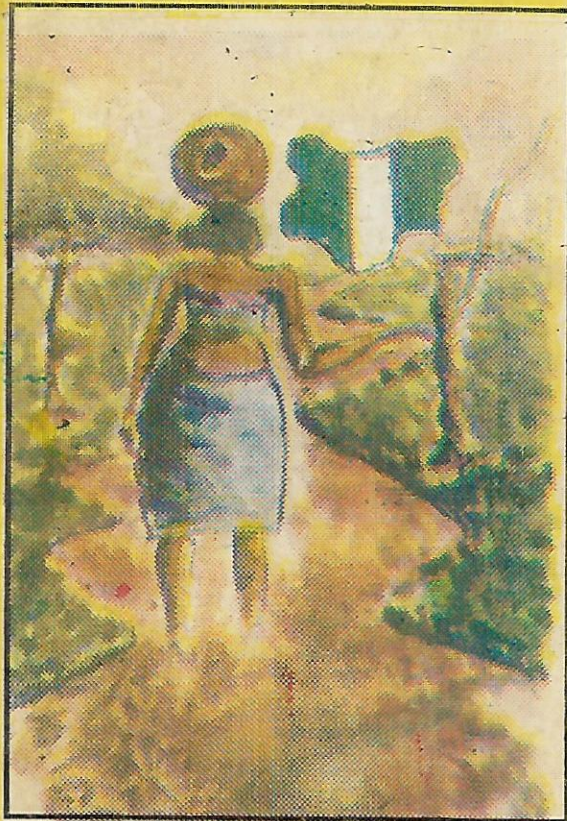


**A BASIC HISTORY OF NIGERIA  
TO AD 2000**



By

**I. F. A. UZOECHI PhD**

## INNOCENT F.A.

UZOECHI PhD is the second son born to Warrant Chief Uzoechi Ubenyi and Mrs Onugbo Uzoechi (nee Ozomaluze) of Enugu Agbagbo, Awha Imezi, Ezeagu Northeast L.G.A, Enugu State. His school days covered 1946 - 1951 at St. Michael's Primary School Awha, 1952 - 1953 at St. Joseph's Olo, Preliminary Training College (P.T.C) Eke, 1954, and Lourdes Training College (LTC) Iwollo-Oghe, 1956 - 1959. Higher Educations took him to the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1961 - 1964, where he graduated an upper second class honours in History; to Ibadan University for the Doctorate, part-time 1965 - 1967 and full-time 1971 - 1975, where his professor climaxed everything by playing God, said to him: "You can never be a doctor as long as I am alive".



Persecuted out of a doctorand's status by 1975, he had signed on at the Ibadan Polytechnic's General Studies, late 1975 to January 1977 before joining the History and Civic Department at the Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri, 1977 - 1979.

Steeled to but unbowed by, academic violence, this knowledge hunter enrolled at Kent State University, Ohio, USA for graduate work 1979 - 1985, and as a selectee, understudied his Professors as a Teaching Assistant before being a Teaching Fellow. His MA arrived in 1981. An earned doctorate in August 1985 crowned his twenty-year struggle 1965 - 1985.

Nationalism yet drove him home to Alvan 1985 - 1998. He enjoined the Owerri experience of teaching highly-motivated and apts Collegians. Over here at the Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), he handles Igbo, History and Philosophy of Science, Labour Behaviour, and Urbanization among eager and intelligent youths growing up in a madding Money Culture.

This Uzoechi chose Teaching: He can never regret doing so. Given his life to live over, he would welcome it more.

About hobbies, he goes for wide Reading Highlife Music, Listening to the Radio (National and Overseas), Philosophizing, Biographies, Conversation, People watching, Bookshop-crawling, Religious Literature, and Igboisms.

Senior Lecturer and husband, Innocent has been happily married to Mrs. Juliana N. Uzoechi (nee Enyi of Ukana), his co-soldier for three decades. Their adult graduate offspring now tip-toe into a vanishing labour market. To parents, to children - Education is Freedom. It still stands tallest as the only game in town in this Century of over choice.

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**DR. I. F. A. UZOECHI PhD**

**ODR. L.F.A. UZOECHI**

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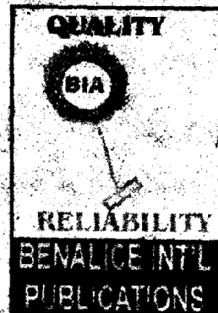
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**DEDICATION**

I dedicate this book with every gratitude to my late father, Warrant Chief Uzoechi Uberryi of Awha Imezi (d. 1950). He realized the cost of ignorance and the value of Education in Colonial Udi Division. His oral will on his death bed was that I should never stop school on any account because Mmuta ga-akwu ngwo, meaning that Education would reward learners. This testament has inspired me through fifteen student years in three name Universities.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

§ Every book, every teacher, has academic parents. From primary school to university, teachers, tutors, and lecturers helped me on my road to History Land. My experiences, in fact, have been liberative through the Universities of Nigeria, Ibadan, and Kent State in Ohio, USA.

§ During various cross currents in African, European, and American historiographies, I was guided to discover the stone excellence of true historianship; the democratic temper in the House of the Intellect; the humility of the learned; the ongoing incompleteness of history; the nationalist revisionist angle to colonial writing; and the difference between documentarians and historians proper within the guild.

§ For this mind travel, I am grateful to the Library Staffers of the Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, UNN (1961-1964, 1970-1971) and of the University of Ibadan (1965 - 1967, 1971 - 1975). The Ibadan library is unrivalled for its wide-ranging collections. At Kent State, there existed an oversupply: books, manuscripts, various micro-documents, and inter-library loans. My only regret was that I

could not read all in the calm atmosphere of a creative faculty.

§Over this long-range study, I consulted Nigeriana, Militaria, and Igboania – books and other records on the Igbo people's history and culture. American and European texts were handy over the world war years foreshadowed by aggressive and jingoist sick governments called fascisms. As a matter of course, I collected data from the Nigerian National Archives in Enugu, Ibadan, and Owerri.

§For their inspiration, support and kindness, I thank my uncle, Dr. Joseph Ogwudile Oforama, my guardian, Engineer (Locomotive) Samuel M. Ndubuisi, my teacher, educationist Nze Stephen Agu, tutor Dr. Robert Duhu, Professor J.E. Flint, before Professor J.C. Anene, Drs C.C. Ifemesia, Romanus N. Egudu. A. Adewoye, J.C. Onyemelukwe and Prof. Moses Airen Amayo during my Ibadan days. Though few are dead, many live on as eminent professors and technocrats.

§At Kent State University, I met God Himself. It is thanks to Sir William Ekechi, head of an academic dynasty of that name, Hon. Dr. Nnanna Ukegbu, Prof. G.I.C.



Eluwa, Drs Tony Onwumerobi and Chidi Osuagwu at the Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri, Professor Felix K. Ekechi, my main supervisor at Kent is famous for his thoroughness. He guided me with truth, kindness, and expertise. Thanks are also due to Lady Regina Ekechi, Prof. & Mrs. R.P. Swierenga, Professors Jerry Newman and Barbara Clements, Prof. & Mrs. Henry N. Whitney, Professor Victor Papacosma, Chairman Prof. and Mrs. Graves, Professors Saul Kaplan August Meier, K. Calkins and J. Friedman, Wang J. Hubbell, L. Bozcek, and the great secretaries Mrs Evans and Peach.

§An academic nomad, I left Owerri for ESUT in 1998. For working here, I am thankful for being attracted by Prof. & Mrs. C. J. Akubulo, for being recruited and encouraged by Prof. & Mrs. R.C. Okafor, formerly Director of the General Studies Division and now Dean of Postgraduate Studies. Professor Venerable Dr. Chinedu Nebo, ex. DVC and Professor I.J. Chidobem, the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor have in many ways smoothed my feathers. Our current Director, Mrs. Oby Nnamani deserves praise, and I fully give it while thanking all my colleagues.

§ For my continuing researches into Igbology and long History, thanks go to Chief Vincent Agana (Hon. Member of the House 1960 - ) Mr. & Mrs. Frank Ndubisi, a top-drawer author- at the IMT, Enugu, Principal Special class Mr. and Mrs. Moses C. Egbeli, Archivist Gregory & Mrs. Obiani, Accountant Jimmy & Mrs. Nwadinika, Dr. & Mrs. Ayk Ndubuisi, Engr & Mrs. Simeon Ejike, Mr. & Mrs. T.O. Chiakwa, Vet Chief Gabriel Anieke, Chief Librarian, Mr. & Mrs. Maurice Aniebo, ESUT Corpus Christians, Historians Stephen & Mrs. Anonde, Nze & Mrs. Chris Onoh, Mr. & Mrs. Emma Achi, Mr. & Mrs. Chris Ohagwu, and computerate Mr. & Mrs. Tony Eryi.

§ To my publisher, Engr. B.O. Oke of IMT, I owe heaps of thank-yous for a keen interest in, and our tireless love for, knowledge.

§ Finally, I praise and thank my wife and co-soldier in academia, Julie N. Uzoechi (Nee Eryi) and the family - Hon. Barr Uzoma, Scientist Ebele and Chijioke - on the make - for their love, care, and patience. About patience, I am myself a millionaire, having been for long a prisoner of History - under God.

§ I alone am responsible for any errors of fact. Criticisms are, however, welcome for future revisions.

Dr. Innocent FA Uzoechi BAHONA, PHD  
Doctor of Philosophy in History,  
Division of General Studies,  
ESUT, Enugu.

## PREFACE

§ This document appears in an age that fears and ignores historical knowledge. Professionals in church as in state, attract followers to their craft. Everyone is a missionary. History as history is always a political consumer good. Even underusing it by leaders or statesmen leads publics towards blindness in state matters. As a disease, therefore, going blind deforms democracy; corrupts federalism; sows violence; and feeds ethnocracy, say, in the nation.

§ Inside A Basic History of Nigeria, a historian unfolds a twin view. One comes from the valley of the masses. These fight wars and live poverties. The other arises from the hill of circulating elites. They tend to mouth unity or to beat the patriotic drum – anyhow and everywhere. These facts, at all events, reveal a tragic view of national history.

§ Within five chapters, this inquirer re-creates the nation's past. He shows history's importance, the eco-historic zones, and the social institutions supporting survival. For the second, the emphasis shifts to class and authority structures. Explanations fit in for such socifacts expose the forces, conflicts, or

tensions impacting peoples, ideas, events and communities. Beyond them, the third chapter rises above the cold urban elite protesters that praised as well as adopted petition-writing, messages, night-visits, and Aesopian newspaper columns for urging official reform. The opposite happened. It was radical oppositionists of the Maculey - Zik-Awolowo-Aminu-Sardauna school that agitated the masses nationwide for freedom till a soft Independence dawned. Truly its early overjoy was soured through antipolitics that hatched the Civil War (c. 1967 - 1970). An aftermath of that crisis was the mis-reconstruction of re-integration under military rule.

§ But, in the eyes of history, to rule is not to govern and cannot be so. Little wonder that nation-building, without credible whistle-blowers or supervisors, has become an elephant dream in an empire. So, the fourth is a forward march. It stresses some lessons for posterity. By and large, history stands, first and last, as the ever-ready general teacher. For an example, Democracy today can be for or against the people: for the many or for the few. Leaders also can govern with or against history. Gains and losses follow.

accordingly. The fifth one, besides, concludes the argument open-endedly. Because historians avoid dogma; form knowledge; inject doubt; suspect party-writing, and, world without end, embrace controversy.

§ If national history spreads as a compulsory culture of wisdom necessary for sustaining nationalism and erecting democracy the author's labour will have been rewardful.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

- CUP** : Cambridge University Press  
**FDP** : Fourth Dimension Press  
**IUP** : Ibadan University Press  
**JAH** : Journal of African History  
**JHSN** : Journal of the Historical Society  
of Nigeria  
**KSCAC**: Kaduna State Council for Arts  
and Culture  
**OUP** : Oxford University Press  
**UNN** : University of Nigeria, Nsukka  
**UP** : University Press  
**UWP** : University of Wisconsin Press

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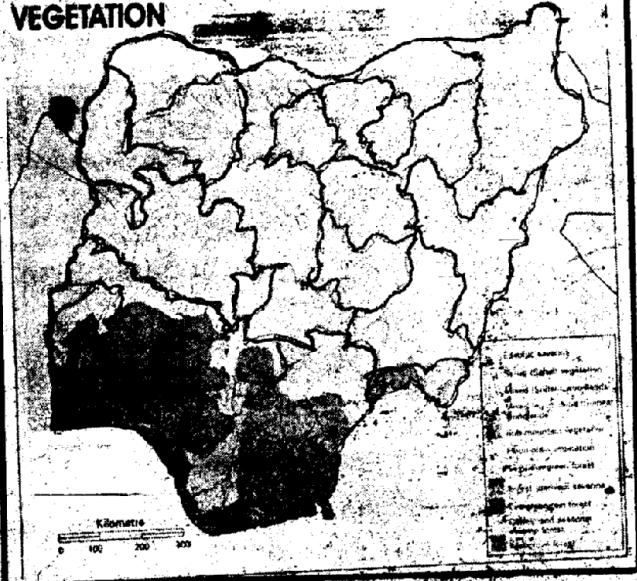
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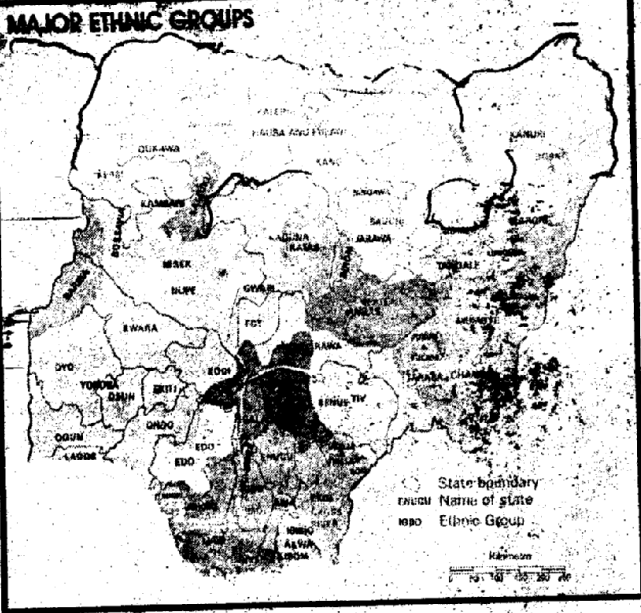
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# VEGETATION



# MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS



## CHAPTER I

### **HISTORY OF NIGERIA: PRECOLONIAL COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL TIMES TO AD 2000.**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

History is the mother of other subjects. It grows as a very wide<sup>1</sup> subject that teaches humankind by guiding leaders, instructors, and other citizens. To miss this subject at school has many sad effects. Some need notice. First, citizens grow up ignorant about their long past. Second, that error weakens rulers. It does not allow them to know useful facts. Third, without historical knowledge and its knowing, other educations remain at the best, half-baked and, at the worst, empty-minded<sup>2</sup>. Fourth, since "historics" make people wise, wisdom, is their best fruit. They cannot be ignored without bringing social ruin or death<sup>3</sup>. Fifth, love-of-nation, often called nationalism, arises from history and historified schooling<sup>4</sup>. Its absence makes unity hard to achieve in Nigeria; denies citizens local information; and punishes them with drift, waste, unpatriotism, and, of course, greed in government.

§ "The story of Nigeria", the title given by Michael Crowder, a British historian, to his book, shows stage histories<sup>5</sup>. This fact means many pasts within the past - a period that runs from pre-history through protohistory to antiquity and medieval times before modern and contemporary ages, say, according to current European chronology. That does not and cannot agree with a Nigerianist time-scale<sup>6</sup> since nations and their events differ in scope, time, volume, ambition, and direction.

§ However, these views may be taken, the historian needs also to consider some themes. These cover period, land, people, and action. Nigerian history, if seen through Archaeology, runs back to B.C. - unnumbered<sup>7</sup> but forwards to A.D. 2003. Other dates come in. It is, indeed, the land and the peoples living upon, and acting on it, over time, that, as they work together, produce history, meaning the remembered important events in men, women and children's lives.

### **HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY**

§ Land, thus, means a "Niger - area" later on, the Nigerian territory accepted by world leaders and known to their laws. The risk-tasking patriotic British people seized

this country and occupied its peoples. In 1861, Lagos Island, shot down from the high seas, passed over to them by a treaty that the local chieftain, Decemo, signed in fear. British colonial autocracy -- a one-man rule with local supporters -- lasted openly from 1861 to 1960. That old but foreign-managed Nigeria, an Anglo-Nigerian community, turned into a new and rising nation which though free and self proud, has lived on with a hidden colonialism or outside control. Paul Ilieje, a geographer, has noted Nigeria's position and features -- hills, mountains, and valleys together with ecological as well as economic zones'. His study confirms historico-geographic facts. To it, Northern Nigeria has the sahel and the grassland region with little to a five - inch moderate rainfall. After these, the Niger - Benue rivers and their basins beautify the Middle Belt, tall - grassland territories with their heavier rainfalls and near - forests. Below them, southwards, there lie the guinea savanna proper and the rainforest regions rising to two hundred inches - covering over one hundred miles deep, east to west.

§ Further on, there comes the Niger Delta region. Within it, the Lagos lagoon and ~~the waterways flow~~ nearest to the coast.

They have a mangrove forest swamp. Given their graded rainfalls and uneven heights, these zones hold key messages. Geographic influence tells that soil quality and rainfall touch human life much. Cattle cannot breed well in the swamp. Nor can farmers make progress in the desert-like lands on the northern Nigerian boundaries. Easy movement, peace, and government are, indeed, joined in this environment. The open grassland has affected not only transport and people's movement but also philosophy and marriage. Even if these facts are played down, no one can forget that place, that is location, impacts settlement, politics, war, or security<sup>10</sup>. If geography cuts off citizens, if rainfall divides them also, their government, therefore, have to deal with difference in nature, as in politics, by going with the grain. Doing so means accepting peoples' lives as they are, and practicing tolerance, otherwise called live - and - let live. Which is a unity - building behaviour.

§ Upon this land, peoples now working to be one people have settled for centuries. As a guesstimate, the main ethnics, not tribes as used in dead Anthropology, are the Hausa - Fulani, say 47%, the Igbo at 18%, the Yoruba so, and the minorities making 17%<sup>11</sup>. One

two hundred and fifty groups formed self-governing states or nations. Human geography explains that the Hausa-Fulani living within small communities settled over the sahel grassland to the upper northern borders. The main grasslanders are the Nupe, the Idoma, the Tiv, the Jukun and many more. Today, they call themselves loudly the Middle Belters<sup>12</sup>. Below them, there live the Igbo, the Ibibio - Efik, the Ogoja, the Edo, and the Yoruba. Forest - dwellers, they live very south, though, there follows a guinea savanna fringe towards Middle Nigeria. The mangroverers are the Deltaic people. The Izon (Ijaw), the Urobo, the Itsekiri, the Akwete, and so forth lived landward, coastwise as well as waterbound lives across ages<sup>13</sup>.

### **SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

§ History for these peoples and in their lands for all these long years has been about mixed actions and inactions over solving problems or issues. In life, troubles demand cures. Within their unlike zones, indeed, Nigerian man or woman faced hunger, fear, transport, commerce, philosophy, religion, continuity, survival, or death. Hardwork and wise thinking had to solve hunger. For this reason, agriculture in farms or work in industries gave residents little rest whereas



childcare, farmwork, and homemaking. If the men, as public philosophers, and, in their self-love, cheapened them, women themselves, deep-thinkers and observers as ever, saw through manhood. Though, they know that the men mostly brought in foodstuff, guarded their families; worked polygamy for the economy; and married them in all ages. How heroic a woman would consider a man, after all, is hard to tell.

§ Time was when social philosophers like Obusze Ndisi<sup>18</sup>, heavy but grave, and Warrant Chief Uzoechi Ubenyi<sup>19</sup>, tall, full and bold – all from Awba Imezi – talked over origin or creation. They asked: who created life? Why? When? How? These questions and the answers to them continue. For them, in their bygone age, "Awa" (the cutter) "maka mada" (cut human beings) to their shapes and sizes for varied reasons concerning duties, life – chances, and trails. As they saw life, Death, meaning staying with the ancestors, was a half absence from the living. To honour the dead is to befriend the past; to serve the present; and to plan a future welfare for the community. While the dead are alive thus, the living are dying along, and the unborn are hurrying in to live and later on die. There exists, in brief, a cosmic union, meaning a life



to death to life cycle. All persons therefore keep its laws for the general good<sup>20</sup>.

§ One support for that norm comes from religion. Arising from fear, growing with anxiety or ripening by experience, African traditional religion has kept man and woman alive upon their land and across the seasons. That belief centers on the supreme Being, the giver of life, already known to many languages, its spirit agents; human helpers, and rewards such as blessings, gifts, and punishments<sup>21</sup>. Suffering is already at home in History. It means for the dead, living away from home, usually in a never-never land. Such is the high seas, in the prayer, "ya da naa oshimili na Amabara (let the bad citizen fall into the ocean and the Anambra river)"<sup>22</sup>. African believers take this life as a brief resting place on the way to another beingness. "Re-incarnation" or re-cycled life-and-death, called ogbanje (the repeater), carries this idea. It goes with punishing the wrong-doing family with more and more deaths. Only the diviners and the fortune-tellers can halt them.

§ Though religion held the society together, other friendly forces continued things and saved people. To live on, man with woman in protohistory began marriage. It

went from having a common wife to choosing a personal one <sup>23</sup>. By this means, new children came on; became educated in social living, married in their turn, and took over from their parents in a never-ending stream of human beings — a stream that makes history. Continuity implies living in a place or on nearby territories where farming, fishing, and herding, among other callings, fit surroundings. For the ancients to continue also was to adopt government, religion, work, and trade. Those cultural values had early on guided the ancestors long before helping their children.

§ If to continue was to survive, to survive was to advance with, and improve on, existence. Doing that meant avoiding foolish wars, making just ones, setting apart defending soldiers, and joining police and army duties. Added to these, marriage happened at the right age, time, or place. Caring for the offspring followed. Thus, survival, a changeless goal in human history, called for learning problem-solving skills for the community's benefit. Relevant learnings, such as educations, farming methods, story-telling ways, and other idioms or usages promised culture change or development. For surviving makes growing. When a culture

stands still, it kills its society. Otherwise, a dynamic type needs change-agents. These lead the laggards or slow-changers, often called conservatives. At that, needed sciences and technologies prevail.

§ To avoid survival is, indeed, to invite death. In the old sense, it meant quitting History's chances in which actions benefit the living first. Food, in practice is that history: it pushes society on to big wealth. Agricultural efforts, for them, suit the crops that increase populations. In the Niger Delta, nationals farm the rivers as well as the high seas; in the forest today, they plant cocoa, yam, and other crops; in the guinea and other savannas, they sow root crops alongside cereal while tending goats, sheep, and other cattle. Over this boundary, rice, millet, groundnut, amidst other animals, hold sway till cattle-rearing and caravaning by donkey and horse takes over, in fact, towards the sahel. Several activities, thus, kept man and woman going in their changeful environments <sup>24</sup>.

§ Very often, historians that see treat time, land, people, and action together to show social dynamics. They explain what can or cannot be done or expected wisely in any location.

§ Far enough, therefore, the point is explaining the institutions, with their local editions or biases which marked the precolonial world. Teaching them enables readers, whether students or others, to understand Anglo-Nigeria, 1861 – 1960 as one period showing radical, conservative or additive changes. The following chart explains much by digesting historical experience and problematics.

§ The need for history has been confirmed. Its context of time, place, and people leads to an emphasis on social institutions. Usually, these picturize the community to show lived life. Concepts as ideas help scholars to understand their times better. Hence, in the next chapter, historical and authority charts are presented in perspective with some explanations.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL AND AUTHORITY CHARTS: EXPLANATIONS

These facts say that British rule, after occupation, upset traditional truth and life. Government reasons for conquering new territories are never lacking<sup>25</sup>. Suffice it that the historian notes better war technology that often pleased aggressors; the need for overseas markets that benefited local manufacturers; the urge to "export" the jobless to avoid civil unrest at home; the hungers to spread Christianity to the so-called ~~Godless peoples~~. Zeal drew out missionaries and explorers<sup>26</sup>. Nineteenth-century race pride made the Europeans think themselves superior enough, even in their error of false race science, to convert as well as to rule other human beings. Finally, these were the war-hungry peoples whenever there were disunities among their "defeatable" victims. These facts recall the cocksure high nationalism that forced whites to see themselves as the chosen people to better the world.

## UNITIES IN HISTORY AND PERIODIZATION

§ Historical unities by time, land, people, actor, and activity deserve notice. For a true understanding of the Nigerian past depends on them. Pre-colonial times to 1861 became the foundation for British colonial rule afterwards in 1861 - 1960. This century marked by wars had darkenesses and lights<sup>27</sup>. These led to the new epoch that showed a double obedience - the first to tradition, the other to the white master. As a patriot, an adventurer served his fatherland with loyalty, greed and race-thinking. His enthusiasm suited his age of plunder<sup>28</sup>. As event moved on and on, four stages of colonial rule emerged. 1861 - 1885, marked by quiet imperialism, gun-boat diplomacy, treaty-making, and local agency; 1885 - 1914, the fighting times based on empty international law, little wars, well-armed diplomacy, realpolitik, and arrogant foreign interest; 1914 - 1945, when powerpolitics used seapower, warfare and overhot nationalism. The years between 1945 - 1960 stood for colonial tiredness and confusion over white mastership and status. That time the world wars had weakened but re-educated colonizers. They had to stop playing God, having seen that

oppressing and dominating others cause war, rebellion, anti-Britishness and even revolution. Could colonizers again, it might be asked, rewind the clock of empires?

§ Within the first period, 1861 – 1885, treaties and treaty-making succeeded. At that, British consuls, meaning the agents to their kings or queens protecting their fellow subjects as well as their businesses. Sir John Boscawen was a pioneer. In this era, African treaty-chiefs or "kings" ruled their own states as the equals of European majesties<sup>29</sup>. This age had eminent "Nigerians" – Jaja in Opobo, Nana in Itsekiri-land, Ovaranwen in Benin, Elocemo in Lagos; the Othman dan Fodio dynasty in Sokoto, Omu Okwei in Onitsha and the Royal Niger Company a British trading agency doing business in "the Niger area". Various British-Nigeria treaties, now, led to changing frontiers from 1851 onward through 1861 to 1885. By usage and sufferance, many chiefs became British servants, otherwise known as paid agents or stipendiaries. They served of course during good behaviour, but however, appeared as leaders with their own subjects. Whether British policy needed changes or not, public opinion, often stronger than armies, supported empire-building, at first. That moved all

Europe. As a craze, footdragging in politics opened the way for soldiers to jackboot along into Africa, the last continent to be partitioned by stronger countries. Their shares were treated as trade, treaty, settlement or conquest colonies.<sup>31</sup>

§ 1885 was not 1861, and truly so. It saw occupation. Keeping colonies looked idle in the early nineteenth century. But the rise of an army-strong Germany in addition to a United Italy or the expanding United States and Japan shook the British off their so-called absentmindedness. They could no longer get an empire when, where, or how they liked. Fears and prides; nationalisms and ambitions; technologies and ideologies – all pushed nations to rush their peaceful citizens out into other lands. In this sense, Nigeria's resistances to foreign control opened. Till after 1914, native states or autonomies fought the invading British soldiers in the west, south, centre and north. The anti-British wars fanned out. Anglo-Ijebu (1892), Anglo – Aro (1901 – 1903), Anglo – Sokoto rout at Ravia (1903), the World War I revolts from Ibadan 1916 to Abeokuta (1918) and the Islamic uprising in Northern Nigeria at Satiru (1906) and Dumbulwa (1924).<sup>32</sup>



§ Yet some key events attract notice. From 1885 to 1914. These included active warfare; treaty-making, rivalry with the French and the Germans in the West, East, and North of Nigeria<sup>33</sup>. Others were the Royal Niger Company administration under the shrewd and able Sir George T. Goldie<sup>34</sup>, missionary expansion from the coast to the interior as Mary Slessor's career points out<sup>35</sup>, and a colonial plan for a new mercantilism. Forced unpaid or later paid forced labour, race bias, plus a Euro-African urban society — all unfolded.

§ There followed confusions in governing circles between British Foreign and the Colonial Offices over policies. By usage, the Secretary of State for The Colonies, a politician, "represented" the colonized peoples' interests in parliament. Expect, perhaps, in Lagos and Calabar, the schools taught more boys than girls, and thus, carried over an old-time prejudice. This increased life chances, for the boys who were by age and size actually "school men"<sup>36</sup>. The most territory had come under the British flag by 1914 when some so-called lucky Africans flourished as whiteman's cooks, stewards, messengers, catechists, clerks, agents, and low-paid or unpaid chiefs. Called popularly

the "warrant chiefs"<sup>37</sup> in their several grades, they ranked from first class, outside the East, downwards to sub-chiefs. Military officers served in the districts, later re-named divisions. For an example, District Officer Dann was in Enugu in 1910. After this phase, civilians or civilianized soldiers ran the local administrations. They were appointees with good connections in British class and status society.

§ More peace and order led to an unwise centralization after 1885 - 1914. Captain, later Lord F.D. Lugard, during his second tour, preached and carried out his Indirect Rule policy. It was a golden-haired myth, a mistake wrapped in racist thoughts, to be introduced into the Eastern Provinces. He thus commonized the British administration in the Islamized northern territories. This was by emirating the non-Islamic Igbo people and their neighbours through carving out Native Authorities. "Find the chief" became a policy that led to inventing or appointing anybody or a nobody, anywhere to serve British interest<sup>38</sup>.

§ Onward from 1914, Paramount Chiefs, in fact, overchiefs, came to be appointed, often to control un-related communities. In Udi Division, a notable

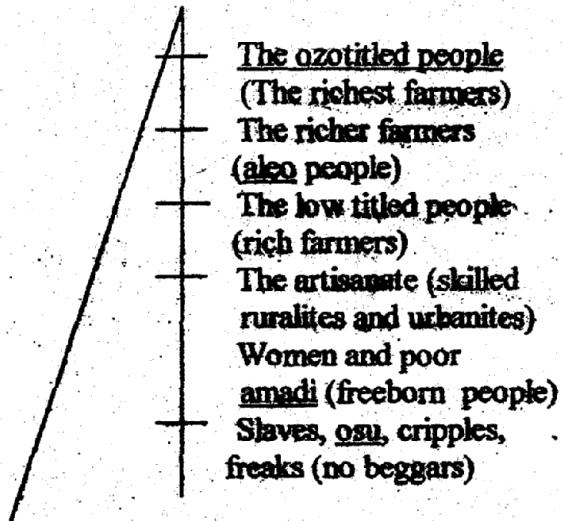
leader, Ozonechi from Oyofe Ogbe, administered Awha, Iwollo and other over-independent communities. In 1917, the Revenue Ordinance required Native Authorities, meaning localities, persons or merged towns, chosen as such, to make money; source forced labour; and keep peace and order. Paramount Chief Onyema of Eke (d. 1933), competent and well-informed, serving as a Native Authority, towered over most big chieftains in Onitsha Province. He thus, had unusual and, at the beginning, unchallengeable powers<sup>39</sup>. Authority derived from "royal" warrants signed for the British monarch by the territorial Governor, a viceroi, or his agents as from 1910 in Udi division. Soon, local chiefs reworked its process into their traditional ozo-title system among the rich. They tried group recruitment as well as rejection of warrant-seekers<sup>40</sup>.

§ Aside from such overbig agents, the authority structure drawn here shows the very lowly position for the warrant chiefs, to say nothing about other warrant-holding colonials. Mention should be made of their miserly pay, if at all, and the dual organization within the empire civil service. There were the African and the British sides to the colonial workforce -- with unequal

ranks, rewards, and benefits. As African, whether Nigerian, West Indian or West African, empire – followers, often sub-imperialist<sup>41</sup>, received token salaries. The British group stayed white, too. By the nature of things, it earned fat salaries, lived richer lives, and stood very high, given their tall education, birth, class, and whiteness.

§ If Africans lived graded lives – in classes, the British occupiers did so openly in their Anglo-Nigerian empire.

**IN PRE-COLONIAL SOCIETY  
(NIGERIA): Northern Igboland**



**FIG 1 PRECOLONIAL NIGERIA**

## THE COLONIZER'S SOCIETY (VICTORIAN ENGLAND)

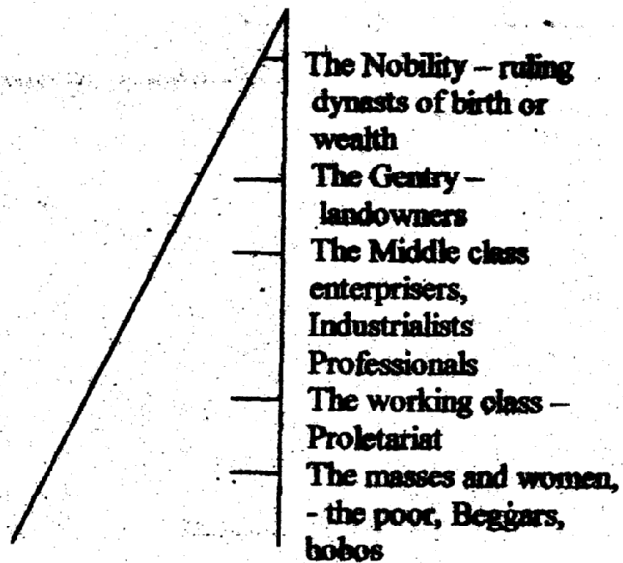


FIG II VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN ENGLAND

## COLONIAL SOCIETY OVERSEAS (ANGLO - NIGERIA)

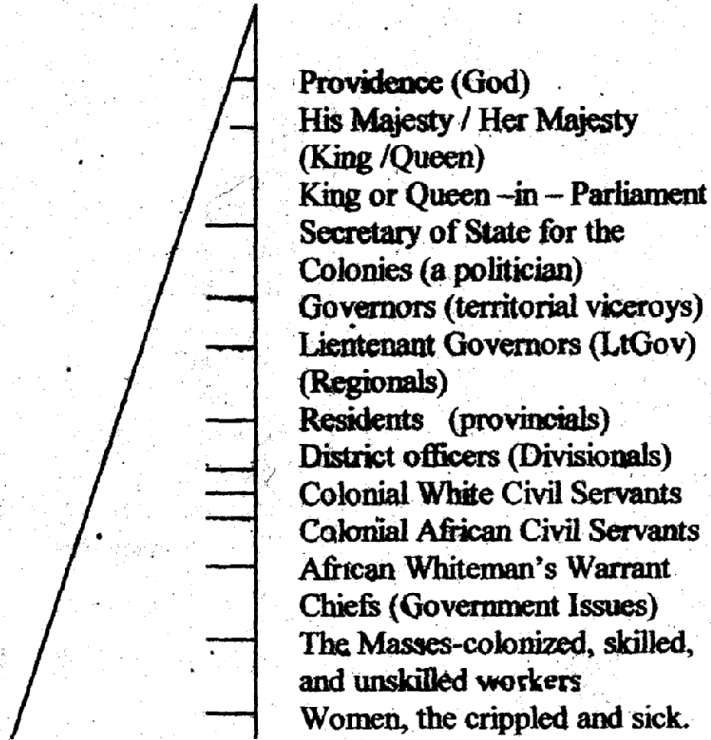


FIG III ANGLO - NIGERIAN SOCIETY

## A CHART OF CONCEPTS

SOME CONCEPTS	ACTIVITIES	ACTORS
1	Political Organization	Autonomies or Independent Communities (states). Nigeria - wide.
2	Economic order	Rural - Urbanites Nigerian, foreigners
3	Social Life	Generalised: ruralites, Urban-dwellers
4	Religious System	Traditionists, Christians, Islamic & Islamized groups
5	Industrial Organization	Extractors, Additive Carvers, Industrial groups.
6	Intellectual Outlooks	Generalized World viewers
7	Literary Existence	Nigerians: Men Women Children
8	Revenue Administration	Royals, privateer, Joint-operators
9	Commercial Modes	Merchants, financiers, factors.



	FEATURES	PROBLEMATICS
1	Monarchy, Republic	No Statelessness. Mixtures. Changefulness.
2	Transportation, Capitalism, Communitarianism, Traditional Education.	Agriculture, trade, commerce.
3	Proverbs, Songs, musics, feasts, sacrifices, fashions, sexism	Rest season, Games, Leisure.
4	Death, life, burial, public judgement, African Traditional Religion Theologic unity, Pantheon, Muslim	Re-incarnation. Spirit world. Organic Society, no heretics or fundamentalists
5	Mining clay, tin gold, Fishing, canoeing, winetapping, pottery.	Joint production. Men & Women & children co-operated. Joiners
6	Reading the Books of Nature. Social Questions. Philosophizing	Both sexes act. Women hidden (?). Men in the open.
7	Folk lore, oral histories Traditions, oracy, orature.	Women & men story-tellers. Minstrelsy, zippy songs
8	Administrative trade, royal traders, Age grade organizations	Traders, merchants, agency.
9	Long distance-traders, caravaneering.	Caravaneering; fetuucci, group trade, Joint-stock coys

10	Communication Style.	Generalized literates in Indigenous & foreign Tongues.
11	Diplomatic Practice	ALL: Officials, unofficials, wives, in -laws
12	Currency Plan	Governments: Community and market organization.
13	Military Scale	Village, village-group, clan Commanders "ochi agha".
14	Slavery	Sarkin Bayi. Rich Nigerians, Foreigners, Marketers
15	Marriage	Generalized Difference Brides, Bridegrooms, parents.

"Bush telegraph" ("the market radio) system; The gong, fire, runners, gossip.	Gossip / Rumour mongers. Night & Day operators
Ambassadors, representatives, agents.	Official and private diplomacy Foreign daughters, third - parties.
Local goods, goats, sheep, coins, cattle, cloths, slaves, crops.	Variety of coins, goods, Fairs, local markets, entrepots.
Scratch forces, kinship military organization, self-paid soldiery, hirelings, adventures.	Ideological warfare, "psy-war" unbarracked, privateering, Emergencies & their leaders.
Indigenous slaves; missionary slaves, repatriates, redemptories.	Slavery & freedom. The religion outlooks. White Rule.
Patrilocals, matrilocals, neolocals, levirate, sorroral.	Dowry, bride-wealth (bride price) divorce, "umuada". Politics of it.

§ Under colonial overrule during 1914 to 1960, Governors, in British interest, managed Nigerian economy, politics, and commerce. Colonizer and colonized are from class societies. Inequality in state, religion, and society became an unbending law. Whites headed every grouping or organization. The precolonial economy based on rural mining, pottery, agriculture together with manufacturing faced death through de-industrialization. In every community, Nigerians lived apart from their overlords, who, settled in Government Reserved Areas (GRA); practiced apartheid<sup>42</sup> or segregation; engaged private whites-only doctors; and kept African women as lovers, only as night mistresses. One and all acted out racial superiority. Today, that has become an exploded lie, a tired idea, a failed magic, thanks to human progress and nationalism.

#### EXPLAINING THE CHARTS

§ Figure I plays back the passing of old society, noted for slow change, organic life, and class. In contrast, Figure II pictures the rank – conscious backgrounds of the colonial officials. Most came from the nobility, many from the middleclass, and the fewest of the working class. Though, district officers held degrees, equivalent certificates

or influential social links. Figure III says that the British Queen-in-Parliament owned the colony which the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the viceroy, the Governor, ran on her behalf. Any list of governors tells service periods whereas this author stresses epoch-making events, often called milestones. There was, for an example, the transportation revolution<sup>43</sup> that joined railways to feeder roads and waterways across populous settlements, thereby, hurrying up change and fostering economic unity.

§ During the First and Second World Wars (1914 - 1918, 1939 - 1945), mainly European wars, colonies helped their mother-countries, that is, the home governments served by colonizers. Many Nigerians laboured as porters, soldiers, and forced workers. Colony crops like cotton fed the owner country's mills. So did such minerals as coal from Enugu, gold from Obuasi in the Gold Coast, now Ghana or tin from Jos. British oversea territories formed the never-empty storehouses for war work. Still, rebuilding the shattered economies, known as postwar reconstruction, altered the revenue system. Early on, taxes were paid in kind and mostly so from 1861. Paying British cash or

money as the legal tender opened about 1914 and expanded in 1927 – 28 to the Kwale-Aboh and the Eastern Nigeria areas. Citizens, called subjects by the British, in fact, revolted against levies after World War One (1914 – 1918). Taxation was a trick. Rather than helping Nigerians, it prime-pumped Britains warsick empire to create a consumer, meaning a buy and buy, and buy market for their goods. Raleighs, Ridges, Hercules bicycles much like biscuits, footwear, Manchester cotton-piece goods, Navy cut cigarettes, cigars, shoes, soaps, books, and other educationals entered even village markets <sup>44</sup>.

§Education, unpopular at first, increased through missionary work backed by government fund and security. Its content was however, too much obedience – too much yessing. This attitude, without doubt, created a habit of depending, almost blindly, on every so-called authority. "Nigerian History" was what creative white authors, like M. English and Sir Alan Burns, wrote about, for, and even, against the colonized <sup>45</sup>. Woman's education snailed on behind man's. Teaching looked bigmanish. For many it was the fastest road to skilled colonial wage labour. The primary, secondary, and training institutions

produced new leaders – a fresh elite in whiteman's ways – to lead others in state, industry, church, and school. The philosophy was to educate Nigerians into English people, to get them "civilized", in fact, against their culture and person – hence their social falseness.

§ In that imposed system, the socioeconomy differed. Neither communal as of old nor welfare as in afterwar Great Britain, it was commandist <sup>46</sup>. Communities planted whatever crops or trees that the colonizers demanded, namely, palms, groundnuts, cassava, and peas or guineacorn, pineapple, and cashew. Anglo-Nigerians, subjects as they were, gained from these efforts mostly by accident. Because imperialists, as foreign rulers, in spite of themselves, cannot fail to do good. Some of their activities, however, helped their victims. At the same period as History teaches over conflicts, there follow at war's end peace-hunger and reconstruction. In the logic of that peace, to reconstruct introduces problems that can lead to another war. A little after 1918, the European world, now welcoming peace, boomed. It knock-kneed along but crashed into a fall. Social issues, namely, unemployment, inflation, and quick-death

among governments stood too tall for short as well as diseased administrations. Inflation – the money devil – ruined European nations with rising prices. It also over-angered colonial Aba provincial women and their business allies in faraway Nigeria to force about two million into revolt<sup>47</sup>, a fact that the world “riot” hides. As if fat problems needed big governments, many closed political parties won power in Italy, Germany, Japan, and even in the United States. As if a fashion, they practiced populism, race supremacy, state ownership (statism) or economic direction (dirigisme). They controlled persons and things. Monoploy power marked out the leading political parties. Their times produced proud, cocksure and vain nationalisms. Their politics at home or abroad made many democracies lose face for being brutal. They soon went under Collapsed<sup>48</sup>.

§The new governments, called facisms, with different names reduced democracy’s appeal. They made tough noises, built up national economies, and forced in progress. But what looked real was fake. Surprisingly, their misleaders invented and fell into war again. World War II, at last, grew out of such total governments, riding upon military force and false science. This



war shook the earth once more; squeezed out over-proud leaders, and toppled fascist movements in Italy, Germany, and Japan. A tug-of-change, re-awakened Nigerians like other occupied peoples to agitate out their colonizers, now exposed, fatigued, and uncivilized by warfare. Nigerians began to make their obedience disloyal as well as problem-solving. Nationalists, usually outsiders within the colonies, demanded, not begged for, freedom openly. The time was ripe. It was during Imperialisms suicide of power<sup>49</sup>.

§Colonialism always created deadly tensions. The coming chapter considers radical anti-imperial opposition, Independence, Civil War, and reconstructionist military rule.

### CHAPTER III

#### **HARD OPPOSITION AS RADICAL**

Helpfully, the United States held onto her world-wide expansion. American wealth steeled her might. Especially was this so after dropping atomic bombs on Japan's large cities - Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. By her success, she moved world opinion through the new United Nations Organization now standing for a world government. She thus, influenced the coming of Democracy. With this result decolonization or empire-murder spread. In effect, Nigerian leaders and the urban masses widened their opposition to foreign rule. Movements upon movements woke up many Nigerians. They joined latter-day politics of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC, 1944), the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC, 1949), the Action Group (AG - 1950), and the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU, 1950)<sup>50</sup>. The dream nation was already going into ethnic camps at birth.

§ Empires, nonetheless, never kill themselves. Over Anglo-Nigeria, the records show a deficit or losing administration. Now losses led events. They revealed the growing

independence struggle after 1945. Current followers were radical – urban politicians and bold labour unions controlling nationalist newspapers like the West African Pilot<sup>51</sup>. In their usual wisdom and caution, the British began to talk down agitation. They shopped along for a shameless retreat by holding conferences from 1948 to re-shape their authority over a shaky federal union. Dividing one Nigeria into three regions, as they had had to divide a single India in blood into two by 1947, became a delay tactic that succeeded in Nigeria. It was, for them, a quiet withdrawal<sup>52</sup> with dignity and surely for Nigerians, a postponed war of Independence. In 1967, in the moment of crises, that war returned on the seventh year of Independence on 1 October, 1960. Some Nigerians call it the Civil War, others, the Nigeria-Biafra War.

§ Pre- 1960, conferences and intrigues had produced some unexpected results. First, the homeland nationalist movement surprised “the Lords of empire”. An “Empire on which the sun never sets”, according to its songmasters, slumped with style. Nigerians danced for unity with freedom; welcomed it as a fact but failed to see far. For it was then only a good risk, one demanding mutual respect, equality and continuous patriotism.

Second, though Freedom Day dawned, ~~women were still the occupied unequal citizens.~~ National Independence, indeed remained incomplete till Babangida's military presidency. Third, as in society, so in the economy, de-colonizing Nigeria sounded a hard-to-easy chance, given good faith among the inheritors. Those were ethnic leaders with their followers.

§ Fourth, a flag independence was political freedom. It had a weak wealth-making foundation – a foundation under foreign or outside management<sup>53</sup>. Neo-colonialism today means, “imperialism without colonies”. In that, local agents labour for private friendships or profits while mouthing national slogans and singing patriotic songs – but sometimes only as patrioteers<sup>54</sup>. A situation as this encourages outsiders to intervene in host politics among the newly-independent nations. Fifth, a future for Nigerians looks bright but spotty. Events can sometimes outmarch citizens and their leaders. Not strange to say, changes between 1960 and 1999 happened through coups d'etat<sup>55</sup>, civil war, militipolitics, genocidal riot, urban violence, para-militarism, and so forth.

§ Traditional society lost much power to the colonial state. Freedom, indeed, took

the masses unawares. Other events, leaders, followers – moulded events and peoples – the known staples of human histories.

## **EVOLUTION, REVOLUTION OR EVOREVOLUTION**

§ Independence, a pregnant fact, was an open door to more change. The period, 1960 – 2003, therefore, periodizes as follows:

- I 1960 - 1967. The Cold war era in the First Republic.
- II 1967 - 1970. The Hot war (civil war) OR Third World War.
- III 1970 - 1979. The Reconstruction of things but not of people.
- IV 1979 - 1983. The second Republican Break or Interlude.
- V 1983 - 1999. Open and veiled militipolitics. Soldier's suicide by coups d' etat. The Aborted 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic.
- VI 1999 - The Fourth Republic: Return to a slippery Democracy.

These six time-levels need some explaining to provide other details. Afterwards, general lessons can be drawn.

§ Till 1967, Independence was a sweet but unclear freedom. The all -Nigeria nationalism that fired the pioneer leaders to unite their oppositions against foreign rulers

began to fade out. Leaders and their parties collected and used power along regional or ethnic lines. They preached what the elites liked such as northernization, westernization, and easternization — meaning that only indigenes should profit in their zones by their leaderships<sup>56</sup>. These measures re-introduced local divisions often called ethnocracies for champions in power. The one-Nigeria idea, thus, soured; bad politics took over. Nationalist feelings remained with tiny but circulating elites that managed mass ignorances.

§ As a result, competition for power and its rewards cracked the nation. Local leaders became instant anti-Nigerian heroes<sup>57</sup>. Labour mobility failed. Freedom to move on and about or the right to own property anywhere woke up resisters<sup>58</sup>. With the number of job-hunting youths rising, more so among the first home trained university graduates, the urban potential for violence increased. "Racial slurs" and race-thoughts worsened these errors. "Onye Awusa" "Alakuba" "Abakpa — such terms covered all northerners. "kolekpo" or "nyammiri" (Aba kpo) (yem mmiri) became Igbo -hating epithets mostly in the West and the North. The Igbo people echoed "ndi mgbati" "ndi

ofe mmanu", meaning noisy-speech people, the overoil soupmakers. These went for the Yoruba. Many other ethnic putdowns spread hates and differences to benefit politicians.

§ Since wars begin in human hearts, since politicians fight for power anyhow, and since without education, the masses chant for, and with, every public man or the so-called messiah, wrong public enlightenment quickly annoyed most people awake in the new nation. Angry ideas travelled, fast and wide. Those were fears about an Igbo domination, hungers for northern forever-leadership, fixed attitudes among the highly-educated Yoruba toward the Hausa who, nonetheless, were advanced in Islamic civilization which many learned Christians mis-judged proudly<sup>59</sup>. There came lately wholesale politics – selfish activities at their worst. Corruption, rigging, colonizing, and thuggery – often the words of the opposition – all spoilt regional elections. Opposite party ambition to Islamize the south and to westernize the north, heightened the crisis of, and scramble for, power in the divided but very educated western Region. The NPC under the very able and popular Sarduana of Sokoto and the NCNC under the fearless, active, and honestly stubborn Dr. Michael Okpara, took sides. The result was

the premiers' war <sup>60</sup> that increased smoke in Yoruba-land.

§ Bigtime popular party leaders sensed misfortune. Dr. the Hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Dr. Michael Okpara, Dr. Denis Osadebey, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, and Chief S.L. Akintola could no longer talk troubles down or wish them away. Each looked as angry and patriotic as the other<sup>61</sup>. Electoral crises cooked up violences in the Western Region under the pro-Northern Akintola and his opponent, Sir Dauda Adegbenro, - with Eastern backing. Nigeria boiled over. Of three dominant parties, the NPC and the NCNC formed an alliance at the Federal level. Both traded for profits during the Treason Trails <sup>62</sup> of Chief Awolowo and several other suspects. So events appeared in this light, in a move to halt the suspected overthrow of the Federal Government. That central authority was legitimate then in its own eyes but stood defaced by inactivity, bias, and pro-British diplomacy over Rhodesia. Supporting the colonizers pleased their "ex-masters". Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, a golden-voiced orator, then Prime Minister, seemed to hold his hand. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, a statesman, and other



"smaller" politicians observedly acted as though events were obedient to them. Hence silence here and there prepared the troubled waters of fears and suspicious over which journalists fished <sup>64</sup>.

§ Nigerians now doubted Independence. When fears increased, despair mounted. What a sudden relief it was for many publics, including the educated elites, for an example, when radical youthful soldiers – the Five Majors – booted out the civilian government. Theirs was an over-fast action. It out-spied and even fooled the highly-rated British Intelligence service <sup>65</sup>. "It can never happen here", was the earlier foolproof opinion among rich nationals, after the Ghanaian example that ruined Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's power – but not his fame. Some lecturers at the young but radical University of Nigeria, Nsukka, like Dr. Aligwekwe, a political scientist, thought otherwise. And correctly. The "politics of the sword" came over.

§ This change and its methods – the coup d'etat – were new. Their results became riskier. Because, later on truth, myth, fear, or hope over-mixed for clear thinking to continue. Open rejoicers lived with sullen watchers. The political widows, that is, the

"out-going" beneficiaries of power nationwide wondered. They were the inter-ethnic mourners for the greats like Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sir Abubakar, Chief S.L. Akintola and Chief Festus Okotie - Eboh, who wept openly. Newsmongers read their chosen papers for opinions. Musicians, those quiet social critics and praise-singers, waxed bold in a joyful mood resulting from changing times. Famous for ever, Rex Jim Lawson from the Niger Delta, recorded his very popular-unpopular "Eghu na-ebe akwa" (the Goat is crying). The goat is, in various cultural idioms, the king of fools. The Islamic tagiyya, of loving the enemy with your tongue when you are weak, the Igbo ojemba enwe ilo ever-hopeful peaceful co-existence ideology, the Yoruba double-diplomacy of up-and-down negotiations - often fine-tuned to precision, and the minority's frontier wisdom of fence-sitting- all these attitudes hardened issues in all directions. For the coupists and their managers had failed to secure Lagos, Nigeria's diplomatic capital. There an Igboman, the highest military officer, restored Federal Government authority, imprisoned the army radicals, and uprooted regional governments by forming a unitary administration.

§ Almost so soon, for most ethnics, rumours about Igbo domination fanned fears and deepened the unknowns in politics. Foreign and local interests fused confusions till Northern Nigerian soldiers on 29 July, 1966, waged a revenge coup d'état that, to them restored the old order. Agents assassinated the Igbo leader and Head of State, Major - Gen. J.T.U. Aguiyi - Ironsi, and his tour host, a Yoruba Governor, Lt. Col. Fajuyi for, at the least, not betraying his master as well as guest. Many Igbo army officers lost their lives. The coup sponsors on the ground named a young officer, Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon "another Northern<sup>er</sup> to head their countercoup movement"<sup>66</sup>. Secession was in the air but success or pressure diluted desires. Where revenge ~~crisis~~ has never been clear or, perhaps, need not be so. For "Enough!" is not the vocabulary of angry politics. From May till September 1967, genocidal revolts overtook mostly the Igbo settlers - the diaspora in many urban centers. Kaduna, Kano, and so on. The July massacres before Ironsi's ouster had screened his administration from revenge plans. Rapid events had kept him in ignorant doubt. After those monthly persecutions, the Igbo and some other southerners, in large numbers,

excepting perhaps, the Yoruba, deserted the host Cities of Blood – for home. Refugees, killers, and their sad stories rushed the nation into more dangers.

### **CIVIL WAR: BIAFRA AND RECONSTRUCTION**

§The Eastern Regional Military Administrator Lt. Col. Emeka Odumegwu – Ojukwu, an Oxford historian in power, with wisdom and in sorrow, therefore, desired survival for his people. The Consultative Assembly comprising Eastern leaders-of – thought- the elites of their communities – gave him, at that, the mandate to lead them to freedom. Almost friendless and unloved, those easterners accepted their will-to-nation. Theirs became the sovereign and Independent state of Biafra that his Excellency, Lt. Col. E. Odumogwu – Ojukun declared solemnly before the world. Heaven and Earth met: Freedom embraced life. This new nation of course ended the agelong oppression. Here was an invitation to the goodlife denied in a bygone deathful Nigeria<sup>67</sup>.

§ Like the love for it, freedom sparks power into the human heart. It makes trouble though. True is this when rulers and obeyers – the masters and the so-called servants quarrel and create tensions. Saying no or yes makes

more troubles in a divided society. For the Biafrans – new people in, and to, History – to live was to be free. After all, that is to break the chains tying them down for exploiters. To the Federalists, to live was to unite all Nigerians by every means. It also included maintaining a vampire ruling class, at all costs. A shouting war, now hot indeed, erupted. Already, “talked” diplomacy, as slippery as ever, failed. For it had become the dialogue of the deaf. Events sharpened the vigilant contradictions in Nigeria. Peace emerged, to many as a public enemy. War became an escape route for the conservatives. Between July, 1967 and 15 January, 1970, the Niger-Biafra war ate everything: money, religion, morality, democracy, and youth. Hunger and disease, wars companions, ruined homes, stole children in their thousands<sup>68</sup>; but toughened the much-underrated “Rebels”. Till April 1968 when International Relief Agencies flew in aid materials, the Biafrans, in high spirits, surprised the on looking profit-seeking world powers before luck hovered.

§ Everywhere war is another school. Advances in military science and technology showcased Biafran expertise, resourcefulness, courage, and diplomacy. Traitors, tireless in, and endemic to, all wars hit the Biafra

revolutionary movement hard from inside<sup>69</sup>. Infiltrated, that is secret funds tempted many into cross-border attack-trading. "Brotherizing"<sup>70</sup> caused rivalries and jealousies between ethnic or subethnic groups; cooled off loyalties while Hunger with its sister, Greed, threatened the war economy. Self-defence continued. It earned more life through state defacto to dejure recognitions of Biafra by five countries - the Ivory Coast, Gabon, Tanzania, and Zambia in Africa with one in the West Indies, namely, Haiti<sup>71</sup>. Blood, love, friendship - these always move events in history. Superpower interests and international oil politics handcuffed small-nation diplomats but promoted racism in wartime relations<sup>72</sup>. The Biafra Revolution succeeded in its spirit. In the logic of radical movements, however, it could not defend its homeland owing somewhat to superpower alliances. Those respected Great Britain's "legitimate" influence in her ex-colony. This bloc, at least, upset Soviet Russia's influence gamble in Nigeria from 1967 to 1970.

§ Mid 1968 to 1970, war shortages and diplomatic hide-and-seeks forced changes in strategy as in tactics. National survival held the front seat. It was achievable. Biafra Sovereignty had confronted the forces of

external history, already noted. By December 1969, peace talks had crawled nearly three years through conference "partying", brinksmanship, and foot-dragging. All this time, thousands upon thousands perished in Biafra from disease, hunger, or bullet. Till the main records come into open use, a short term opinion is that this war ended suddenly for all combatants, thus stressing a truth about contemporary warfare.

§ Resistance morale all the same stood high. Death lost its shock; food became gold; old morality decayed; a military culture arose from the grave-ashes of "Rebs" and "Feds". Peace making came into the open. Brigadier Philip Effiong, the Officer Administering the Government, was a soldier mightily honoured by all accounts. He gallantly headed the last delegation. While Biafra's ever-popular Excellency flew out to guarantee peace as the Radio Announcer said no opposition or revolt marked this twist. The surrender document on 15 January, 1970, cut another, probably, untravelled road<sup>73</sup>. Winners and losers, victors and nonvictors – all would wage peace – the hardest war. Postwar peace, however, is always filled with illusions. The "No victor, no vanquished" broadcast of General Gowon's, the Head of the Federal

Government foretold peace and equality in Nigeria<sup>74</sup>. Where, however, it might be asked, could the vision go without the visionary?

§ If war was never ends, so it seems, peace still attracts leaders that re-mould the broken society. General Gowon, a sincere Christian creature within the anti-Ironsi junta, headed Nigeria well into the postwar period till 29 July, 1975 when Coup-makers taught him also that power dies. His rebuilding philosophy between 1970 and 1975 centred on the Three R's - Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, and Reconciliation<sup>75</sup>. Honeyed slogans, these meant little to the starving, the miserable, and the uprooted. Surely war as war in lived history invents contract millionaires. It spreads corruption, bribery, fraud, and anomic<sup>76</sup>. As plots succeeded plots, victims followed victims because the soldier class struggled against facts and histories by fashioning an empire into a nation.

§ After General Gowon, after Murtala Muhammed, and, if by an accident, General Obasanjo next advanced military rule. Its fire-fighting policy created an oil-boomed waste. Prestige-hunting featured. Still the emphasis was on national security. By their roadworks, hurried industries, overfat salaries, and tightlipped loyalties, the good and the bad,



true to human affairs, co-existed. These soldier-leaders, sometimes, statesman, lengthened roads. They carved more states, thus injecting a "state drift" of continual demands for statehood in politics till thirty six. Education also improved through federal bursaries often won by lucky and intelligent applicants. As enrolment grew, educational quantity jumped. Quality began to fade. The times proved too hard for Democracy and Justice to command sincere attention. Leaders learned to say much in order to do little. Opportunists and pleasers, and sycophants, eternal honey-bees stood around. The journalists kept them company even as the people's watchdogs. Unknown to them, flattery kills governments.

### POST-CIVIL WAR POLITICS

§ To humanize administration, the military under General Obasanjo, 1976 - 1979, agreed election for the political parties. As a result the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) headed by Alhaji Shehu Shagari, a long-grade teacher-politician for the supposedly wealthy and influential conservatives rivaled the Nigeria People's Party (NPP). That was led by Dr. the Hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, a scholar, for the middle-class liberal and petty-bourgeois groups.

Chief Obafemi Awolowo, a shrewd organizer piloted the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). His followership meant scholars, middleclass business people, and the workingclass. The national power-conscious army stood too close by for comfort. In this new order in which the NPN governed the nation, President Shehu Shagari became the First Executive President despite the UPN's near-victory. At all events, the new presidentialism was an excellent plant now out for American export.

§ Their politics were talk, patronage, service, rallying, and group noise<sup>77</sup>. Old issues came back with ethnic rivalries, image making projects, like ports, and infections self-enrichment. Even if the press breathed free air when education and health looked robust, Nigeria's pillowy dependence on oil deceived leaders and supporters alike. They now began a naira worship that created porous borders, started a money culture, and enriched smugglers. Many a kind person in politics can be blind to fortune-hunters when managing public affairs. For the soldiery, now wallowing in power, to the "foreign" investors eager to wash themselves in profit, a sick democracy was in practice a mistake. The coup leaders, like their various sponsors,

~~thirsted~~ for more change knowing that intrigue is indigenous to civilization and governance.

§ Once again, in December 1983, the soldiers pushed down the New Democracy and its Alhaji Shagari. Their reasons, almost overused, concerned bad government, corruption, civil service slowness, idleness, and waste<sup>78</sup>. The incomer, General Mohammed Buhari, an oil expert and disciplinarian, meant himself to clean up Nigeria because his administration had to provide security and order. For the first time, nationals queued up for fuel and banking. Discipline became a public policy<sup>79</sup>. Its growth attracted many patriotic youths and generally the students. The loud-mouthed liberal press faced death through Decrees Nos 2 and 4. These penalized low-fact or lazy journalism; padlocked editors' mouths; and frightened publishers. He aimed to protect officials - and the nation<sup>80</sup>. Though order reigned, human wrongs overbalanced human rights. To play safe, as usual, the powerful civil service swam along and partied with the men of the moment. The angry press soon lost its fangs but continued howling in secret.

§ From one coup, it was a short journey to another. In August 1985, another

bold spirit pulled another Northerner out. This soldier-soldier crisis, an army civil war, corrupted Nigerian society. But it advanced socioeconomic activities, to wit, creating more states – like Enugu (Wawa) state<sup>81</sup>; widening roads; improving telecommunications; supporting education; and doing active foreign politics. This time machine politics began. Leading politicians alone chose candidates, “borrowed” down banks, watched declining civic morality, and softened military obedience which decayed. Soldier politics and demagogic speeches created delusions about a forthcoming Third Republic. For that, the Federal Military Government forged two political parties, namely, the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) – one for the rich, the other for the rising middle and working classes.

§ Open and direct voting in public places received the name OPTION A4<sup>82</sup>. Supporters by it, filed behind their candidates. Bribery and corruption, by other means, kept people busy, night and day, thus leading to the “browning” of Nigeria because suchlike envelopes carried monies for target groups. Before all the lower candidates from among the grassroots could be elected, the Military

President, for almost cheap reasons, aborted the peaceful changeover before the last election – the presidential. His government expelled the electees. Hard-faced, this able leader looked blank in most photographs. By 1993, events appeared overheated and too tall for him. Public opinion rejected cheating: Groups shouted their angers to generate protests. The General, a skillful master, read the signs correctly and zig-zagged his exit. He bowed out to escape the looming crisis by, in his words “stepping aside”. Probably politics needed a business-drilled citizen.

§ Chief Ernest Sonekan, a Yoruba civilian success story, entered the system. His lot was to lead a new ~~business~~ organization called the Interim National Government (ING)<sup>83</sup>. But words deceive humankind, more so in politics. For him “authority” was a brief hour. He seemed to hold power without authority, because the army breathed down his neck. Easily, another top eye-glassed soldier, General Sani Abacha, a long insider, scared the acting civilians, well-dressed as they looked, away. Big money, noisy youth, intimidated citizenry – all looked away. From Abachanomics to General Abubakar, (1993-1998) a dictatorship rested on state terrorism, arm-twisting tactic, moneyed lobbying, youth

~~mobilization, big money contract, and home front politics~~<sup>84</sup>. These elements made unity empty because of devolution at the top and ethnic mininationalism at the bottom.

§ Nigerians, in effect continued to be born, to struggle on, and to die. Friends, relations, adventurers – all flocked to support the leader for differing reasons. The Consumer Society had arrived. Buying and selling foreign goods became more important than manufacturing local goods, Economic nationalism, General Babangida's re-discovery, proved weak and uneven. For "used cars" or "tokunbo", smuggling re-named "border trade" and fraud, styled "Igbuozu na high sea" (killing a corpse on the high seas) became trendy. Youth worshipped money everywhere, demoted education, "humiliated" the educated, and ignored old morality. By all means, success turned into a new god. More churches arose with shifting followings. "Incorporated" ones, possibly, the churches of the oppressed" elbowed their way into the missionary movement. National society went normless. Her ever-changing rules or methods must be noted while the European isms – socialism and capitalism attracted debates<sup>85</sup>. All brands, indeed, teach that big money is what capitalists get from

their competitions, no matter the level of poverty.

§ Upon this environment, strolled in General Abubakar, thrown up by the unhappy – happy chance of Abacha's sudden death. He maintained state power and bailed out fast through shepharding five fresh political parties. These campaigned for leadership in the planned Democracy for the Fourth Republic: The Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), the Alliance for Democracy (AD) and the All Peoples' Party (APP), to name the top ones. Hard grass rooting canvassing – from the primaries onward to the final conventions earned the PDP its leadership at the centre, in most states, and in majority local governments. President Olusegun Obasanjo, General turned politician, a tradie-modern Yoruba chief, re-planted Democracy. He aimed to give Nigerians a firm programme that would open the nation.

§ Even if folk wisdom suggests, of course wrongly that citizens do not learn any lessons from history, since it stands barren of them, this inquiry provides some. Because, history is the first public teacher of humankind. Chapter four agrees.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME LESSONS FROM THIS HISTORY

§ History is a continuous open social process. Inevitablism, and they are many, cannot be good guides. As such, statesmen, politicians, and other citizens learn its useful lessons<sup>86</sup> for their survival within their environments. Those range from Independence to poverty.

§ From 1960, this Independence wobbles ahead. None denies its values or problems or solutions. Nigerians, a new people to the world, enabled freedom by public international law. In that age, people hated empire-building, a once-popular demand. Yet to live is to face endless problems which fact teaches patience in, as well as hope for, nation-builders.

§ Wisdom, perhaps, includes noting down this fact. A pan - Nigeria nationalism fell to pieces by 1967. The pioneer nationalists, formed, adopted, and practised it. Their successors killed that ambition via de-nationalism. Today calls for a re-nationalism, an attempt to return to a Nigeria - wide loyalty to the state. Otherwise, patrioteers would replace and even control patriots. Without true patriotism in the midst of self -



seeking, the Anglo - Nigeria empire may break up into ministates.

§ Ministatehood arises from ethnic jealousies. Igbo, Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, Efik Edo and other ethnics sometimes beat loudest on their local drums and so ignore the national one. For an example, asked on arrival in the United States in 1979 "where are you from?", many nationals answered "Western State", Mid-Western State, East Central State, or Southeastern State". And so on. Nobody mentioned "Nigeria" first. Thus Nigerianness has been long coming. It demands working at through History - based education and civics.

§ Certainly, of course, local patriotisms have been feeding violences into national politics. Ethnic persecutions, anti-Igbo or Southern pogroms, urban riots, contract murders, and state tortures - these weaknesses spoil Nigeria's soul and image. In pre - coup times, the Western Region was on fire because politicals, called thugs, and other agents, worsened life by August 1965. Such badly - managed unrests, often linked to state - sponsors tied the Federal Government down with inaction till some active majors hanged old Nigeria. They, thereby, halted drift, suffering, and panic. Briefly, to their surprise.

§ Though fears and hopes were unequal, angers and tensions followed suit. "Militocrats", playing in wider politics, scratched some ethnic champions hard. Those replied with a counterrevolution – something critical that the majors failed to combine with their own movement. As regionalist politics mixed with local prides, their union poisoned the Nigerian environment enough to inject further violences. These, sad to note, ended in scapegoating and murdering many Igbo people. Ndigbo's counterattack was the mass escape from northern states to their homeland – the Eastern Region. That exodus that peppered the national crises toughened the Igbo.

§ Human suffering is a stubborn force. It turned so loud and cruel that victims decided to make a stand. They did so by dying on their feet rather than "living on their knees". That way, they would be free, secure, sovereign, and independent. On the one side, there stood the Revengers, on the other, the Avengers. Every bridge to place had fallen in. The gunners rushed on, probably, in complete ignorance of war. The civil war named sometimes the Nigeria – Biafra war, that lasted from mid - 1967 to mid - January 1970, passed into universal history. It came

around dressed in waste and blood. Though Death knocked both side's into doubting the wisdom of war, it proved nothing for the much – shouted unity, a key slogan during it. ~~Disunity~~ remains an issue since political violence never sleeps, since ethnic fears never die.

§ That outgoing war fathered another colonialism, by name, army rule. Developing roads, ports, and university won popular praise. Reconstruction, a surface event, missed war's homeland. That is the human heart. It is always as dark and treacherous as a forest. Soldier – adventurers held the stage but soon passed by as a tribe. But Nigeria and her people stay with their fears, hatreds, and groupisms. Building things up rather than human beings can thus be misleading.

§ Violence, civil war, bayonet politics: these came into the open. They brought and stressed the problems arising from the Federal Constitutions of 1960 to 1999. Readable or thoughtful, they had this misfortune that key unbelieving political elites applied them. Those workable laws became, in their hands, guilty documents from yesterday till tomorrow. Law usually fails whenever it ignores public opinion or else depends on uncommitted officials. Their failures need not

be forgotten now or in the future. The nation requires the rule-of-law, not the rule of man or of woman.

§ If such laws decompose through abuses, post-war reconstruction based on another regulation would be chancy. As later events showed, the reconstructionists helped the contractors, the local relief promoters, and the politicians directly but not the war weary citizens returning to ghost villages. Nothing, even foodstuffs, could soften their heartaches without attentive statesmanship. Decades after, observers still emphasize warfare's smoky face, the ex-soldier's hardheart or their sponsors' fishy eyes.

§ No balanced national history curriculum heals the wounds. For a low history diet has imprisoned ethnics in their localities. It has left their fears and hates unsolved. History gives nationalism. Nationalism builds nations. To govern against her or with a distorted knowledge while searching for unity amounts to combing the wind for it. Nigerian leaders require this All-mother. In her main role, she teaches humankind survival via wisdom.

§ Beside a poor historical education, Nigeria stands wealthy among nations. Tapping her resources without managerial

wisdom or caution enriches foreigners and their client hosts. Contract bridges, railways, secretariats, airports, oil pipelines involve mountains of naira. Within this abundance, several citizens live with hunger and sleep upon disease. If anything, waste kills nations while discouraging investors.

§ Who, citizens may ask, are those that fund investments: They own profit-seeking capital. Whether nationals, foreigners or combiners, they influence the economy much. In their actions, they become neo-colonial brokers who scheme for gains everywhere. Nigerians, as a result, serve as general consumers for foreign products. This weakened position re-invites imperialists. A senior player in African politics, Nigeria has to protect herself by investing in human capital, by educating the youths and by employing the workforce.

§ Since consumers change, nationals can adapt so fast when poverty booms. That evil buries Democracy alive and upsets most citizens. It feeds youth militance. Geographic control, for an instance, through vegetation, erosion management and farm settlement can be exploited by people-minded leaders. Otherwise, poverty, indeed poverities, like the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

(AIDS) all demand for a stable nation, practical leadership, and nationalist historical education.

§For the academic historian living in History's laboratory, namely, this wide world of change upon change across-time, books are timebound as well as situational. Conclusions, as asserted here, are open and wisely so.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

§ Nigerian history, in conclusion, dates back million years. From high antiquity to contemporary times, the land has been peopled by various ethnics, each living upon its environment or ecological zone. Traditional society moved on Nature's balance. That combined religion, economy, politics, and living. Independent communities had diplomacies, problems, achievements, and scientific technologies. British conquest, together with occupation through treaty, religion or education made Anglo-Nigeria. It was a colonial state whose double culture rested on racial supremacy. What the British achieved, at the best, was adding to traditional sciences and technologies. In 1960, they hurried off their retreat from autocracy — under Nigerianist pressure. Independence, nonetheless, carried joy, violence, sorrow, civil war, reconstruction, militarism, and disunity. Nigerians having suffered, however hard, never lost hope. Soldiermanship took turns with civilian mastership. Change upon change continued. The lessons from national history show continuities. De-nationalism lasts. National development swings, at the

least, because leaders underused History – the hinge of all subjects. In all generations, no matter the dangers faced, this field makes people wise and wiser. Nationalism, in this Epoch of Democracy, remains a main tool for nation – building. Every historian, indeed, has to summarise hills of facts to create a usable past. Nigerians must be historicized. Judging by all the ages of this evolution, doing that is a patriotic duty. And History has its own clock. It tells Nigerians, like all humankind, to beware of Time and People in a Democracy.



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