

Research Article

Discerning Ethnicity, Religion and Politics as Instruments of Social Relegation: The Northern Nigerian Philosophy on the Babu Group

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Abstract

This paper examines the role of ethnicity, religion and politics as instruments of social relegation, with specific emphasis on the Babu people of Nigeria amidst an extant Northern philosophy. In order to thoroughly explore the concern of the study, the paper employs a descriptive—historical methodology to evaluate the Northern Mafias' religious bigotry and exclusive treatment of the Babu group. Several variables were researched to buttress the argument that Religion has been the bane of social relegation in Nigeria, particularly in light of the Northern quest to relegate other groups, specifically non-Hausa/Fulani; non-Muslim groups into modern day slaves. To this end, the study contends that this legacy, launched by Othman Dan Fadio, has been the major cause of the oppression of the non-Muslims in Nigeria, particularly those of Northern Nigeria. In consequence, the study demonstrates how the Hausa/Fulani, Muslims have consistently marshalled the philosophy of divide and rule to place themselves at a cutting edge while the Babu group have been at the receiving end politically, socially, economically and religiously. Against this background, the paper argues that the church being the agent of transformation has a critical role in halting the usage of ethnicity, politics and religion over the autochthonous nationalities in the context of Nigeria's socio-political and socio-economic situations. While the paper addresses the question, in what important ways can the church in Northern Nigeria halt the wrong usage of these ideologies, it contributes to the field of religion, sociology, economy and politics, demonstrating that in the context of Northern Nigeria, religion, ethnicity and politics have been employed to marginalized the Babu group, thereby, placing them at a disadvantage position socially, economically and politically.

Keywords

Ethnicity, Religion, Politics, Relegation, Nigeria, Babu Group, Kanem-Bornu, Lord Lugard, Dan Fodio, Yakubu Gowon

1. Introduction

The constant overlap between ethnicity, religion and politics is so significant in Nigeria such that ignoring it is almost synonymous to ignoring the existence of the sun that shines on all and sundry. The history of this relationship in Nigeria,

the interface between ethnicity, religion and politics, is as old as the country itself. Uyi-Ekpen Ogbeide [1] paints this scenario thus,

[In Nigeria] ethnic groups are thrown into direct competi-

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tion with one another, for positions within the state agencies and commercial concerns, for the control of local markets, for admission to crowded schools, for induction into the armed forces and police, and for control of political parties...state power becomes the bone of contention between ethnic groups. In such a situation, ethnic groups may perceive themselves as involved in a 'zero-sum game' over state power, a game in which one group's failure is attributable to another's success.

John Markakis [2] is apt to note, "Ethnicity has emerged [as] a major contender for political powers. Its claims are strengthened by the current movement for democratization, decentralization, respect for human rights, and grassroots development." J. Dogara Gwamna [3] lends his voice. For him, "...religion can provide a strong basis for identity, social mobilization and a tool to legitimize power. In the case of the Middle Belt area, identity contests are rooted in ethnicity, religion and other factors." In the foreword of the book *Tainted Legacy* Patrick Sookhdeo captures the interplay between ethnicity, religion and politics. He states,

...the present situation does not arise simply from ethnic differences, as is often suggested, but is deeply rooted in the history of West Africa, dominated as it was by the mighty empires of the Sokoto Caliphate and the Sultanate of Kanem-Bornu and their Islamic colonialism. This Islamic rule was consolidated by British Colonialism, employing Lord Lugard's policy of indirect rule. The centralized administration of the Fulanis appears to have appealed to British minds. Lugard himself certainly held that Islam was a superior religion and culture and that the Fulanis' fairer skins made them 'natural rulers' over the darker 'pure' Africans. Thus, the British set Muslims to rule over non-Muslims (Turaki [4]).

It can be said, therefore, that it is an imperative for Muslims to thrive on political power to enforce their agenda upon the society. Ethnicity, religion and politics are seen to be instruments of relegation of all other religions to the background. Islam seeks to replace or supplant other religions and also use its adherents to replace the adherents of other religions in political positions. They use politics and ethnocentrism as vehicles to propagate their agenda (W. C. Troll [5]). This perspective is bolstered in one of my recent publications citing the Abuja Islamic declaration of 1989 thus, "To ensure the appointment of only Muslims into strategic national and international posts of member nations." [6]. Elsewhere, the declaration reads, "To ensure that only Muslims are elected to political positions," [6].

This sentiment is expressed in the teaching of the Qur'an and the Hadith that severally and strongly support this agenda to fight people of different faith or religion and establish Islamic community (Umma). Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His apostle nor acknowledge the religion of truth (even if they are) of the People of the Book until they pay Jizya with willing submission and feel

themselves subdued (Sura 9:29). In the words of I. S. Zabadi [7], "Leadership (of Nigeria) is to be provided by the (umma) Ulama class." Thus, "The theory of the Northerner as the natural ruler of the country would also guarantee the support of the 'North.' So, State institutions and policies must take an Islamic outlook by its being used to advance the religion. Little wonder, the position of the late Sardauna was termed the Premier of the North as religious leader. Hence, he used the Government to set up Arabic Schools, take charge of the Hajj operations and strengthen the Sharia courts."

Elsewhere the Qur'an (Sura 47:4) as quoted by Turaki [4] states,

"Therefore, when ye meet the unbelievers (in fight) smite at their neck: at length when ye have thoroughly subdued them bind a bond firmly (on them): thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom: Until the war lays down its burden."

Borrowing from Matthew Hassan Kuka's [8] thought, *The key religious adherents (of Islam) have turned religion from a weapon of love to an arsenal of fear and savagery while claiming that they are acting in the name of religion. They believe that they are acting to expand the frontiers of power and authority of their religion, that they believe they are defending religion and working for God. Zabadi [7] is right to articulate that the Northern elites have established "Ruling houses in all emirates of the Caliphate and recognized as deriving from the will of God." Elsewhere, he speaks [7], "It is these emergent ruling families that have exclusively monopolized power in Northern Nigeria."*

Against this background, this paper attempts to substantiate the theory that there is a conspiracy and grand plan to Islamize Nigeria, using ethnicity, politics and religion as the instruments of relegation of other faiths towards achieving this plan. In Wusasa, a suburb in Zaria of Kaduna State, Jan H. Boer [9] reports, "Almost everyone was molested, especially the Christians. They were asked to recite the Muslim creed. Some were beaten...and left for dead, naked on the street. Mrs. Denejo Ibrahim and Mrs. Asaber Naandeti were victims, while some were ruffled and cut." Against this backdrop, several variables are researched to buttress the fact that ethnicity and religion have been the backbone of politics in Nigeria, particularly for the Northern quest to relegate Babu groups into modern day slaves. A timely example noted by Zabadi [7] reveals, "Instinctive Islamic features and symbols, such as the attempt to make public buildings at both the federal and state levels to have Islamic/eastern architectural designs." In this paper, I use the phrase "Babu Group" to refer to the cluster of autochthonous non-Hausa/Fulani; non-Muslim ethnic groups in Nigeria who bear the brunt of the Northern philosophy of dominance over the non-Muslim Hausa/Fulani ethnic groups. According to Boer [9], "This type of violent campaign of Muslims against Christians is unprecedented in the history of our country." In the realm of politics for instance, Boer [9] paints, "This cam-

paign of violent religious politics has reached the very dangerous levels it has because several powerful media organs, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria has been allowed to be used by a tiny backward oligarchy which survives on inciting one section of Nigeria against another.”

In a paper tagged, ‘Submitted to the Kaduna State Commission of enquiry into the recent disturbances in Kaduna State in 1987,’ Chief Daniel Gowon (cited by Boer [9]) outlined the waves of vandalistic campaigns, noting, “There were four waves in all. The first wave of the campaign of terror comprised of multiple of hundreds of ‘Jihad I Allahu Akbar’ chanting individuals whose job was pulling down the fence, destruction and setting churches on fire.”

1.1. Using Ethnicity, Politics and Religion to Relegate: Some Pointers

In what ways is ethnicity, religion and politics used as instruments of relegation in Nigeria? Turaki [4] mentioned,

The plan to Islamize Nigeria, particularly the north, came to existence as early as 1804-1808. Fulanis came in from Guinea and Senegal to the northern part of Nigeria. Usman dan Fodio led in jihad against the Hausa kingdoms of the northern Nigeria, and the forces of Usman dan Fodio slowly took over more and more of Hausa kingdoms through war and by 1810, Fulani had already conquered all Hausa Land.

During the colonial era, the administrators favored the Muslims, thereby, further championing the Northern philosophy of dominance over the Babu group. This provided the impetus of relegating the non-Muslim groups into slavery, which is the sole objective of jihad—a means of creating, “Political power that results in Islam being made a state religion. Islam informs and influences people’s conception of identity, authority and legitimacy. It also influences socio-political organizations,” (Turaki [4]). This is only possible “by bringing both the Muslim and the non-Muslim groups together under one colonial structure and showing preferential treatment for the Muslims over the non-Muslim groups,” (Turaki [4]).

This philosophy is well laid out in the Abuja declaration. The Abuja Declaration is the name given to a communiqué issued after the Islam in Africa conference (IAC) held in Abuja, Nigeria from 24-28 November 1989. The conference was organized by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and it agreed to set up the Islam in Africa Organization (IAO). This meeting only seems to have visited the 1804-1808 agenda. Frans Jozef Servaas Wijzen [10] notes the declaration was to the effect that Muslims should unite throughout Africa, the curricula at various educational establishments should conform to Muslim ideas, the education of women should be attended to, the teaching of Arabic should be encouraged, and Muslims should support economic relations with Islamic areas worldwide. It noted further that “Muslims in Africa had been deprived of rights to be gov-

erned under sharia law and they should strengthen their struggle to reinstate it,” (Wijzen [10]).

The Abuja declaration comprises most of the African countries, but the conference was sponsored majorly by the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria during the regime of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. The declaration asserted that Nigeria should become a Federal Islamic Sultanate and the Headquarters of West African Islamic Countries. The aim of the conference was to spread Islam in Africa and only Muslims should be appointed to strategic governing positions, non-Muslim should be eradicated, and Western law should be replaced with Islamic Sharia law. The Islamization of Nigeria as a country was the frontier of the meeting so that it should be an Islamic country (Wijzen [10]).

In retrospect, it is therefore clear that certain events and activities that took place in the history of Nigeria and certain policies that were enacted were not just sheer coincidences. These events cannot be exhaustively discussed, but a quick review of such events from the pre-colonial era, the colonial and the post-colonial era will further substantiate the argument of this paper.

1.2. Ethnicity, Politics and Religion as Instrument of Recolonization: The Context of Taking of Mission Schools

A quick look at the taking-over of Christian schools during General Yakubu Gowon’s administration buttresses the fact that it was not just a coincidence but a deliberate means to recolonize (Islamize) the nation via the church. Historically, education was used by the various mission movements as a vehicle for evangelism; and their initial concept of education for Africans was rudimentary enlightenment just enough to enable the converts read the Scriptures and moral instructions (Ushe Mike Ushe [11]). And because education is emancipatory, the role of Christianity to halt the evils of the slave trade and slavery is not often spoken about. Turaki [4] points that “The early Christian missionary pioneers to Africa were motivated by two principal concerns: to root out slavery in Africa and to stop the spread of Islam, which perpetrated it.” This suggests that the colonialists in Nigeria and the missionaries had conflict of interest; the colonialists favored Islam while the Christian missionaries were out to stop the spread of Islam and slave trade, and indeed, the British colonialists saw Christianity as a threat to their agenda to exploit the tropical Africa. In the Middle-Belt in particular, Turaki [4] aptly notes,

The work of Christian missionaries brought a measure of freedom to the ethnic nationalities since the non-Muslims under British-Muslim rule were subjected to forced labor and servitude, and Christianity was seen as liberating. In some places in the Middle Belt, Christian converts rejected the servitude and inferior status imposed upon them, in some cases refusing to submit to forced labor or tax payment. The allegiance of the people shifted from the Brit-

ish-Muslim rulers to the new missionary–convert teachers and evangelists.

This led to the displeasure of many British residences against the activities of Christian missions and the subsequent regulation and banning of Christian missions from Muslim territories. Lugard refused to allow the work of the Hausa Mission (CMS/SIM) with Muslims, but he was willing to have them work with non-Muslims because he thought the non-Muslims had more need of civilization (Turaki [4]). The Christian mission were viewed as a threat because they brought powerful agents of social change into the Middle Belt, while on the other hand the educational policies of the colonial administration were based upon European racial theory and were hostile to the spreading of Western civilization and Christianity (Turaki [4]). It was within this context that the Christian schools were established. Ushe [11] traces the establishment of the schools,

The CMS set the pace by opening the first school at Badagry in 1859. It was followed up by that of the Methodist in 1877. Although up to 1882 the colonial government had not indicated any interest in educating the people in their colonies. Efforts by the missions were only subsidized with grants-in aid from the government. The first venture of government in education was in 1909 which saw the emergence of King's College, Lagos. When Lord F. Lugard settled in the North as the first High Commissioner, he specifically instructed the Christian missions to direct their education programs to the non-Muslim areas.

It was aimed at regulating the spread of education through the Christian missionaries in order to control the rate of social change, especially in Muslim areas. Lugard is cited to have said “Racial distinction should be accepted as the true basis of African education” (Turaki [4]), hence, he objected to the teaching of the missionaries on ethnic equality.

This philosophy of favoring the Hausa/Fulani Muslims against the Babu group was responsible for the subordination of the non-Muslims under Hausa-Fulani rule, hence, “The Muslim Hausa-Fulani, who had no ancestry in the Middle Belt, were made the rulers of the non-Muslims and they claimed land rights in the area of the non-Muslims” (Turaki [4]). It is against this backdrop that subsequent regimes, particularly the military regime operated and thereby, further championing the cause of Islamic dominance on the non-Muslims--the Babu group. Alhaji Usman Faruk, Former governor of the defunct North-western state, Kaduna, is reported in the *Daily Trust* of Jan 9th2014 to have defended the taking over of private and missionaries' schools in Nigeria. He said,

I was the one that initiated the idea of government taking over private and missionaries' schools in the country... Shortly after the civil war, I observed that all the schools belonging to Christian and Muslim missionaries had been abandoned and it was against this backdrop that I raised the issue during our Northern governors' forum meeting in Kaduna. My colleagues unanimously bought the idea as

they all lamented that the schools in their states had been abandoned. Since the situation was the same in the six Northern states then, we the governors agreed that we should take over the schools (Ismail Mudashir [12]).

He provided details of how the idea was implemented, pointing that the six Attorney Generals met and resolved that all the schools be assessed, to know their actual value and their owners should be invited and compensated accordingly... When the memo got to Gowon, he was happy with the initiative. He then said the memo should be adopted as that of the Supreme Military Council. In addition to this, he said admission into Federal Government Colleges should be done nationwide. He also said that admission into federal universities should be done by quota (Mudashir [12]).

Since there was already a legacy of Muslim Hausa-Fulani dominance, which was consolidated by the British, this legacy found its way beyond the colonial regimes. This is true because it was a win-win situation for the British. Gowon's regime should not be expected to sanitize the nation from the Muslim quest for dominance; the regime was also not free from the corruption that characterized the previous regime. These schools were taken over within a regime that was characterized with unaccountable wealth by the public office holders that were supposed to cater for the different institutions under government (Adeleja [13]). It will therefore not be out of place to locate the taking over of schools within the Muslim quest for dominance theory. Care Fronting [14] reveals, “The alliance between the British and the Fulani aristocracy gave birth to the system of ‘indirect rule.’ Though sovereignty lay with the British crown, the ‘native authorities’ remained in direct control of the population.”

This is also true of Nigeria even after the independence, hence, the nationalization of the mission schools was not just motivated by the quest to improve on them because they had been abandoned, rather it was motivated by the Muslim–non-Muslim hierarchical classification, and since the Christian missionary schools were the liberating agent, the best action is to cripple it.

The civilization of the non-Muslim group was a threat to the British; hence the relationship between the British and Hausa-Fulani Muslims will be more beneficial for the British. Adeleja [13] reports an interview conducted for Harold Smith, a colonial administrator in Nigeria who, out of a troubled conscience granted an interview before his death in 2011. He said,

Our agenda was to completely exploit Africa. Nigeria was my duty post. When we assessed Nigeria, this was what we found in the southern region; strength, intelligence, determination to succeed, well established history, complex but focused life style, great hope and aspirations... the East is good in business and technology, the West is good in administration and commerce, law and medicine, but it was a pity we planned our agenda to give power ‘at all cost’ to the northerner. They seemed to be submissive and silly of a kind. Ours was accomplished by destroying the

opposition at all fronts....

Fronting [14] revealed that many colonial officials did not disguise their contempt for the 'semi-civilized mission boys' who tried to imitate the behavior of the whites. While the large majority of the Muslim population was subservient and willing to cooperate, the Christian converts were often perceived as tiresome competition. They were anxious to appropriate the knowledge of the Europeans, but with the intention of taking over their privileged positions. Consequently, the mission schools were seen as breeding grounds for African nationalism. It was here that the modern elite which later revolted against the foreign rule of the whites evolved (Fronting [14]).

In the late 1960s Nigeria nationalized primary education in the North, which is the only way to control and regulate it as a breeding ground for African nationalism, which was both a challenge to the British and the Hausa-Fulanis. The nationalization did not stop there, because in the early 1970s it nationalized secondary schools, teacher training colleges, and hospitals. Turaki [4] maintains that "One of the arguments for the nationalization was that Christian missions used them for Proselytizing." Turaki [4] adds that what the Christian missionaries were accused of then, has turned out to be the very thing Muslims are today. "Today Muslims in West Africa established Islamic institutions that they hope will eventually replace the secular institutions of the state."

It is unfortunate that the activities of Christian missions in the region have been significantly reduced, but Islamic mission has witnessed a dramatic rise. Thus, the continuous quest to relegate the Christians as second-class citizens seems to be unending, even within their indigenous states, and the taking over Christian schools is no doubt part of the grand conspiracy.

It is worth noting that the government of the predominantly Muslim states have constantly sort to impose Sharia, and anything that opposes this ambition is controlled, regulated or ultimately crippled by the system. We have recently seen another significant move to infiltrate the educational system through the imposition of Arabic language in its curriculum. Curriculum of education is a mapped out learning activity for learners that eventually is taught in the classroom by educators. A curriculum is developed to guide learning activities through the content that suits the expected outcome of the learning experience. For this reason, while Bernhard Ott [15], calls it, "The structure of an entire course of study, an entire educational path," Hardy [16] says it is, "The overall effects of an entire educational package." The question now is, why is the imposition of Arabic language such a big deal? Some individuals have argued that there is no cause to worry. But one may ask, is the Arabic language Nigeria's first language of communication such that offering it will promote the language of Nigerians? The truth is Arabic Language is rather a language of a few who have borrowed it to propagate a religious belief among the religious group. Since not all the adherents of this religious belief read or understand the lan-

guage, should not a curriculum be developed with the intention of meeting the need of these individuals and not overall needs of the society?

It is therefore obvious that the imposition of Arabic language in Nigeria's curriculum should only be seen as a tool of oppression and suppression of Babu religious groups in Nigeria. Or, why not the inclusion into the curriculum languages of other religions (e.g., Greek and or Hebrew) in the country? Since Islam strongly promotes acculturation, which is a process whereby an individual or group acquires the cultural characteristics of another, either through direct or indirect contact and interaction, the agenda for dominance over other cultures and languages is therefore obvious. If Arabic language must be adopted, shouldn't it be a collective responsibility of Nigerian citizens to agree to use it as a recognized and accepted foreign language like in the case of French? Therefore, if curriculum must be what it should be to meet the need of the society, Arabic meets only the needs of a particular sect of the society and so should not be accepted to be part of our curriculum, and its imposition can be concluded to have a religious relegatory undertone. It is obvious that the North will continue to seek ways to cripple the educational system through policies that will favor them, and the quest for dominance can be said to be threaten by the liberating power of the Christian mission education on the non-Muslim group.

The struggle to maintain dominance by the Muslims over non-Muslims will not cease, but another variable that militates against the quest for dominance of the Hausa-Fulani Muslim in the North, which was consolidated by the British, was the area of economic development of Nigeria as nation. The Northern region lagged hopelessly behind since the discovery of the enormous oil resources in the far away Niger Delta, down south of the country, which had been tapped as early as the 1950s. Hence, if the North were to profit from this wealth, its elite had to secure its political dominance. Aladeitan [17] comments on the importance of natural resources as essential commodities, "Which are at the heart and soul of a nation's economic survival, and the definition of natural resource ownership as a bundle of rights."

This understanding no doubt informs the quest for control, because ownership means control, and control of natural resources can be traced to a nation's political, social, and economic considerations across the world.

In the case of Nigeria, Aladeitan [17] submits,

The vesting of ownership and control of minerals and mineral resources in the Nigerian state is historical and dates back to the colonial era. This has had a great impact on the country's legal system and conception of property rights. As a British colony, most laws in Nigeria were fashioned after those of Britain. Nigeria, therefore, inherited a colonial legacy in which ownership of mineral resources was vested in the crown of England. This was due to the fact that the country, as a corporate entity, was regarded as the property of Great Britain. Thus, the then su-

zerain authority and, naturally, the minerals in Nigeria—whether oil and gas or solid minerals—also belonged to Britain.

From the British point of view, the conservative elite of the North, which had formed the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) in 1951, was much better suited to maintaining stability in a time of transition from the colonial era to independence. In 1954, the protectorate received a federal constitution, which established an African government with extensive powers for each region. This meant that NPC politicians could establish their influence in the administrative centers of the North without much interference from the federal capital. Moreover, the Northern Region remained a single political unit, notwithstanding the embittered resistance of the non-Muslim minorities. Consequently, the NPC, whose primacy in the North was based on the dominance of the Muslim population, an ideology that Takaya [18] calls, "Survival strategies of the Kaduna Mafia," and Logams [19] calls it, "A pragmatic policy which was used as a strategy to maintain political stability in the north, "also had the opportunity to bring the minority regions of the Middle Belt under its control.

It is important to now ask: how was the dominance of the north maintained? As early as 1939, the South of Nigeria had been divided into Western and Eastern provinces, while the North remained a single administrative unit even though it encompassed three-quarters of Nigeria's territory. Likewise, in terms of total population, the Northern Region appeared to have a slight edge on the South according to the 1952-3 census. As a result, the North was granted more seats than the West and East combined, when the first independent federal parliament was elected in 1959. Any party that succeeded in bringing the Northern Region under its control was in a good position to secure power in Lagos. Indeed, this was the only chance for the old elite of the Fulani to prevent its lapse into insignificance. Deprived of the means of controlling the government of independent Nigeria, the entire North would have been further marginalized. On this backdrop, Ekhato [20] reevaluates the Public Regulation of the Oil and Gas Industry in Nigeria. He submits that there are various strands of ownership of oil theories prevailing in different countries. Ownership rights over oil are dependent on a number of factors or conditions, such as, the political system in place at the time of the determination and the instrumentality of the law in any country.

In Nigeria, most of the oil-related laws were promulgated by military regimes, which are typically unitary in nature and tend to be socialist or centrist inclined. Indeed, Nigeria's military rulers were at the forefront of centralizing the ownership and control of oil and gas resources in the federal government of Nigeria. As a result, Adamolekun ([21]; cf. 2004) submits that it is common among many analysts of governmental systems to describe military governments as dictatorships, and perhaps what mostly characterized the thirteen-year period of martial law in Nigeria was the lack of

electoral legitimacy that describe the three successive military governments. This being the case, Nigeria operates under the domineering legal system of ownership of mineral resources established by the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution, Petroleum Act and Exclusive Economic Zone Act, amongst other statutes, which vest the exclusive ownership of mineral resources in the federal government of Nigeria. Hence, the federal government of Nigeria owns and controls the ownership of mineral resources. Laws, such as the Constitution of Nigeria, the Land Use Act and Petroleum Act, amongst others, which vest the total ownership and control of mineral resources in the federal government to the detriment of the states, local governments and the local communities wherein the mineral resources are situated. The plausible argument for the federal government's ownership of mineral resources is that the minerals (oil and gas included) in or upon any land in Nigeria are viewed by the state as public goods and government's intervention in their exploitation becomes simply a case of public use (Ekhato [20]).

Nonetheless, it is obvious that the federal government ownership of the mineral resources for the benefit and development of the country, Nigeria, has not been truly realized. But the question is, will the private ownership of these mineral resources help either? We can therefore situate the policies guiding the ownership of petroleum and mineral resources within the discriminatory practices that seek to limit the influence of Christians and other non-Muslims predominantly in the southern part of Nigeria. This policy of federal government ownership will not favor Christians within an Islamic theocratic government. Turaki [4] opines that "Christianity and other religions find it difficult to survive or co-exist within such government." It is clear that since the north forms the government of the Nigerian state, the policies and laws guiding the ownership of natural resources is aimed at empowering the North, and not really nationalistic as it claims to be. Consequently, the political position of Nigeria today can be seen in favor of Muslims; it will be of no surprise that a Muslim is claiming the political power and even the country as Islamic. What is happening now in Nigerian political system is the implementation of what has been planned long ago. The comment of the update of the 1989 Abuja declaration and the Islamization of Nigeria, Aliyu Gwarzo in his speech in Point Blank news titled, "It is Either the Koran or The Sword," reported by an anonymous reporter [22] in the *Point-Blank* news is cited to have said,

When I say that the presidency must come to the north next year, I am referring to the Hausa-Fulani core north and not any northern Christian or Muslim minority tribe... when we are talking about leadership in the North and in Nigeria, Allah has given it to us, the Hausa-Fulani. In return for the good works of our ancestors, Allah through the British gave us Nigeria to rule and to do with as we please. Since 1960, we have been doing that and we intend to continue. We must fight and we will fight back in order to keep it. The war has just begun, the Mujahadeen are

more than ready and by Allah we shall win. If they do not want ISIS in Nigeria then they must give us back the presidency and our political power.

With speeches like this, one would not doubt that some tragic events that have resulted to the crippling of the resources of Nigeria are all planned and orchestrated to further prove that ‘it is either the Koran or the sword.’

2. Threat and Trick as Powerful Ethnic, Political and Religious Weapons of Relegation: The Burning of Markets in Nigeria

The consistent burning of certain markets in different regions of Nigeria, the Garki Model Market, old Bida Market, the Jos Main Market and several other markets across the country in which the blame is wrongly shifted to electricity fault is part of the gimmicks to deceive Nigerians into believing falsehood. Ajayi [23] in the *Sunday Magazine* reports that a study carried out under the auspices of National Association of Nigeria Traders (NANTS) indicates that the country’s economy lost over N5.3trn to market fires between May 1999 and March 2016. The report shows that 49 markets across Nigeria were razed between 2010 till date. It reveals that over 600 lives were lost while over 10,000 shops were destroyed. There were about 15 fire incidences in markets across the country in 2016 alone and 100 per cent of the affected markets had no insurance coverage. Electricity issues were blamed for about 85 per cent of the fires (Ajayi [23]).

An eagle looks at the burning of the Jos Main Market, for example, reveals astonishing facts that further affirms an undertone of Islamic agenda. Kingston [24] notes that the market was, “Constructed by the first military administrator, police commissioner Joseph Deshi Gomwalk after the creation of Plateau State and located in Jos North Local Government Area in 1975.” The ultra-modern market popularly known as “Terminus Market” project went beyond Gomwalk’s 4 years’ administration due to its complexity and vastness, so he handed over its completion to Chief Solomon Lar in 1979. The market had a unique design which made it one of the most attractive shopping centers in the state which made the federal Government regard it as one of the major tourist attractions in the country. People from all local governments of Plateau State and neighboring states such as Bauchi, Kaduna and different states of the federation patronized the market on a daily basis. Nanzip [25] states, “This influx of people from different places makes the market very busy and congested.” The huge complex accommodated at least 3,500 traders and had an open space at the base of the market which was meant to accommodate at least 2,000 shops. Hence the potential for revenue, particularly for the empowerment of Plateau State, a Middle Belt state was huge.

All these targets changed when a mysterious fire left the complex in rubble. According to Mvochou [26], “Few years

ago the ultra-modern market in Jos, one of the largest markets in the West African sub-region, was razed down in a matter of hours and the people and government of the state are yet to recover from the loss.” More so, when the mysterious outbreak occurred in February, 2002, it took the state fire service 2 days to put it out. The market which served for about 16 years was left in ruins. Subsequently, the market could not provide a return on capital invested in it by the government. No wonder, Obatere [27], a *Vanguard Newspaper* reporter in Lagos, in 2002, cited Chief Solomon Lar who once noted, “Jos main market fire was not an accident.” He went further to emphasize that the burning of the market would not be unconnected with the ongoing campaign by anti-democratic forces to discredit the country’s young democracy and create chaos (Obatere [27]).

In 2009, the then Director of Fire Service Mr. Gabriel Fom cited by Mvochou [26] says the major causes of fire outbreak in Nigeria are, “Carelessness, ignorance, cooking fire, e.g., boiling ring and careless smoking.” Notwithstanding, the burning of Jos main market is more than that, prior to the incidents, all those selling goods outside the building were driven away from the premises by the government, this became a law because they prevented customers from entering the main building of the market to buy, and the traders occupying the shop must pay rent whether they sale or not. After the exercise, the next thing was the ruining of the market. Some have suggested that envy by enemies of the state who did not want the state to grow financially through revenue collection could be another reason for the burning of the market. Majority of the population of the traders, particularly outside the market were Muslims, and since the government did not allow them to sale outside, the theory that they could be responsible for the burning the market down could be true (Mvochou [26]).

Presently, the market has clusters of shops erected by traders at the foot of the now ruined market while other traders take on the streets to display their wares for sale and contest the use of the road with vehicles. In an oral interview with Usman who sales second-hand clothes laments that “Currently about 70% of buying and selling takes place in Terminus within the vicinity of the main market. “So, we can now see that the mysterious fire brought the complex to its knees, that it never recovered could truly be orchestrated by some of the traders. The market that was a tourist attraction in Jos is now a nightmare to the government and citizens alike as the ruined stores serves as hideouts that provide accommodation for criminals in the city; drug addicts, robbers, rapists, Boko Haram militia etc. Thus, situating the burning down of this market within the Islamic agenda will highly be supported, because the economic development of Plateau State is not beneficial to advancing the northern philosophy of dominance and relegation of non-Muslim groups, instead it could serve as a huge threat.

Another subtle incident that is an indicator of the northern philosophy of relegation is the sacking of Christians from

government offices by Col. Hameed Ali and, in consolidation, in recent times by Malam Nasiru Ahmad El-Rufai of Kaduna. Colonel Ali was born in Kano State on the 15th January 1955 and was a former military administrator of Kaduna State (August 1996-August 1998) during the military regime of General Sani Abacha. Colonel Ali as governor, in October 1997 sacked about 30,000 striking civil servants in Kaduna State, and detained 18 local government chairmen. In fact, a journalist who reported on the sacking was allegedly arrested, severely beaten, then taken to the government house and further tortured. The story which was published in *Tempo Magazine* was entitled "Goodbye Justice." The story was later discredited and proven to be false. Ali played a very active role in the funding of Buhari's campaign as head of the crowd funding project. Ali after retirement, became the secretary of the Arewa Consultative Forum, a northern lobbying group. President Muhammadu Buhari in 2016 appointed Colonel Ali as the Comptroller General of Customs stating that he is satisfied with his military background, antecedents, modest lifestyle and anti-corruption profile, and he is convinced Colonel Ali would do well in that office. We've heard it over and over how the Senate summoned Hameed Ali to National Assembly in order for him to explain himself yet he remains adamant by even refusing to wear his official Custom's uniform (Ibraheem Hamza Muhammad [28]).

This scenario takes us back to the immediate past governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai, who was elected during the 2015 general elections. He seems to be following in the antecedence of Ali. El-Rufai was the former Director General of the Bureau of Public Enterprises, he headed the privatization agency in Nigeria and also the former minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja from July 2003 to 29 May 2007. As Governor of Kaduna State, between 2017 and 2021 he sacked in different instances over 60,790 civil servants. Viz, 21, 780 Primary School Teachers, over 33,000 staff of Government parastatals disengaged, 7, 310 Local Government workers sacked, 1,700 Primary Health Care workers sacked and 11,000 currently penciled for disengagement and conversion to casual and contract staff the reason been, because they are unqualified for the job. According to him, sacking of incompetent teachers/civil servants predated his administration, as previous governments sacked especially, teachers with fake qualifications. The statistic for disengaged teachers as reported stands at: "Out of the 21,780 teachers who 'failed' the test, the spread of the victims across the 3 senatorial zones of the state are as follows: Northern Kaduna 1,557; Central Kaduna 4,567; Southern Kaduna 17,865! This means that 82% of those sacked are from Southern Kaduna!" (*Everyday Nigeria*, 19th November 2017, see also; NLC: EL-RUFAI'S SCORE CARD ON LABOUR MATTER, 17/5/2021, cf. dx). This statistic could hardly say otherwise than that the sacking was religio-ethnic and politically incited; being it that Southern Kaduna is the Christian hub of the State. It also shows that the governor is only building on the foundation of one of his predecessors

such as Colonel Ali. During Col. Ali's sacking game, it was the Christians who were the majority in civil service. In fact, the few Muslims that were sacked with the many Christians were later said to be reinstated.

The same method applied also in El-Rufai's regime. They do this in order to weaken the Christians politically, religiously, economically and otherwise. While EL-Rufai was minister of the Federal Capital Territory, he demolished houses and properties worth billions of Nairas in the name of "Abuja geographic master plan" but 95% of those houses and properties belonged to the Christians, yet Obasanjo was not aware that he was doing it against his own brothers and sisters. It was alleged that El-Rufai sponsored his Fulani brothers with arms and empowered them with money against the Southern Kaduna indigenes. Colonel Ali as soon as he assumed office as the Comptroller General of Customs, gave the directive that high-ranking officers be retired. He stated, "That the retirements were part of measures to kick-start the repositioning and reorganization of the service for improved performance," (Muhammad [28]). But is that true? It is obvious that majority of the officers were Christians, who posed a threat to the fulfillment of Islamic agenda.

To further substantiate the connection between Islamic agenda and the events enumerated above, an article on the *Vanguard* by Femi Fani-Kayode [29] reports the words of Adamu Mohammed, which reechoes the statement of Aliyu Gwarzo Mohammed was cited to have said that "Ever since President Muhammadu Buhari took over the mantle of leadership of this great country Nigeria, we (Hausa-Fulanis) have come under severe media attacks from enemies of progress. "He added,

...let me make something clear to you, we hate you even more and we can never love you because you are all infidels. If you do not want to give us your cursed land, we will rear our cattle not only on your farmlands but also in your churches. If I have a way, there will not be any church in this country, especially in the north.... That is why I am so much happy with governor El-Rufai who is living up to the expectations of Allah in Kaduna State. We are not pleased with President Muhammadu Buhari who is too slow to implement everything we asked him to do in this country, he has not even done 20% of northern (Islamic) agenda.... We will continue killing you in large numbers until you are truly submissive to us as your slave masters. We will not stop killing you until we take over your land as a conquered territory....(Femi Fani-Kayode [29]).

It will be unrealistic to ignore the fact that in the present dispensation of governance in Nigeria, the situation of Nigeria and the issue of herdsmen and Fulani colony gives a clear prove that Hausa-Fulani invasion on non-Islamic communities or groups has been consolidated in full phase. Badu Salisu Ahmadu, the National President of The Fulani National Movement (FUNAM), had an extensive deliberation on the state of the nation in the context of recent killings and

the nation uproar in Kano, the capital city of Kano State. Among other things deliberated by FUNAM were the attacks by cattle rustlers, abduction of Fulani men and women in some parts of Nigeria, the displacement of Fulani traditional settlements in Northern Nigeria and some parts of southern Nigeria, stealing of properties belonging to Fulani cattle owners amongst other issues. After the extensive deliberations the following declarations were made by FUNAM:

First, the killings in Benue State of Tiv is well deserved. It was a revenge attack on the series of onslaught on the Fulani that was horrendous on November 17, 2017 when 30 Fulani men and women were killed in Nasarawa State. We notice the recalcitrant culture of the Tiv people as demonstrated even during the 1804 Jihad when they obstructed our ordained conquest of Nigeria. Second, we condemn the media propaganda being wage against Fulani and supported by Yoruba, Igbo, and their bigotry allies in the Middle Belt. Third, we are aware of plots by the minority ethnic groups in the Middle Belt to attack Fulani settlements (Omoleye Omoruyi [30]).

In the Fourth to the sixth point FUNAM maintains, *we have asked all Fulani across West Africa to raise money and arms to prosecute the oncoming war. We call on all Fulani to prepare for this Holy war. There is no going back. All over the world, Nigeria is the only country given to Fulani by God. Fifth, we oppose the anti-grazing laws which obstruct the ability of Fulani to move freely and stay anywhere in Nigeria. The Fulani, if not for the British would have actually conquered the entire Nigeria which God has ordained as our dominion. Sixth, the cattle colony is the only solution to the crisis. Whether the Federal Government or State Governments accepts or not, we have asked all Fulani herdsmen all over West Africa to move to Nigeria and penetrate every corner for the upcoming Jihad. We have asked them to be armed since it seems it is the only language Nigeria understands. The Nigerian Government has failed to protect us (Omoruyi [30]).*

FUNAM's Seventh—last point vouchsafes in no uncertain terms the Hausa/Fulani agenda against the Babu group,

We warn those who oppose the Fulani cattle trade to be cautious of the consequences. We are ready for the worse. We are prepared for war. The hope for peace is if only attacks on Fulani herdsmen stop and the Fulani is allowed to settle anywhere that the Fulani chose to settle in Nigeria. We are Nigerians and are free to settle anywhere we desire with our commerce and our values to the glory of Almighty Allah. Any attempts to reverse these demands will be met with Holy uprising never before seen in the History of Nigeria and in the scale compared only with the 1804 jihad. A word is enough for the wise. The Fulani is capable of defending itself (Omoruyi [30]).

From the declaration of the Fulani leader, it shows that what they are doing right now in Nigeria can be linked to the mandate of their forefathers in the jihad of Usman dan Fodio.

Turaki [4] maintains, "The Fulani or Fulbe moved into the Hausa land in large numbers, and in 1804 became the religious and political rulers after Usman Dan Fodio, the Shehu (Sheikh) of the Sokoto Caliphate. Fulani established Islamic rule over the conquered areas of Hausa land."

The strategy is hidden only from those who are not carefully realizing, and looking at the situation of Nigeria and the Middle-Belt. Thus, the proposed Cattle Colony is surely part of the plan of Islamizing Nigeria.

Truth cannot be despised, either by political or economic events; the Fulani herdsmen will take advantage of any process to implement their Islamic agenda to Islamize the Middle Belt and the entire Nigeria as a country. If the present Nigerian regime under President Tunubu Ahmad Bola wants to implement any project that will have a nationalistic importance, then it should be the 2014 Nigerian National Conference (2014 Confab) which was convened during President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Jonathan is reported to have said the 2014 confab holds the answers to most of what Nigerians are agitating for today, he adds that his administration did not have enough time to implement the conference recommendations, given that the report was submitted to him in August 2014, a few months before the 2015 general elections (Nkwachukwu [31]).

Unfortunately, President Buhari has strongly refused to implement the confab's recommendations, which includes the creation of 18 new states. It is very obvious that the aftermath of the confab would not favour the agenda perpetrated by Islam in Nigeria. The content does not support the systematized Islamization of Nigeria. Buhari who has been rather mute on it spoke up during newspaper interview to mark his first anniversary in office. He said that despite the persuasion of his predecessor, he had not even read the confab report and that it would remain in the archives where according to him it rightly belongs. He gave other reason for not implementing it, which are: (1) the 2014 Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike. He said that ASUU was on strike then for almost nine months. The teachers in the tertiary institutions were on strike for more than a year, yet that government had about N9billion to organize that meeting, and some members were complaining that they had not been paid, (2) Misplaced priority of past government. He said he never liked the priority of that government on that particular issue, because it meant that what the National Assembly could have handled was handed to the Conference, while the more important job of keeping our children in school was abandoned (Umoru & Nwabughioqu [32]). However, some prominent members of the conference, in form of delegates tried their best to respond to Mr. Buhari's assertion. People like General Zamani Lekwot, rtd, Dr. Patricia Ogbonnaya, former Permanent Secretary in Rivers State and a Delegate to the conference, Senator Aniete Okon, former National Publicity Secretary of the People Democratic Party (PDP), Deacon John Dara, former Presidential Candidate of the National Transformation Party (NTP), Iyom Joseph Ane-

nih, former Minister of Women Affairs, Ezenwa Nwangwu, Constitutional Lawyer, Professor Auwalu Yadudu, Yinka Odumakin, Spokesperson of Afenifere Renewal Group (ARG), Chief Mike Ozekhome, SAN, all responded to let the President see the grave consequences that refusing to implement the confab possess to the people of Nigeria and Nigerians as well. But little did they know that they were beating on the rocky wall to bleed (Umoru & Nwabughioqu [32]).

Ayoob [33] raises several Islamic antecedents and behaviors that are rather thought provoking to define the reality of political Islam. The fundamental message of his submission is that Islam is political rather than a religious phenomenon, and must be understood within the framework of nation-state. Why does he think so? He thinks it overstates the religious, enduring, and translational natures of Islamism. He contests that mixing religion and politics is unique to Islam, and that political Islam is monolithic; that it is inherently violent. When we have a president that supports this philosophy, we should know why he will not implement something that seeks to promote true nationalism. In other words, Ayoob [33] attests to that fact that Islam does not prescribe any particular model of rule, whether authoritarian, democratic or structural. Islam adopts structures and clones them with their own surrogates. They choose Leninist-style political party to pursue their interest. A hybridization nonetheless is occurring in Islam; where the former become more radical and the latter more moderate and the contemporary Islamists contending that the state should be the instrument by which the Sharia is applied and extended, which is exactly what Buhari has done, using the political position to fight anything that is not Islamic and seeking to implement Islamic Agenda through whatever means he can, especially through the power of the state.

2.1. The Role of the Church in Halting the Usage of Ethnicity, Religion and Politics over the Babu Ethnic Nationalities in Nigeria

The church, this paper argues, is still the permanent solution to all of the problems, crises, chaos and dysfunctional relationships that have marred the living existence of Nigerians for many decades now. This exactly is true and divine because solution to every human dilemma and chaotic situation belongs to God, as such, the church is God's representative right here on earth to bring forth these needed solutions.

Nigeria belongs to God, and all Nigerians are God's creatures, hence Christians must be united in seeking God for wisdom and solutions to these existing man-made human problems. National unity is the most paramount factor that holds a country together, helps the citizens live in peace and harmony, and as well promotes healthy and cordial human understanding. To overcome or halt the usage of ethnicity, religion and politics as instruments of relegation and slavery of the Babu people of Nigeria by the Hausa-Fulani Muslims

of northern Nigeria, the church must first realize her shortcomings, her shortsightedness, her lack of relevant, contemporary and consistent teaching of her members on crucial and important issues such as politics. The church must be willing to adjust socially, proactively and practically. The church must wake up from her slumbering, reevaluate or revisit her understanding of the relationship between the church, state, politics and economics. These three segments of human existence are never dichotomized by Hausa/Fulani Muslims who have the understanding of how both operate and functions together for their own benefit.

2.2. Politics as a Weapon of Power in Nigeria But a Weapon of Transformation for the Church

For want of better ideas, most of the resources in this section are taken from an article entitled; *"The Prologue of John: A Conceptual Framework for African Public Theological Discourse,"* I presented at the South African Theological Seminary e-conference March 17-18, 2021 and later published in *Conspectus* Vol 32. October, 21 (Reuben Turbi Luka [34]). Politics in Nigeria as earlier established in this paper is as significant as human existence. The constant overlap between religion and politics is so significant in Nigeria such that ignoring it is almost synonymous to ignoring the existence of the sun that shines on all and sundry. Politics according to Aristotle, explained by Yamsat [35] is "...about the study of happiness and about working out how this happiness should be secured for the good of a given society." Yamsat's assertion implies that politics is meant to be used for the common good of every citizen of every given nation. The opposite is the common practice of politics in Nigeria. The wrong and selfish usage of politics is clearly seen as used by countless Hausa-Fulani/Muslims as the instrument of relegating the Babu people in Nigeria. This calls for sincere and regenerated Christians to be actively involved in politics representing the interest of the church. Canvassing for Christians' involvement in politics, Yamsat [35] traces the Christians' right of politics to the Scripture,

The Holy Bible does not leave us in doubt about the nature of church involvement in political government. It need not be over-emphasized that freedom or democratic rights originates from God, it is his creation, right back to the origin of creation, as we read in Genesis 1:28. The first set of human beings, Adam and Eve were created in his image and created with freedom, freedom to govern the universe and all God's creation....

Kafang [36] believes that Christians and especially the church separating politics and religion has made serious mistakes. He writes, "From a biblical point of view, this dualistic distinction between church and the world, between the sacred and the secular, is mistaken. Christ is Lord of the whole world, over every dimension of creation." This political and divine right granted to man by virtue of being created

in God's image brings the church into political picture, hence, it is the church's divine duty to teach and train her members how to do politics that glorifies God and beneficial to humanity.

Consequently, this paper argues that it is the church's sole duty to teach and train Christian politicians for the Lord, by so doing, politics and politicians in Christian domain would be transformed and yield the anticipated result which is to glorify God. These politicians are not just to get the church's attention only when it is time for church's endless projects which is usually to get funds from them. The church can achieve this by a way of organizing seminars purposely for political training, thus the church would be in better place to know these Christian politicians and be able to call them to account each time they err. Kafang [36] proposes, "Christians must create awareness, be informed citizens, and raise the conscience of their members through seminar, workshops, publications and the like...." Furthermore, Kafang [36] is convinced, "Our personal piety and heart-deep dedication to Jesus Christ should work their way out in the way we seek to obey God with all the political responsibilities as public officials and as citizens" (Esther chapters 1-9; Daniel chapters 1-12). Yamsat [35] is blunt,

The church should be the power deciding which Christian is qualified to go on political quest, the church should be the one to recommend and send any political candidate vying for any political position. If those in political leadership or in positions of authority are instituted by God, then it is important that we know who and who are being called by him into those positions of leadership. It also means that the church should be interested in knowing who and who God is calling into these positions of authority. For how can the church support and bless those elected into offices of authority when they have not supported them right from the choosing processes? That is why it makes sense to say that the church should make sure that it is only those whom it believes are called and have the gift, get to the throne.

As difficult and seemingly unattainable as this sounds, it is the right thing to do and it is doable. Every Christian politician is a member of a particular local church and as well under the authority of the church, hence the church's leadership has the power to make it happen. This brings Christianity into the fore of politics, hence, empowering Christianity with the needed power to stop all forms of marginalization from wherever. It is critical we state further that the church's political training should not be strictly about the present serving politicians, the church members inclusive—in the sense that they need to know their political and civic rights, they need to be aware of their responsibilities as citizens, they need to be taught how to support and as well call leaders to accountability (Rom 13). This as well prepares intending politicians to be aware of the church's role in their pending political intentions.

The last point brings all theological institutions and semi-

naries into the picture. The sole aim and objective of theological institutions is to raise godly church leaders for the church, this is achieved by many relevant courses offered in these institutions which are geared towards producing quality and contemporary church leaders. Theological institutions beyond just teaching the theology of public policy, should not leave the training of intending politicians only to secular universities. They should have a political science department in the faculty of theology which sole aim is to raise godly future politicians; this can be done just as the other various departments with relevant courses. On the whole, Romans 13: 1-2 (NIV) says,

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgement on themselves.

This verse has political meaning for all Christians in Nigeria and it is the church's duty to teach this political meaning to all members. This Scripture simply states that all authorities, including the ones we naturally detest, including non-Christians in authorities are established by God, hence it is our civic right and divine order not to rebel against them which implies rebelling against God who placed each in the seat of authority. The church would have to teach members the meaning of this passage and as well teach members to hold tight to their rights as citizens of Nigeria.

Without the involvement of the church in political issues in Nigeria, the Babu people of this country will continue to suffer setbacks from the ethnic, religious and political shenanigans, jingoisms, oppressions and slavery tendencies of Hausa-Fulani Muslims. To halt this menace, Christians all over the country must be united. It must also revisit her position on church and state as well as step up in the fight against oppression of Christians and unwanted relegation. And of course, unity and Christian brotherhood should be the heart-beat of the church in Nigeria. This campaign is a must if the church must thrive.

3. Conclusion

The plan to Islamize Nigeria using ethnicity, politics and religion existed many years ago and this plan is still as fresh as ever. Adeleja [13] submits,

Instability in Nigeria's political system began right after independence because the British neither made efforts to unite the different groups of people in the country nor established strategic plans on how the political systems should work after independence. What they did instead was to plant a time bomb that was bound to explode within a short time... consequently, within six years of independence, the Nigerian polity had become a cauldron of chaos, triggered by misrule, political manipulation and corruption.

Consequently, this paper strongly affirms that religion and ethnicity have remained at the core of contemporary Nigerian politics. Sookhdeo in Turaki [4] proposes that “Peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims truly can occur in a liberal, secular, democratic society, where religion may influence lives but not take political power.” But will this ever be attainable in Nigeria where ethnicity and religion are infused as strong political forces particularly by the Hausa-Fulani? This reality has been analyzed from many fronts ranging from looking at the Othman Dan Fodio’s 1804-1808 philosophy of conquest, looking at the 1989 Abuja declaration, tracing the religious/political crises in Nigeria and many more. All of these variables further reveal the strong relationship between ethnicity and religion, particularly Islam, and the political grand conspiracy deeply rooted in the history of Nigeria against Christianity and other non-Muslim groups.

Hence nationalism is never the motivation for any action by Northern leaders, rather, every action is within the master plan of imposing Sharia and subjugating other non-Muslim groups. If nationalism was the motive behind the actions of Northern leaders, they would have yielded common good for all the citizenry of Nigeria, not minding their religious allegiances, geographical location or ethnic affiliation. But because of the Islamic agenda to use politics to relegate a certain group, as has always been the intention of the Hausa-Fulani Muslims, the co-existence of all the groups within the Nigerian state will remain a mirage. Until the philosophy of imposition is thrown away, the Nigerian society that Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa claimed at the independence of Nigeria is only falsehood, and nothing substantial can be built on falsehood. He claimed, as reported by Adeleja [13].

...at the time when our constitutional development entered upon its final phase, the emphasis was largely upon self-government. We, the elected representatives of the people of Nigeria, concentrated on proving that we were fully capable of managing our own affairs both internally and as a nation. However, we were not to be allowed the selfish luxury of focusing our interest on our own homes....

These seem to give a glimpse that Nigeria beyond independence was going to be beautiful, a nation that will cater for all and sundry, but like Adeleja [13] echoes, “The state of affairs obviously didn’t fulfill the dream of the founding fathers and neither did it meet the expectations of many citizens.” How was it going to achieve that if ethnicity and religion were the driving force of the politics and leadership of the northern leaders and not nationalism? It was not going to turnout well if the seeds of falsehood and discord were sown right from the beginning, and until we re-cultivate Nigeria, the non-Muslim groups will continue to repel the force that seeks to relegate them as second-class citizens in their land.

Abbreviations

IAC Islam in Africa Conference

OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
IAO	Islam in Africa Organization
CMS	Church Missionary Society
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission
NANTS	National Association of Nigeria Traders
NPC	Northern Peoples’ Congress
FUNAM	Fulani National Movement
NIV	New International Version
PDP	People Democratic Party
NTP	National Transformation Party
ARG	Afenifere Renewal Group
SAN	Senior Advocate of Nigeria
ASUU	Academic Staff Union of Universities
2014 Confab	2014 Nigerian National Conference
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

Author Contributions

Reuben Turbi Luka is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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