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NIGERIA SINCE 1960: A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN NATION-BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

Terhemba Wuam

Abstract

This paper is a study on independence and the development process in post-colonial Nigeria. It addresses the challenges that running a diverse and new nation have posed. The paper considers the nature and character of indigenous leadership in Nigeria in the period preceding independence by evaluating the entrenched traditional chieftaincy elite and the emerging Western educated political elite. The paper shows how the traditional elite were displaced by the western political elite who took over from the British colonial authority. It shows how at independence and in the period leading to it, the challenges that the political elite would face in the First Republic were already manifesting in the dearth of adequate manpower, financial resources and the ethno-regional composition of the country. Additionally, the paper addresses, how the different power elites – the military and the political class – have attempted to build a nation by resolving the problems and challenges that Nigeria has faced since 1960. The paper also offers a comparative study of other nations in order to place in the right context the nation's achievements and shortcomings.

Introduction

To give perspective to what has been happening in Nigeria and Africa in the past fifty years, it is essential to take into cognizance the state of affairs in the country at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Nigeria and her counterparts in sub-Saharan Africa relative to other parts of the world were far less developed and apart from the coastal communities, the interior was yet to be penetrated by outside influences.¹ Beginning from the middle of the nineteenth century, however, contact between peoples of the Nigeria area and Britain was enhanced and facilitated by the legitimate trade following the abolition of the slave trade. British and

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European explorers and traders were hence drawn into the interior of the country and with the penetration of the interior; Britain through the Royal Niger Company came to increase her influence in the area thereby establishing conditions for eventual colonization, which in Nigeria and most parts of Africa lasted barely fifty years and was on the whole the most short-lived exercise in empire building, dismantled as soon as it was set up. The European empires in Africa therefore pale in significance when contrasted with those in other parts of the world. The American colonies, for example, existed under British rule for over one hundred and fifty years, and India was under British colonialism from the late eighteenth century through the whole of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century and experienced British rule longer than Nigeria and most parts of Africa.² The years under which Nigeria experienced colonialism as short as they were according to a number of scholars were what laid the foundations for modern Nigeria with development in the country continuing along the lines established by the British.³ The point of interest here is that in some parts of Nigeria the intellectual comprehension of the basic tenets and principles that govern the operations of modern states were still being inculcated and were yet to be grasped and assimilated by a significant proportion of the citizens of the new country when it became independent.

In this sense, African states like Nigeria are unlike European, American or Asian nations with reference to chronological age. Because of the relatively short period in which they started the process of acquiring modern norms, these newer states lacked the skills, structures, institutions and intellectual resources available to states which experienced colonialism, exploitive as the system was – or independent states which zealously pursued westernization starting from the nineteenth century. Thus while African countries exist within the same century as those on other continents, it is illustrative to note that the knowledge necessary to drive forward the modern nation-state was by 1960 not evenly distributed within all countries of the world. Nigeria like other African states started the journey to modern nationhood later than other continents, as such African nations' development is invariably behind states in Asia which gained independence within the same period or even later than African ones.

The paper seeks to provide a guide to understanding the current state of development in Nigeria by linking it with development in African states on a comparative basis with other parts of the world. It focuses on the problems and challenges of nation-building that Nigeria faced, some of which were unique to the country and others that were less so, and how

within the past fifty years, the nation's leadership acting within the ability of the leaders and that of the citizens which were in the view of this paper unquestionably limited have been to make the substantial advances that the country has recorded. The paper argues that to expect more than what has been achieved can only arise from the unrealistic expectations of individuals and groups whose failure is an inability to understand the context and perspective of the Nigerian reality at independence in terms of limited resources and skills. Making comparison between Nigeria and Asian countries without taking cognizance of the nineteenth and early twentieth century realities of these entities defeats the point. To address its central theme, the paper looks at indigenous leadership and society in the period before independence. It also considers the role and limitations of the western educated political elite who began to rule nationally from 1951, and concludes by addressing some of the national questions that Nigeria has grappled with since independence.

Indigenous Society and Leadership in the Period Preceding Independence

Indigenous society and leadership in Nigeria was at varying degrees of organization and development. Some parts of Nigeria were more advanced than others in terms of political organization and economic and material development. In this regard, the northern parts of the country formerly under the suzerainty of the Sokoto caliphate were much more advanced and indeed had the potential in both its advanced military organization and social technology which incorporated a high level of literacy to initiate and conquer much of the Nigerian area or dominate affairs within the region in a continuously expanding manner in the nineteenth century.⁴ On the Atlantic seaboard, the city-states of Calabar and the Niger Delta were also well organized, but limited in scale compared to their Benin and Oyo counterparts. The southern states and kingdoms shared the same fate of not being literate societies despite more than four centuries of the Atlantic trade. For until the establishment of the British protectorate over Lagos and the Oil Rivers area, no schools were established in the area. That is, there were no attempts by the indigenous community to acquire from and replicate the more advanced civilization of their trading partners as was the case in the northern area where trade with the Arabs had brought with it literacy which was portent among the scholarly and clerical class.⁵

Although Nigerian groups in pre-colonial time did not exist in a state of "savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them"⁶ the societies in most parts of Nigeria and sub-Saharan

Africa were not advanced educationally, scientifically and technologically as those in other parts of the world. As such, some nations that were colonized as Nigeria was, had higher levels of material and intellectual development at the point of colonization, and in most of these cases because colonization lasted longer, the skills necessary to continue building these nations when they became independent along a western modernist path were already ingrained in the western-trained indigenous elite who assumed control after independence. In this class of countries are the North African and Arab states of Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria; and the Asian nations of India, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Hong Kong among others.⁷ These countries building on and incorporating western civilization and precepts into their already advanced traditional societies for longer durations than those of sub-Saharan African states were able to after independence became much more advanced than countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

In Northern Nigeria, where conditions elsewhere could have applied to the caliphate system, the failure of the political elite to recognize the value of the superior education, economic and social systems as well as the technology of the west was coloured by resistance to Christian missions which were the forerunners in establishing schools, and thus, the former caliphate societies failed to embrace what would, if it had been coupled with their already advanced systems have pushed them faster along the path of modernization and its benefits.⁸ Even though the north's case of resistance to westernization is not unique, examples of countries that consciously embraced westernization, even with advanced indigenous civilisations, by recognizing that the knowledge of the West was vital to advances in the modern world includes Japan, which decided to westernize even as it was an independent country in the nineteenth century after a period of contemplative hesitation⁹ and, other nations for example include Turkey and Thailand.¹⁰ In the case of these nations, because they consciously chose to westernize, they did it without the cultural baggage of feeling that something was being imposed upon them, which they had to resist. Also these nations were able to make conscious choices which they felt were compatible with precepts in their indigenous societies. In Nigeria, when the north is contrasted with the south, which because it had no formal central religion and little in terms of literacy offered the least resistance to westernization and heartily embraced western education which in many parts of the world today is the universal standard for building modern prosperous states and societies from China to India, Europe, the United States, Russia, Turkey, Iran and Latin America.

With the British conquest of the area over with the unification of all hitherto independently existing groups into a united Nigeria by 1914, the format adopted by Britain to govern the newly created political entity was also one that would have implication on the future development of Nigeria in the period after 1960. Relying on the system of 'indirect rule' that they had fine-tuned in India, the British sustained the institution of traditional rulers to achieve their political and economic objectives in Nigeria.¹¹ In this manner, the traditional institution and its operators were utilized as the main avenue for the development of local political capacity with the requisite knowledge and skills to understand modern bureaucratic administration which was radically different from what was previously obtainable in the pre-colonial era. Dzurgba, however notes that colonialism and its system of administration when combined with what was obtainable in traditional Nigerian societies created not the need for democracy but rather further entrenched autocratic sensibilities, where power flowed from above and not from the people.¹² As such, many parts of Nigeria had no political experience of democracy and its tenets and how it was practised until the 1950s. The historical experience and awareness of many Nigerians were limited to authoritarian domination. The most important lesson drawn from the practice of 'indirect rule' in Nigeria was that apart from the isolated case of elective assemblies in Calabar and Lagos before 1950, the traditional leadership elite were due to their close association with British rulers the group possessed of the most practical experience in the business of running a government. This was so even when considered against the background of their limited educational attainment.¹³

The traditional leadership elite through their association with the British residents and district officers had primacy in running native administrations and traditional councils in the country. They therefore had substantial experience in grassroots administration, tax collection, school administration, development of infrastructure, agricultural supervision, maintenance of law and order, and the development and management of markets and the economy. When colonialism ended and the British departed, power and authority to supervise future developments in the country was however not handed over to this category of Nigerians who working closely with the British had acquired much in terms of modern administration. A new national elite, the educated elite who had been the vanguard of nationalist aspiration for independence were, through their lobbying and agitation for inclusion, self-rule and eventual independence incorporated into positions of authority in the colonial structure in the last ten years of colonialism.

This process had the concomitant consequence of creating friction between the traditional leadership elite and the emerging western educated political leadership elite.¹⁴ The traditional elite were not prepared to be subservient to their fellow Nigerians, who simply because of superior education were stepping into the shoes of the British district officers, and neither were the educated elite prepared to countenance the sharing of power with the traditional elite, considering that as Nigerians they could relate directly with the masses without necessarily seeking recourse to a system based on intermediation. While countries like India, found a way round this crisis, Nigeria phased out the native authority system and with it the institutional memory, accumulated skills and knowledge generated over the colonial period were dissipated.¹⁵

The Western Educated Political Elite and National Leadership since 1951

A distinguishing feature of the political leadership in the period after 1960 when Nigeria became independent is that all of them had some modicum of western education, at least training up to teacher's college or secondary school level. Almost all of the major political actors were also children of the colonial era; born under colonialism, and experiencing the passing of traditional Africa and the emergence of modern Africa. Because of the fact of least resistance to western education in Southern Nigeria, the south had a greater number of the educated elite than their northern counterpart. The leadership experience of the educated southerners was also greater than that of the northerners due to their greater involvement in local government administration, politics, journalism, education, business, the civil service and a more internationalist disposition. The Nigerian educated elite of the 1950s and 1960s were usually the first generation or pioneers in holding political office before and after 1960. There were rarely cases of predecessors, rarely any modicum of knowledge on how things were done was handed down to the first generation of Nigerian political leaders by more experienced compatriots. This dire scenario was not even mitigated by prior practical experience in running or managing medium or large scale operations in government or private endeavours for many of the major political figures of the 1950s and 1960s. This categorization of the western educated and political elite is also inclusive of the Nigerian military elite which after 1966 were to play a dominant and significant role in the political direction of the country.¹⁶

The real take-off period in which the educated elite became the emergent ruling class in Nigeria is traceable not to 1960 but 1951 when

the process of grooming those who were to take over from the British began. Prior to 1951, despite the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914, the regions essentially operated as semi-autonomous units and Nigerians from these regions before then had not learnt to work and co-exist together or see the bigger picture of a united Nigeria. By 1951, the British were becoming conscious of the wind of change and largely were often found to be facilitating the process of transferring power to nationals of colonial territories following India's independence in 1948 than obstructing the process. In Nigeria for instance, motions for independence were muted and defeated severally by Nigerians themselves, large segments of which felt that they lacked the tools necessary for meaningful participation in the modern Nigerian state.¹⁷ It is also rare since then, for Nigerians to express this sense of intellectual modesty to the question of national ability or otherwise to undertake certain actions in national life, even if the case of the first instance was influenced more by practical political consideration. Further, expressions of honest modesty in the ability of the nation as expressed by General Yakubu Gowon were not exactly understood by Nigerians, and misconstrued as a deficiency on the part of General Gowon, who fully comprehended the context of his statement that the country's problem was what best to do with the money Nigeria had and not that it was in excess of requirement.¹⁸

The Macpherson Constitution of 1951, though short-lived, was the first of the tentative steps towards the fulfilment of the leadership aspiration and desire for participation in the national affairs of their country by the new class of Nigerians that were by their education possessors of knowledge not available to their parents, and for that matter, knowledge that was not accessible to more than eighty percent of their countrymen and women.¹⁹ Though the situation in Nigeria was unlike that in Tanzania where at independence, the country had only twelve graduates, the difference was not significant.²⁰ The leadership challenge at independence in many countries in Africa was that a significant proportion of the educated people – the British colonial administrators – who knew how the system they had instituted was run and what its requirements were for it to continue to function effectively left the countries that they had helped to bring into existence.²¹ Cases where a significant number of the indigenous elite were in appreciable numbers at independence are limited to examples like India, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. India indeed had modern universities established from 1857, more than 90 years before independence in 1948.²² In Zimbabwe and South Africa, those who had hitherto dominated the country to the exclusion of the black majority did not leave with their

knowledge and skills, but stayed back to work with the new political leadership, which was itself supported by a rather large indigenous cadre of well educated elite. Growth in these countries therefore ought to be faster than in countries such as Nigeria.

While the Macpherson Constitution brought the regional political elite into positions of tutelage in modern national political administration only in 1951, a mere nine years before independence, in India for example, the future pioneer prime minister of independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru was already a congressman by 1912, a full thirty six years before Indian independence in 1948. Before him, his father had also been firmly involved at the top echelon of Indian politics and was a leading member of the Indian Congress Party.²³ Given the relatively little experience of Nigerian pre-independence and post-colonial politicians on the national scene therefore, it is quite instructive to assert that many were certainly unprepared for the tasking demands of holding national offices for which only their imaginations had given them inklings of what to expect.²⁴ The future prime minister of Nigeria, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa in 1951 found his job as a minister to be "new, puzzling and demanding... I am very very busy, reading reading reading all the time, started on my new interesting job. It will as I see be some time before I get to settle in it".²⁵ The Nigerian ministers, however, from 1951 to 1960 achieved quite a lot by working in close collaboration with their more experienced and often better educated British colonial counterparts.²⁶

With regards to the Nigerian bureaucracy in the past fifty years, even though it lacked the quality of the British colonial bureaucracy being a new thing to Nigerians, its achievements are those of greater reach now and phenomenal expansion.²⁷ The expansion of the bureaucracy and the political elite in the years after independence indeed calls for a comparative assessment with the British bureaucratic and political elite that superintended events in the country in the colonial era. This comparison is important because to understand the achievements of the independent Nigerian political elite it is ideal to place it against the achievement of the past, which is essentially one of a continuum and not a cessation or clean break with colonial history once independence was achieved. This linkage with colonial antecedents was made clear by Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa who identified what needs keeping in focus—the country's colonial intellectual heritage – seeing Lord Frederick Lugard as the country's "greatest administrator".²⁸ To comprehend the achievements of the post-independent bureaucratic and political elite is to understand their spirit of optimism in building upon colonial legacies to initiate the opening of ever rising number of schools, colleges and

universities, power stations, roads and bridges, hospitals, markets and general expansion in all sectors on a scale of ambition that British colonial administrators would have reined in. Thus what they lacked in experiences and skills they made up in a true patriotic spirit and ambition. However, in aligning with the past, it makes sense to observe that if secondary schools had not existed during the colonial era, universities and more schools would not have been opened by Nigerians in the 1960s onward, nor would certain industrial and economic complexes have arisen as the skills to man these would simply not have existed.

While the British were around, however, some of the challenges that would affect the direction of national life after 1960 were effectively kept under check or integrated into constitutional arrangements leading to independence.²⁹ With independence attained the practical consideration for governing a very diverse nation as Nigeria and its associated problems became the lot of the political elite to contend with and resolve. These among but not exclusive to the following were: the dearth of adequate and capable manpower, low economic growth and meagre financial resources, and the ethnic, religious and regional differences that became political differences. The dominant political parties of the 1950s-1960s were formed along regional and ethnic lines in all parts of the country.³⁰ The struggle to resolve these issues in the preceding fifty years – 1960-2010 – have continually engaged the Nigerian political and leadership elite. How well they resolved these national questions is answered in the affirmative in very broad strokes as can be allowed in a paper of this length.

National Questions and Solutions since 1960

Nation-Building and National Cohesion

Much of the period of Nigeria's existence since 1960 has been spent in nation-building efforts, which has taken time and energy from pursuing economic growth. This was a factor that other nations elsewhere did not have to contend with in the twentieth century especially those outside Africa. In India for instance, apart from the dismemberment of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan and later Bangladesh, nation-building and national cohesion has not been a divisive issue and has therefore not drawn attention away from pursuing objectives of national economic growth and provision of basic social services and amenities for the people.³¹ Nigeria's major nation-building challenge was the civil war of 1967-1970. Crucially, Nigeria fought the war and came out with no victor, no vanquished.³² It is possible to hypothesize that few nations

had reconciled themselves as well as Nigeria did after the war. In America, some of the objectives for which war was waged were only reaching resolutions in the 1960s after the war ended in 1865.³³

Nigeria's major attempt to resolve the crises affecting nation-building and national cohesion was resolved by state creation first initiated in 1963 with the creation of the Mid-West state, and expanded in 1967 by Yakubu Gowon with subsequent creations in 1976, 1989, 1991 and 1996. Of the 1967 exercise Ayandele marks its significance thus:

By far the most important measure of the "New Nigerians" is the division of the country into twelve states, the high priority status of which is clear from the fact that the states were created simultaneously... The administrative, political and constitutional advantages for the country of dividing the three Regions – North, West and East – into smaller, almost equal and balanced units were beyond dispute.³⁴

State creation despite the fact of its proliferation has fulfilled the need for self-determination in the Nigerian federation without the fear of domination by the major ethnic groups over the minorities.³⁵ In large measure this has weakened regional and ethnic hegemony as many of the states relate directly with the federal administration and other states in the federation. In addition, the issues of ethnicity and religious exclusivity have received the attention of the leadership and Nigerian policy makers by the development of conditions that make the formation of political parties to conform to a national character, with membership drawn from all parts of the country.³⁶ Other initiatives include introduction of the federal character policy and initiative such as National Youth Service which have been developed as peculiar responses to national issues by Nigerians working together to resolve national political problems.³⁷ Oyovbaire has also provided an excellent exposition of how the Nigerian governing class has articulated and implemented changes designed to strengthen the Nigerian federation and make it responsive to the wellbeing of all Nigerians. It is on these structures implemented since the 1970s that Nigeria has continued to build on viz. "the executive presidency, federalism and democracy, political representation, and political recruitment".³⁸

Thus, even though the British amalgamation of 1914 brought into existence the Nigerian state, it is the actions of Nigerians in the past fifty years that have actually given spirit and character to the existence of a viable nation-state through the various initiatives tried and implemented

since 1960. Some of these have worked others have not, and the country is still working on the right political and constitutional models upon which achievements so far recorded in the task of nation-building and national-cohesion will be sustained. Towards the objective of nation-building, Nigerians have largely exhibited the spirit of understanding, tolerance and pluralism for one another religious, ethnic and cultural sensibilities.³⁹

Education and Socio-Economic Development

Intellectual development as noted by Prof. L.H. Ofusu-Appiah “is a slow process”.⁴⁰ Africa because it started late in modern times along this path lacked a critical mass of educated people by the 1960s when most of the continent’s countries were becoming independent from colonial rule. For the next fifty years, therefore, while other countries and continents had proceeded to higher degrees of economic and intellectual growth, Africa was rightly pre-occupied with the task of educating her people who were over eighty percent unlettered.⁴¹ Countries which are compared with African ones like South Korea, which had a lesser GNP per capita than Nigeria in 1960 had an educated population that was over 80% literate, more developed infrastructure and a national history of over five hundred years.⁴² This fact is upheld by the World Bank which acknowledged the East Asians superior human capital as follows:

The East Asian economies had a head start in terms of human capital and have since widened their lead over other developing economies. In the 1960s, levels of human capital were already higher in the HPAEs [High-performing Asian economies] than other low- and middle-income economies. [Asian] Governments built on this base by focusing education spending on the lower grades; first by providing universal primary education, later by increasing availability of secondary education. Rapid demographic transitions facilitated these efforts by slowing the growth in the number of school-age children and in some cases causing absolute decline. Declining fertility and rapid economic growth meant that, even when education as a share of GDP remained constant, more resources were available per child.⁴³

Nigeria in contrast to the now high performing Asian economies with which she is sometimes compared with had by 1965 a primary school enrolment of thirty two percent and a secondary school enrollment of five percent – about eighty percent of those who will live and work in Nigeria for the next forty years not having the skills that South Koreans already had and a national history of less than fifty years.⁴⁴ The import

of this being that education is a crucial factor for economic development with emphasis on “brain-power rather than brawn-power”⁴⁵ and the mere prevalence of natural resources. Nigeria also had scarcely any developed infrastructure in 1960 and contained a growing population, instead of a slowing one as in the case of Korea, and consequently fewer workers than the latter. Considering these two nations, it is quite clear which would sprint forward with assurance; and which as a toddler will crawl for most of the next half century. Fifty years after, it is still important to point out that Nigeria is a young country in the literal sense as half of the country is made up of children less than fifteen years, symbolizing a high dependency ratio.⁴⁶ With a low rate of educated elite, Nigeria was faced with a typical case of a nation in which the few could not drag the many along the road to modernity as illustrated by Bottomore that:

In spite of the great prominence which elites, and even individual leaders, attain in the underdeveloped countries – partly by the contrast which they present with the backwardness of the general population – it is not, in the last resort, the activities of these elites and leaders alone which can decide the success, or determine the form, of the course of development upon which they have entered. Of course, the elites and leaders must be capable and efficient; but that is not enough. They must also express adequately, and pursue steadfastly, the ideals of those social classes which constitute the great majority of the population and which are struggling at the present time to escape from their age-old confinement to a life of poverty and subservience.⁴⁷

In the new independent state of Nigeria, the country only had a fraction of the educated men it needed to build the country. Much time in the past fifty years has as a result been spent on creating such a class and today the literacy rate in the country is estimated at 72% – a point higher than the 71% for South Korea in the 1960s and at par with Egypt which was one of the most literate countries in Africa in 1960 with a literacy level of 25%.⁴⁸ Considering the achievement in education both in terms of quantity and quality; Nigeria needs to acknowledge the progress so far made and work towards a greater deepening of the process. Indeed, Nigeria, relative to its size is among the most educated countries in Africa. Thus, if the country is not where most expect it to be it is because “Experience in putting theoretical knowledge into practice demands more time, energy and discipline than most Africans who walk into safe jobs can devote to their professions”.⁴⁹ It is ironical that those who compare

African countries with South Korea, for instance, do not incorporate Britain into that comparison as her GNP per capita in the 1960s was only \$1,393 compared to the African average of \$150.⁵⁰ By 2009, the difference multiplied in favour of the British by more than thirty times with Nigeria at \$1,260 and Britain at \$39,470.⁵¹

The case with South Korea and Britain was that these countries had a more trained and educated citizenry in the 1960s that even today Nigeria can only aspire to. These countries could therefore accelerate their expansive growth in the era of industrial and knowledge based growth faster than the non-literate but independent countries of Africa could. An example provided by Ormerod showed that while in 1950 South Korea's output was less than 100% higher than Ivory Coast, it was about 1000% more by 2000.⁵² Economic growth in Africa along these considerations is no doubt low and slow. However, as the case of Japan in the 1970s illustrates, if the basic conditions social and economic infrastructure are in place, it takes only a generation to improve and change the pace of economic growth of a country exponentially. The example of Japan shows that for an accelerated rate of growth to occur, prior phases in national life are often committed to setting in place the basic requirement for growth. Such a prior phase in Nigeria's history was the period from 1960-2010. The next fifty years should therefore with high optimism represent the next era on the growth continuum for Nigeria – that of vaulting and expansive economic growth and better schools, not just more.

Conclusion

In 1980, President Julius Nyerere at the handing over of power from the white minority leaders to Robert Mugabe told the latter that "You have inherited a jewel. Keep it that way".⁵³ The citizens of Nigeria equally inherited a jewel in 1960 when their country became independent and the people and their political leadership assumed control over the nation's affairs. Events in the intervening years are a testimony that Nigerians have treasured the land of their birth and inheritance and made sacrifices and worked hard towards building a nation of stability, peace and economic growth and development as well as cultural and educational advancement. In large measure, the rudiments of these have been achieved considering the daunting challenges of the past and the present. Thus, if the events of the past fifty years are to be the yardstick for measuring the future, it is quite logical to make optimistic projections that conditions as they exist in the country today constitute the launching pad upon which the country will vault itself into higher spheres of

development with everyone contributing to the growth and development process. In the next fifty years it is hoped that what Raph Uwechue said of Emeka Ojukwu will no longer apply as a national philosophy in the sense where "Calculation as a method was replaced by hopeful interpretations of ambitious wishes".⁵⁴

The hopeful interpretations of ambitious wishes has indeed coloured the outlook of Nigerians from scholars and intellectuals, the political elite and the masses. Along these lines of thought they have often held grand but unreasonable expectations and made grandiose and beautiful plans and projections on paper that were sometimes unrealistic and when such plans failed the general refrain was that Nigerians were better at planning – failing only at the level of implementation. This held belief of Nigerians being good planners is erroneous. That plans did not produce the required results attests to the fact that the planners were over-ambitious and were unconscious of conditions that need to exist for plans aimed at fast-tracking national development to succeed. A good plan is one that works, and is thereby, probably less ambitious but achievable with the possibility of incremental progress on the wish list of national objectives. Becoming aware of national abilities and limitations will if it becomes commonplace prove more effective in setting and realizing national goals.⁵⁵

Based on the recorded achievements of the past fifty years, reason indeed exists for optimism for the next half century as Nigeria's investments in human resources begin to manifest in all sectors as they are already doing in education and the economy. Nigerian corporations, for instance, have expanded across the country and are now found in several countries in Africa. In industries and services Nigerian entrepreneurs are also expanding their businesses and contributing to growth in the social and economic sectors.⁵⁶

Endnotes

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2. Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World*, Penguin Books, London, 2004, p. 51. For more details on Europeans colonies and dependencies in the period before nineteenth century see Jack Babuscio and Richard Minta Dunn, *European Political Facts, 1648-1789*, Facts on File Publications, New York, 1984, read chapter 8. However, while Europe had possessions in Africa such as Angola, Guinea, the Gambia and Gold Coast, these were not utilized as colonies with administrative structures but merely as staging posts for the

slave trade thereby putting them in the same context as the Gulf of Guinea; In Latin America, colonialism was in excess of two hundred years.

3. See Adebayo Oyejede, ed., *The Foundations of Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Toyin Falola*, Africa World Press, Inc. Trenton, New Jersey, 2003, see too P.T. Ahire, "Culture, Democracy and the Rule of Law" Theory and Evidence from Nigeria" in Yakubu Nasidi and Iyortange Igoil, eds., *Culture and Democracy*, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1997.
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