minority ethnic groups before the invasion of the territory as alleged by the British colonisers. Suffice therefore to state that, "the process of British administration in what is known today as the Republic of Nigeria began with the annexation and proclamation of Lagos as a Crown Settlement in 1861 following the British Settlement Act of 1843 which established British Crown Colony System of Government in her invaded foreign territories, though, Lagos which was her base was not fully recognised as a crown colony until 1886" (Abubakar, 2003). Obiajulu et al. (2016) argued that, "before the coming of the British colonial masters, there were in existence diverse ethnic nationalities in both the Southern and Northern areas of the Niger and Benue rivers, among which were the Hausa, Fulani, Tiv, Nupe, Gwari, Koi, Kanuri, Igala in the Northern part, and in the South Eastern part of the country were the Igbos, Ibibio,

Efik, Ijaw, Ikwerre, Ogoja, and in the South Western part were the Yorubas, Edos, Itsekiris, Urhobos, Ukwuani, Ikas, Aniocha-Oshimili, Isokos, among other pre-colonial ethnic minority groups." It was believed that the reason for British intervention, first in Lagos, was not just philanthropic desire to destroy the Portuguese and Brazilians slave trade activities but to exploit the resources of the vast territories and beyond the Niger River. These factors undoubtedly influenced the composition of the traditional political society of the territory, as well as the contemporary thinking of the people of Nigeria. Hence, the national issues that have threatened the unity of the country in recent years.

The Pre-Colonial North-South of Nigeria

The pre-colonial territory known today as Nigeria was dominated by a number of powerful kingdoms, empires and villages among which are the Bini (Benin) Empire, the Islamic Kanemi Borno Empire in the North and West respectively; and the Igbo Kingdom of Onitsha in the South-East and the various Hausa-Fulani Kingdoms also in the North. According to Abubakar (2014):

> Archaeological record shows that there were vast civilisations and cultural advancement in the life-styles of these indigenous West African people before the coming of the Europeans. He described these kingdoms with their vast ancient civilisations and traced their developments to the striving trans-Sahara slave trade by the Europeans in the late 18th century. He also linked the popularities of these ancient societies to the abolition of slave trade; the consequence of which was the increased Western influence during the 19th Century and the scramble for Africa particularly in the case of the protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria in 1900.

Obiajulu et al. (2016) argued that:

The ethnic groups that made up the entity known today as Nigeria are over 350, each of which were autonomous and engaged in their respective political, social and economic life, as well as cherished identities prior to the coming of the European invaders. Among these traditional Nigerian ethnic nationalities are the Hausas, Fulanis, Tiv, Nupe, Wwari, Koi, Kanuri, Igala to mention but a few in the Northern part of the country, while in the South- Eastern part of the country are the Igbos, Ibibio, Efik, Ijaw, Ikwerre, Ogoja, among others. And in the South - Western part are the present days Delta, and Edo, and populated by the Yorubas, Edo, Itsekiri, Urhobos, Ukwani, Ika, Anioma, Oshimili, Isoko, etc.

Inoli (1979) argued that, "before the coming of the British colonialists, these ethnic groups were independent or self-governed. While the Hausa-Fulani system was centralised in nature, that of the Yoruba was semi-centralised and that of the Igbo was republican, egalitarian and decentralised in nature."

Traditionally, the pre-colonial Hausa-Fulani society lives in small villages and towns where they grow crops and raise livestock including cattle as well as engage in trade within their local environment and in distant towns across Africa. Odusanya (2018) interestingly stated that, "the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups are presently located in the Northern region of Nigeria dominated by the states of Sokoto, Kaduna, Kano and Katsina. She specifically identified the Hausa Fulani pre-colonial administrative system to be complicated and strongly centralised

with several political units covering large territorial areas, each of which were controlled by rulers (Kings or Emirs) and their subordinates." In the same manner, Obiajulu et al. (2016) stated that, "these elaborate structures, units or organs perform social roles with the central having link with them. Notably also were units or structures for law enforcement, tax collection and external defence, with Islam as their major religion. Apart from the major traditional Hausa states of Sokoto, Kaduna, Kano and Katsina, there were also the original Hausa states often regarded as the Hausa Bakwai of Daura, Kano, Zaria, Gobir, Katsina, Biram and Rano, as well as the BanzaBakwai states of Zamfara, Kebbi, Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Kwarafa and Ilorin" (Obiajulu et al., 2016:5).

"It was recorded that Fulani took over the political leadership of the Habe (i.e. Hausa states) in early 19th Century through jihad led by Usman Dan Fodio and subsequently established the Sokoto Caliphate with a well-structured centralized political system of government. The Caliphate was later divided into emirates and each was led by an Emir who has the responsibility of making laws, enforcing and maintaining peace and order in his domain. All the Emirs were made to pay tributes and allegiance to the Sultan of Sokoto who was the overall head of the Caliphate" (Maduawuchi, 2019).

> The Emirs were assisted in their administrative duties by other junior official such as the Waziri who was the head of the entire official; Galadima who was in-charge of the capital; the Madawaki or Madaki who was the commander of the army; the Dogari who was the head of police; the Maaji in charge of the treasury; the Sarkin Ruwa who was the river fishing official; the Sarkin Fada who was the head of the palace workers; and the Sarkin Pawa who was the head of the butchers. There was also a well-structured judicial system where Islamic law was the practice. The judicial administration was based on Sharia laws and was administered by Alkali Judges (Odusanya, 2018; Passnownow.com, 2020).

The pre-colonial Igbo groups

Apart from the pre-colonial account of the structure of the Hausa-Fulani group, there are also the accounts of the pre-colonial Igbo groups with semi-independent village developments all of which are at present located in the South-Eastern part of Nigeria.

> These Igbo communities developed from the previously scattered semi-independent villages into larger units that later developed into autonomous clans. The Igbo pre-colonial civilisation flourished from food gathering to food cultivation, as well as commercial activities which have often involved indigenous traders exchanging their locally produced goods for items from other parts of the country. An important stage in the development of the pre-colonial Igbo society was the ability of the society to invest in iron technology which was said to have first developed in Awka in the present day Anambra state. Blacksmithing was a well-known profession among the Awka people, Arochukwu, Onitsha and Oguta in the pre-colonial days (Ifemesia, 1979).

Obiajulu et al. (2016) noted that:

> The social organization of the pre-colonial Igbo society was based on distinct levels of kinship system, as well as social relations such as religion, marriage, confraternities or secret societies, wealth, etc. Practices like incest was treated with utmost disdain and regarded as "Nso-ani" which in local parlance means a "taboo". Unlike the Hausa-Fulani pre-colonial political structure, the Igbo society was segmented. The elders at all levels of government played prominent roles in their leadership; though they did not rule alone but along with the "Ofor" title holders (Council of Elders) which was the Igbo symbol of authority, right conduct, justice and link between the dead and the living; the "Ozor" title holders which is only for wealthy and influential men; and the age grade traditional group, etc. The Igbo precolonial political institution was said to be egalitarian and republican in nature and not centralised or semi-centralised like the Hausa-Fulanis and Yorubas respectively.

The Yoruba pre-colonial society

Falola et al. (1991) opines that, "like the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo pre-colonial societies, the Yoruba pre-colonial society located in the present day South Western part of the country has its own unique way of life before the coming of the British colonialists. There is this general belief that they are the descendent of "Oduduwa" who was supposed to have descended from heaven and his children from Ile-ife, the founders of the kingdoms and dynasties in Yoruba land." Like the Hausa-Fulani people, the Yoruba people of the old had a centralised system of government controlled by the kingdoms of Ife, Oyo and Bini, etc. Each of these kingdoms was controlled by monarchs known as the "Obas", though the title of Oba differs from community to community. For example, the Oba of Ife was known as the "Oni" of Ife while that of the old Oyo was known as the "Alaafin" of Oyo. Apart from the Obas, there were provincial or village Chiefs who exerted some administrative, military, and spiritual powers within their domain. The Obas were also supported by members of the Oba-in-council, occupational groups and secret societies. Like the other pre-colonial societies, the Yoruba people were also engaged in some commercial activities on arts and culture. The very fertile land of the area made agriculture to flourish and the location of land along the savannah belt made the land suitable for commercial enterprise in salt and leather goods that were sold in Yoruba markets.

The change in culture and tradition from ancient traditions to European culture

It is important to note that the conquest of these pre-colonial Nigerian communities and the subsequent establishment of British authority changed the history of these ancient communities. With the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates of Nigeria and the introduction of indirect rule system, the stories of these pre-colonial societies changed completely. This change in culture and tradition from ancient traditions to European culture is what the paper infers as the root cause of the country's problems. First, the traditional rulers; the native chiefs, the Obas and Emirs following the introduction of indirect rule system were regarded as the integral part of the British colonial government in the protectorates. This system exposed the traditional rulers to the extent that they exercised so much power than they would have ordinarily done. Extant literature revealed that the indigenous Nigerian colonial gazette or adopted chiefs, Emirs and Obas were involved in arbitrary use of powers either against their opponents' wives, lands, etc. This exposed the myths and sacredness surrounding the people's tradition and culture. At independence in 1960, colonial influence

and legacy has strongly influenced the indigenous rulers that emerged as the new political leaders of the new state of Nigeria.

The struggle for supremacy, corruption, tribal or ethnic politics, and nepotism or favouritism dominated the post-colonial politics of the country. This era was also truncated by military rule that existed between 1966 and 1999 when the military eventually handed power back to the civilians. Though, there was a short return of power to civil rule in 1979 to 1983 before the present day uninterrupted democratic rule in the history of the country. According to Max (2009), "Nigeria has over the years experienced several successful and failed military interventions in politics, first with the 1966 coup and counter-coup by some military men from the Igbo extraction including Late Major Kaduna Nzeogu, Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna, among others."

> On 28 July 1966, there was a counter-coup which saw Major-General Gowon as the successor of Major-General Ironsi. There was also another military coup popularly known as the "Dimka coup" which led to the assassination of General Murtala Muhammed and the emergence of Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo as the Head of State from 1976 to 1979 who handed over power to a democratically elected President Shehu Shagari whose second term in office as the president of the Federal Republic was interrupted by another military coup in August 1983 led by General Muhammadu Buhari. In December 1985, there was an alleged coup known as Vatsa Coup where several military officers were arrested, tried, convicted and eventually executed for conspiring to overthrow General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida who initially over threw the regime of General Buhari. This regime was followed by another, popularly known as General San Abacha regime which overthrew the Interim Government led by Chief Ernest Shonekan in 1994. The demise of General Abacha in 1998 saw another regime led by General Abdulsalami Abubakar who is today known as the founder of the present day democracy enjoyed by the present crops of Nigerian politicians (Max, 2009).

The Amalgamation, its impacts and Emerging Issues in Nigeria

On January 1, 1914, Lord Frederick Lugard, the Governor of both the Northern Nigeria Protectorate and the colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, signed a document consolidating the two, thereby creating the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. The consequences of this unceremonious marriage known as amalgamation, though with some noticeable benefits have over the years impacted negatively on the socio-political dealings among the diverse ethnic groups in the country. However, the post independent state of Nigeria has experienced one problem or another since her birth by the British colonialists. Most remarkable of all has been the occasional agitations for state and local government creation by the minority ethnic groups in the country. Critics have always slammed this event of 1914 to be a total failure and the source of some of the problems occasionally experienced in the country in recent years. One of such critics, Ogbu Charles, a columnist with the Guardian Nigeria Newspaper on 6 February 2017 opines that, "every problem Nigeria has ever faced and will ever face can be traced to that demonic event of 1914 when the British merged the Southern and Northern protectorates into one country that is today known as Nigeria". "The British had only one thing in mind while carrying out this marriage called amalgamation: their administrative and economic convenience, nothing more." To him:

> This action of the British through her representative, Lord Frederick Lugard, can be compared to a man who intentionally bought herbivorous and carnivorous animals from the market and decided to put them in one cage for his convenience to transport them home knowing full well that herbivores feed only on herbs, harmless and easy going while carnivores are the opposite and feed on flesh, aggressive and violent in often cases. Such is the marriage called amalgamation because the only concern of the colonialists was economic and administrative convenience and not minding the aftermaths or consequences that will follow the merger after independence. Moreover, the One Nigeria slogan is one of the biggest and organised lies we have ever conceived after independence considering the emerging national issues occasioned by amalgamation since from independence till date (Ogbu, 2017).

The amalgamation and the political management of Nigeria

This marriage called amalgamation made the political management of the country very difficult. It created a lot of challenges in recent times. This means that the creation of the country by the British colonialists without the consent of the people has been the bane of the country's political crisis. The contemporary effects of amalgamation, therefore, cannot be overemphasized considering the socio-political and religious issues that have engulfed the nations over the years. This notion was complemented by Akinola (2013) cited in Oluwatobi (2018:35) when he argued that, "the 1914 unification of the ethno religious diversity of the various groups that presently constitute the modern day Nigeria is a mistake made by the British colonisers." In the same manner Akinjide (2000), (2001) in Oluwatobi (2018:36) argued that, "the implication of the 1914 unification of the protectorates of Nigeria was for administrative convenience of the colonisers and not for the people, the impact of which is still felt in the contemporary Nigeria society." In a similar manner Abubakar (2016:2) argued that:

> The emergence of ethnic militias; the struggle and agitations for recognition and self-determination; as well as religious, ethnic and communal conflicts; all of which are evident in the activities of Boko Haram and ISWA terrorist groups; and the Niger Delta militia groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta Liberation Front (NDLF), Niger Delta People's Volunteer Forces (NDPVF), Niger Delta Revolutionary Crusaders (NDRC), Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), all of which emanated from the oil rich South-South region of the country are the consequences of the fusion of the protectorates of Nigeria. There is also the presence of the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the more recent case of the revived movement of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) both from the South Eastern part of the Country as consequences.

Analysts, historians and political scientists alike have had to situate the root cause of some of these national issues to the disaffections, marginalisation and failure of the central government to fully integrate the people of these regions into the affairs of the state and recognise the fact that the country is made up of people of diverse ethnic nationalities, religious groups and located in different geographical environment and must be treated alike

and equally. Some alleged or argued that the attitude of the Nigerian leaders from the northern region and their allies from the south is inherited from the British supremacist legacies. Indisputably, the forceful marriage called amalgamation and the attitudes of Nigeria leaders of the past and present is the problem of the country today. This has exacerbated the fear of dominance among the ethnic groups in the post-colonial epoch.

Consciousness of identity initiated by the colonialists

The daily realities of the merger are clearly felt in recent time in distinct forms and natures. For instance:

> The lingering inter group and intra group domination in the country over the years has been traced to the consciousness of identity initiated by the colonialists, evident in the occasional challenges of ethnic divides and religious bigotry in the country. This has continued to pose challenges that threatened the corporate existence of the nation over time. Politically, it has created distrust among the ethnic nationalities that found themselves in the same state or local government areas, as evident in the 1997 Ode-Itsekiri communal crisis often referred to as the Warri Crisis, a clash between the Ijaw and the Itsekiri and to a lesser extent, the Urhobo ethnic groups in Delta state triggered by the announcement made by the then Military Administrator, Colonel David Dung in a broadcast to the state that the headquarter of the newly created Warri South Local Government Area was to be located in Ogbe-Ijoh, an Ijaw community (Adebayo, 2003).

Another obvious example was the Arogbo Ijaw-Ilaje conflict of 1998-1999 which was caused by an unresolved land and boundary dispute, struggle for resource control, fear of domination, marginalisation, religious leadership crisis and quest for political autonomy from the conflict between the two groups. "Also identified as the cause of conflict in the country are the existence of artificial boundaries along ethnic lines across the Federation, evidenced in the Ugep-Idoma 1992 crisis; Itsekiri-Ijaw 1995-1997 crisis; Ife-Modekeke 1997 crisis; and Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba in Sagamu 1999 crisis. Others include Kaduna and Kanu ethno-religious riot 2000- 2001; Aguleri and Umuleri conflict in 2001; and the Fulani and Berom; and Tiv-Jukun conflicts in 2001 respectively" (Ayoyo, 2015: 321).

According to Otite (1999) and Albert (2001), "these violent community crises are now part of the regular features of the social life of the people from independence up to the recent days political Nigeria." In another development, Otite and Ogionwo (2006) cited in Ayoyo (2015:321) argued that, "one of the principal causes of social conflicts among groups in the present day Nigeria is occasion by the growing inequality in the distribution of resource endowments among the people. This was attributed to the failure of the Federal Government to respect the principles of federal character and true federalism in the distribution of political appointments and allocation of revenues derived from natural resources to the States and Local government areas of the Federation."

Impunity exhibited by the Fulani nomads

In recent time, conflict arises from the impunity exhibited by the Fulani nomads, a reflection of the hereditary legacy planted by the British colonial masters who saw the Hausa-Fulani

tribe as a special group of people, and as such favoured them fervently during colonial era, creating the impression that the country belongs to them:

> Rather than addressing horrifying menace orchestrated by the Fulani herders against sedentary farmers and local communities across the federation, the federal government engages itself in unwarranted arrests and malicious confrontations of some notable individuals and non-combatant socio-cultural groups such as Ibrahim El-Zalzaky and his wife, and members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) respectively, amongst others. Most provocative of all was the unalloyed support of the Federal Government failed plan to establish Ruga settlements (a special settlement for Fulani herders) across the states of the Federation by Miyetti Allah Kauta Hore, generally referred to as Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), a socio-economic and cultural group from the Northern part of the country. It was alleged in some quarters as a conspiracy to indirectly establish Fulani local government in all the states of the Federation (Oluka et al., 2019: 1267-1270).

It is alleged by critics and observers of the Nigerian situation that the Federal Government, security agencies and Fulani herdsmen conspire to perpetrate countless attacks and killings of sedentary farmers and other Nigerian citizens, the consequence of this gave birth to the agitation for restructuring of the country's political apparatus and the security outfits.

> The prime of which is the establishment of Amotekum security outfit by the Governors of South-West states of the federation purposely to serve as a counter unit to combat the alleged conspiracy and terrorist attacks on non-Fulani tribes and farmers across the region. In other words, the intent is to establish a security network that will be working in collaboration and as a complementary network with the police and other security agencies to combat security challenges across the region. It has been argued that the governors of the six states of the region, Kyode Fayemi of Ekiti State; Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State; Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State, Seyi Makinde of Oyo State; Gbenga Oyetola of Osun State and Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State agreed to establish and jointly fund the security network (Bayo, 2020; Okojie, 2020).

Religious and Political Re -assessment of North-South Relationship in Nigeria

With all emphasis made so far, it is obvious that since Nigeria came into being on January 1, 1914, intolerance and struggle for religious and political superiority have been one of the problems of the country, especially with Muslims in the North. The contemporary crisis and fights that are engulfing Nigeria are instances of the long initiated struggle for religious and political superiority.

In political set ups, one observes endless insatiability by Northerners to rule or govern. During elections, people who win are not the real winners but the cleverest riggers. Unemployed youths are paid and used as thugs to assassinate political opponents. In fact, this is the latest in the list of decadence in our politics today. The news of political assassination here and there dominates the newspapers, radio and television. Human life is valued less than political goals and so on. Also, Section 38 of the 1979 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides

for freedom of Religion. This provision, no doubt, was made in view of the fact that Nigeria is a multi-religious country. The overall implication of the provision is that the Nigerian Christians as well as the Nigerian Muslims and of course the entire country, irrespective of religious identity, is free to manifest, and propagate their religious beliefs in worship, teaching, practice and observance, either alone or in a community with others.

But on the contrary, Northern Nigerian Muslims have over the years, developed a kind of aggressive and intolerant attitude towards Christians in the south which advertently or inadvertently is aimed at obliterating Christianity. The situation is that of determined commitment on the part of the Northern Muslims to subjugate Christians in the South and convert Nigeria to Islamic state. Where then lays our freedom as enshrined in our constitution?

Recommendations

Any resolution of the Nigeria's problems must first of all address the antagonism created by 1914 amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria. The government must revisit recommendations made previously by Nigerian scholars, analysts, constitutional conferences and custodians of Nigerian history as reiterated below:

As a matter of urgency, the government should organise another Sovereign National Conference devoid of any interference from the incumbent government, to decide with utmost sincerity whether to disintegrate into separate entities or to remain as one Nigeria. In the affirmative, the government should address the emerging socio-political issues, such as marginalisation of the minority ethnic groups in the country if it wants to sustain its unity and remain as one Nigeria. This can only be achieved by addressing the imbalances caused by the demarcation of states and local government areas. For instance, the Yorubas in Kwara and Kogi states should be removed from these states respectively and merge with their kinsmen in the South-West of Nigeria.

Rather than propagating ethnic consciousness inherited from the British colonialists, the leaders of the country should address this issue through respect for provisions of the constitution of the Federal Republic, particularly the Federal Character Principles and True Federalism. In a nut shell, the central government should allow decentralisation and allow the states or regional government to explore and control their resources and pay royalty to the central government at Abuja, Nigeria. In other words, there should be decentralisation of power, equal rights to all citizens before the law, equal opportunity for employment anywhere in the country, equal rights to protection of life and property, and significant others. These are likely to de-intensify the unhealthy agitations and struggles for resource control across the federation, especially from the Niger Delta region.

The spirit of black consciousness or brotherhood should be encouraged rather than propagation of ethnic consciousness which has dominated the socio-political environment of the nation. Nigerians should see themselves as one rather than differentiating themselves along cultural, religious and ethnic lines. For this marriage known as amalgamation to be sustained without disaffections, the government should also discourage a situation where those who feel their tribe is superior to that of the others jostle for state or political powers in order to control the nation's resources. This has created problem in governance, therefore should be eliminated from the Nigerian system in order to avoid a situation whereby some

tribalists place their personal interests above national interest. All the citizens should revisit some of their ethnic agenda, notions, aims or even their objectives, which might be very inimical to unity and peaceful coexistence of the society.

Conclusion

The Southern and Northern protectorates known today as Nigeria, a name coined by Flora Louise Shaw, a British journalist, writer, and Lord Frederick Lugard' spouse, undeniably, has a unique and peculiar situation among the other contemporary states of Africa. Like the other Anglophone countries of Africa, the major reason for the acquisition of the territory of Nigeria by the British colonialists was economic expansionism. Geographically, it is favourably located along the Northern hemisphere with 5,529.20mi (i.e. 8,898.39Km) South of the North Pole and 691.15mi (i.e. 1.112.30km) North of the equator. It has an estimated annual rainfall ranges from 381cm along the coast and 64cm or less in the far north and surrounded by Niger Republic in the North, Republic of Cameroon in the East, Benin Republic in the West and Chad Republic in the North-East (Yakubu&Ntim, 2014:1). These unique attributes of the precolonial Nigerian society were the prime reasons for the acquisition of the territory by the British colonial masters. This situation no doubt, changed the history of the country as well as complicated her domestic events from 1900 up to her independence in October 1, 1960. The post-colonial political history has been complicated by the initial contact with the British colonialists and imperialists, hence, the mixed feelings or critiques against the 1914 unification of the protectorates of Nigeria.

By implication and to a large extent, the 1914 unification or amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria left behind an unsolved conflict of ethnic and tribal consciousness among the diverse ethnic nationalities that were forcefully unified by the actions and inactions of the imperialists. Also worthy of note was the divide and rule policy initiated by the colonisers after 1914 amalgamation that is reinforced in the post-colonial era. The consequence of this is mistrust between the ethnic groups, thereby widening the gap that has existed between them. Suffice therefore to state categorically that, the initial coerced marriage with the British colonialists that lasted from 1914 to October 1, 1960 when the nation gained her independence left behind a chronic and damaging legacy that till date, is very much visibly unpropitious, counter and anti-democratic in nature. In other words, impunity, pretence and disaffection became the bane or threat to the nation's political unity. From the foregoing analysis, it could be said that Nigeria's national issues are rooted, as it were, from the "amalgamation" of the protectorates of the Southern and Northern Nigeria. It is a total political blunder and not in the interest of Nigerians as they were not consulted.

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