

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

The Proverbial 'National Cake': Towards Building the Nigerian Commonwealth in a Multi-Ethnic Society, Niger Delta in Focus

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Abstract:

The central thrust of this paper is the attention it has drawn to the people's yearning for the dividends of democracy, transparency, equity, fairness, and justice which is the essence of democratic leadership. Thus, the Nigerian proverbial 'national cake' (commonwealth), connoting that the wealth of the nation belongs to all, and it's for the common good of the people, irrespective of one's tribe, religion, political affiliation, gender, or color. Regrettably, the Nigerian commonwealth is today serving the interest of a few individuals rather than the greater majority. It is against this backdrop that the paper is aimed to exploring the task of building the Nigerian commonwealth amidst multi-ethnic, religious, sociopolitical, and individual/elites' interest. The study further focuses on the philosophy of the proverbial 'national cake', the ingenuity of driving the Nigerian commonwealth (Niger Delta in focus), as well as building the Nigerian commonwealth through the lenses of philosophy. In discussing this topic, the paper made use of the qualitative technique with special reference to the historical and philosophical approach premised on secondary data. The paper traces the problem of building the Nigerian commonwealth to failure of leadership, and the continuous shifting of blames to the 1914 amalgamation by Lord Lugard. The paper therefore charges Nigerians to rise-up to the reality of building and developing the country, through quality representation, strong will and sincerity of purpose, as well as the change in people's attitude towards the state, its right status, and its function towards the essence of commonwealth and democratic leadership.

Keywords: Commonwealth, ethnicity, national cake, philosophy, and religion

1. Introduction

The proverbial 'National Cake' alternatively called 'commonwealth, "common good," or 'general welfare' takes great influence in the thoughts of the people's history both philosophically and religiously. For Plato 'the good' was objectively defined as that which 'every soul pursues and for the sake of which it does everything.'¹ this has to do with what belongs to every member of the community or that which is gotten through nationality or social responsibility.²

Within the context of this study the notion of 'commonwealth' is an important philosophical concept in grasping the nature of economic crises and political instability, in a heterogeneous and pluralistic society like Nigeria. In other words, Nigeria as a nation is a conglomeration of numerous ethnic groups, and therefore, from time immemorial, even before the advent of colonial masters, ethnic identity has defined the scope of her religious and political intercourse. Hence, this paper seeks to explore the implications of ethno-religious, and socio-cultural hybridization on building the Nigerian commonwealth.

Generally, Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural resources, but today one cannot think of the economy of Nigeria without a feeling of disappointment. Today in Nigeria, leadership in all facets of life either government, industry, education, church and what have you, has come to be the hubs of the country's problem. Thus, the summary verdict of Professor Chinua Achebe of Nigeria 'is a failure of leadership.' The Nigerian political leaders and those in responsible position of authority lead a life of wanton selfishness and greed because somehow they have lost track of the nature of common good.³ Although, there is the belief that oil brings about plenty of wealth, the Nigerian case has not proved that to be true as it has always been a case of neglect, agitation for inclusion and pollution.⁴ The exploitation and exploration of natural resources in the country especially oil, is the reason for the high level of water and land pollution in the Niger Delta area today. The government is more concerned with the gains from the oil and not the plight of the people, this has resulted to high level of dishonesty, fight for dominance, militancy and political wrangling.

Democratic dispensation seems to have failed as the reality of the attempt to subvert the Nigerian commonwealth to serve the interest of a few rather than the greater majority, continue to loom high. Consequently, the giant of Africa-Nigeria has been crippled by insecurity, political instability, corruption, ethno-religious chauvinism, and inequality etc.,

which have given birth to youth restiveness, insurgency and armed militia in the oil producing area of the country. Against this backdrop, this paper through the lenses of social contract theory and philosophical method seek to address the task and challenges of building the Nigerian commonwealth amidst, multi-ethnics, religious, political and individual interest.

2. Commonwealth in the History of Thoughts: A Conceptual Review

The notion of commonwealth (common good) has been very pivotal in the annals of politics right from the days old when great philosophers like Aristotle and Plato were famous with their philosophical ideologies⁵. Although Plato wrote on common good, Aristotle was emphatic on the welfare of the people as quoted by Jaede, he stated that 'the city state is a type of community which is built for the purpose of some good to ensure that people live well within a particular society,'⁶

Other philosophers of the ancient time also developed different concepts concerning the common wealth of a people in governance,⁷ for instance, Cicero's idea on this concept was known as 'Salus Populi' which means 'safety of the people', and it can also be called welfare or wellbeing of the general public.⁸

Based on Aristotle's and Cicero's notion, Thomas Aquinas propounded the Christian version of the common good theory. He maintained that selfishness in leadership is misleading, he further stated that justice and fairness to all is key in leadership and concluded by saying that knowledge and fairness in governance can only be gotten through revelation from God because God is the maker of all universe.⁹

Today, however, the idea of the commonwealth is in trouble. John Rawls speak for many observers in the west today when he says that pluralism of the contemporary landscape makes it impossible to envision a social good on which all can agree. This is the intellectual and theoretical challenge to the commonwealth today in Nigeria; political ethnic and religious interest, as well as elite struggle and selfish accumulation and diversity of the vision of good life, makes it difficult or even impossible to attain a shared vision of the Nigerian commonwealth.

3. Conceptualizing Philosophy, Religion and Ethnicity

Philosophy evolved from the Greek word *Philo* meaning love, and *Sophia* which means wisdom. These two Greek words are conjoined to give us etymological meaning of 'Philosophy,' which in the highlight of the forgoing would imply 'love of wisdom'.¹⁰ Within the context of this study is the exercise of one's curiosity or intelligence that yields knowledge, which in some way is useful in the solution of problems. In other words, philosophy is concerned with fundamental principles or modes of thinking that enable rational human beings to deal most effectively with the problem of life. It deals with conceptual problems involved in the explanation of social institution-religion, state, education, law etc., political obligation and other related concepts. It also examines the traditional, political moral values such as justice, equality, freedom and rights.

Philosophy is a critical process of thoughts, it involves clarifying misperception, simplifying shrouded beliefs, explaining concepts, etc. philosophy therefore, develops ideas that gives rational explanations the different occurrences of natural phenomenon that satisfied man's curiosity over a period of time.¹¹

Religion springs problem even at the level of conception, hence, its meaning varies from place to place. The definition of religion is bedeviled with endless controversy and debate, as to its proper and generally acceptable definition.¹² The fact remains that man is homoreligious, hence, religion is very much and always with man. 'It is something which stands beyond, behind, and within, the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, yet waiting to be realized; something which is remote possibility and yet the greatest of present facts; something which gives meaning to all that passes and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good and yet is beyond all reach.'¹³ It is the reality of human experience that pervades through life.

Ethnic group consist members of similar cultural group, who see themselves as belonging to the same ancestral lineage and share certain things in common.¹⁴ It refers to those whose members share a unique social and cultural heritage passed from one generation to another. Ethnicity as a social phenomenon thus associate with identity of members of the largest possible competing communal group in a political system seeking to protect and advance their interest.¹⁵ Ethnicity can disaggregate into politics, economics, socio-cultural and religious dimensions.¹⁶ This fact makes ethnicity susceptible to conflict.

4. The Philosophy of 'National Cake'

The proverbial 'National Cake', in the Nigerian context was coined in the early 1960s to denote 'commonwealth' or 'national wealth' of the country. What is today known as National Cake is the excess gains from the sale of petroleum product.¹⁷ everybody benefited irrespective of one's region or tribe, religion, political affiliation, color and gender. Regrettably, the original ideological perception of national cake has been eroded. However, it is interesting to note that its history can be traced to the era when Nigeria made her highest sales and profits from crude oil.

The phrase 'National Cake', therefore is akin to the commonwealth of the country. Thus, the believe that the common wealth belongs to every Nigerian citizen.¹⁸ This implies that every citizen of the nation qualifies to be a beneficiary regardless of your status but the system has been grossly abused by the few privileged ones. This is why George Christian Nche, stated that the notion of the national cake is linked to the high level of exploitation and dishonesty which is prevalent in the country today¹⁹.

Consequently, the history of the concept 'national cake' gives us a clue to history of exploitation and bribery in Nigeria. It also clarifies the historical origin of electoral fraud and miss-use of public fund. It further elucidates the history of ethnic violence, social unrest and the crave to remain in political offices.

5. The Task/Challenges of Building the Nigerian Commonwealth

The most controversial subject Nigeria is tackling today is the appropriate and adequate formula in sharing the 'national cake' which has been a basis of debates- including the ingenuity in driving the commonwealth, inequality and corruption, crises of confidence, intolerance etc.- that inhabit the search for good governance and national stability. The most debated is the issue of equity, fairness, and justice. This situation is not satisfactory to some Nigerians as they are not happy with the style of governance in the distribution of the national cake by some part and group of people who are not contributing anything to advance the country's commonwealth. In this section, the study therefore explores task/challenges of building the Nigerian commonwealth.

6. Historical Challenge

Historically, the merger of the Southern and Northern protectorate in 1914 by the colonial masters complicated the Nigerian state as it was not a good legacy for nation building. Reason being that prior to the 1914 amalgamation, there existed peaceful co-existence, equity, mutual respect, cooperation, independence sovereignty of states and above all resource control. All the states, empire, and kingdoms forming the Nigerian state today had control over their territories and the resources found therein.

Nigeria is therefore a country of loosed union of various ethnic people with diverse and evidently irreconcilable and mutually antagonistic cultures and religion²⁰. This is because the opinion of the inhabitant of the land called Nigeria today was not sought for, before the unification of the two protectorates. The wide religious and cultural gap that exists between the ethnic groups was not taken into due consideration before the union. From this view one can say that Nigeria was conceived in greed, born in deceit and nurtured in falsehood and violence.

Right from time, cultural and religious difference has been a setback in the development of Nigeria. In a bid to solve this problem, the country adopted federalism as her system of government as well as policy of unity in diversity²¹. Regrettably, the inability to practice true federalism amongst the ethnic groups that make up the Nigerian nation in the sharing of the natural resources resulted to efforts in futility and continue to frustrate the efforts of building the nation.

7. Socio-Economic Inequality and Ethnic Majority Chauvinism

In multi-ethnic settings like Nigeria, everyone will not be privileged especially in education and political placement. Hence, it is certain that there will be inequality in the distribution of the national wealth or infrastructure development to the people of the same nationality.²² It was in this view that the world Environmentalist/Human Rights Activist, Ken Saro-Wiwa writes;

In sharing the money from oil, the big ethnic groups in Nigeria, Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba use such criteria as land mass, population, backwardness and equality of states... In short, anything which can benefit them and ensure that they take away as much as possible. They know that what they are doing is dishonest... but they are driven by greed for Ogoni oil money.²³

Nigeria, since her independence in 1960 has been debating over the right sharing formula for the national cake. Reason being that the region that produces the ingredients of the national cake does not have a fair share of the benefits for its development due to her unique terrain while the non-producing region has continued to fight to get an equal share with the producing regions even though her terrain is not as difficult as the former.

The only sticking feature of the Niger Delta after years of independence is the uninterrupted and regular oil and gas exploitation activities. The Nigerian civil war was indeed a war of who controls the Niger Delta oil. This oil also attracted international attention to the crises. Arguably, when the majority states were favored and agriculturally buoyant with cash crops such as cocoa, groundnut, coffee as major resources; the country never thought of derivation until when oil became the nation's 'gold.' Such agricultural producing areas now prefer population, needs, national interest and landmass as criteria or bases for revenue allocation. Nobody ever thought of the above factors as reasonable for sharing the national wealth at the time of this bountiful agricultural yield.

But with the discovery and sale of oil in commercial quantity, the argument now is that since the nations' resources belong to all, there must be a means of helping the poor states in the provision of social amenities and infrastructure development as well as prevent their citizens from migrating elsewhere. It was in this view that Okowa lamented thus; Nigeria is running a policy of 'mine is mine, but yours belong to all of us.'²⁴ As the non-producing regions do not share their agricultural produce such as grains and cattle to the producing regions; but expects proceeds from them. More so, the producing region has been ravaged due to exploitation and exploration resulting to poor agricultural yield. This is not fair as there is no reciprocity in the sharing.

In other words, the jettisoning of derivation as the cardinal principles for revenue sharing came with the emergence of crude oil produced mainly in the Niger Delta. Conversely, when cocoa of the Yoruba, cotton/groundnut of the Hausa-Fulani oil-palm of the Igbo's contributed majorly to the national budget, derivation was conscientiously adhered to. In reviewing the various yardstick used or suggested for use in revenue sharing in Nigeria, Chief Obafemi Awolowo in his write up titled: *The Tactics and Strategy of the People's Republic of Nigeria* said thus:

Where the opponents of the principle (of derivation) believe that they have the advantages of numbers, they insist on all the revenues being collected into on common pool and then shared out on the basis of population. Where this advantage is absent, they still insist on a common purse from being made on the bases of equality.²⁵

The history if the complaints of the ethnic groups of the Niger Delta region can be traced to discovery and exploitation of the crude oil in Oloibiri in 1956. This is because Nigeria operates a mono economy system which is dependent on petroleum product from the region. Yet the region lacks good infrastructure and is also politically relegated.²⁶

It is also pertinent to note that the relegation which the Niger Delta ethnic groups is suffering is as result of the fact that they are minorities in a federation dominated by the majority ethnic groups. Hence, the income gotten from the oil rich region is used to develop regions which are deemed to be in majority while the goose that produce the golden eggs (Niger Delta) is left to suffer in penury and underdevelopment.²⁷ The region which is naturally blessed with land for farming and good ecosystem for fishing has suffered great environmental degradation, disposition of the ecosystem and destruction of the peasant economy which is the main stay of the people. Consequently, for over five decades the discovery of oil which is meant to be a blessing is almost turning to a curse as the inhabitants are now susceptible to severe health hazards, economic hardship and social dislocation due to their incessant exposure to chemical emission and pollution of varying degrees.

8. Ethno-Religious Intolerance

Nigeria is believed to be the most religious among other Africa nations. Her heterogeneous population is characterized by a preponderance of traditional religionists, Muslims and the Christians, whose web of faith and related activities often make the environment heatedly religious. Though being religious presuppose peace, nonetheless, religious intolerance, violence and its devastating corollary has continued to bedevil the country. Religion as practiced in the present-day Nigeria is saddled with a plethora of moral challenges that detract immensely from its force as a life transforming phenomenon. Thus, the incidence of crimes, corruption, poverty, and unemployment in the country are fast eroding the morality and religious commitments of the people who now resort to all form of dubious means to make ends meet.

Religion as one of the institutions in the society is now a tool in the hands of mischievous fellow to unleash mayhem on individuals as well as commit heinous crime and atrocities just to achieve selfish ends. The Christian inquisition/crusades and the Muslim Jihads and their consequent atrocities bear eloquent testimony to this claim.²⁸ Thus, the country is in factions between religious practices and daily living. Considering the noise being made about religion, one would expect Nigeria to be a Holy Country, free of corruption and other forms of evil, but the reverse is the case.

The inter-play of religion and politics in Nigeria has brought to limelight the high level of cheating, inequality and the insincerity of political leaders and the majority of religious leaders who have refused to address the ignominy of religions politics in Nigeria. The result is enormous –educational backwardness, ethnic polarization, economic retrogression, cultural decay, and international disrepute. Worst still, no clear-cut solution seems to be in view. Rather, so many prophets and religious organization are springing up in their numbers every day in Nigeria.

9. Corruption and Oil Theft

Corruption has been identified as one of the main impediments in the building of Nigerian commonwealth. It is the spiritual or moral impurity or deviation from the ideal. It is the abuse of power entrusted in one for private gains.²⁹ As I noted elsewhere, it refers to bribery or other rewards leading a functionary to favor those who offer bribes and damage the public interest in the process.³⁰ It is a moral decay, ethnical rottenness and loss of integrity which appears as embezzlement of public funds, bribery, extortion, inflation of bills, abuse of offices, nepotism, looting of public treasury, fraud, forgery, impersonation and so on.³¹ Nigeria as a nation has been on a stand still due to corruption and ethnicity.³² Thus, corruption manifest not only in the national ethos, but in all institutions, sectors and parastatals of the nation.

Though Nigeria is trying to diversify from being a mono-economy by developing other mineral resources but is still recognized as a mono-economic nation that largely dependent on the oil sector for its economic survival.³³ The Nigerian economy is based on the production of crude oil, and the nation's future relies on the oil and gas resources from Niger Delta region, which account over 90% of Nigeria's export and foreign exchange earnings, and over 70% of the total Nigerian revenue. Unfortunately, the same resources are being wasted by oil theft, vandals and criminals in copious quantities on daily bases. As it stands today, the country is losing over 800.00 barrels of crude oil per day through pipeline theft.

This illegal oil exploration in the oil producing area is now on a large-scale basis, involving a network of people ranging from politicians, business men, military personnel's and the international communities. While the youth in the area handle the local job of tapping and loading for pea-nuts, the Nigerian cabals' deal with the international players from over sea countries like Lebanon, France etc.³⁴ all these activities contribute to the laundering of money for the smooth running of this corrupt business. In spite of all these operations, either through the legal or the illegal means, the story remains that Niger Delta have been neglected by the federal government of Nigeria and the oil producing companies in the region. Hence, the pangs of unemployment, which often translate into poverty, frustration, sickness, criminal tendency, anger and violence. Lack of education, social amenities, institutions and good road, as a result, some of the youth engage in bunkering business as a means of getting their share of the national cake.

According to the draft report presented on the 5th August 2018 by the Nigerian Natural Resource Charter (NNRC), Nigeria lost NGN1.6 trillion in 2016 and NGN995 billion in 2017 to crude oil theft, translating to a loss of about \$8.9 million daily and a combined loss of NGN2.6 trillion over the two-year period. Speaking in the same vein, Dawn Dimowo who was one of the presenter, lamented on the rising cases of crude oil theft which she blamed on poor governance of oil revenue and corruption in the sector, as well as neglect of oil-producing communities by oil companies.³⁵ She further disclosed that the joint task force (and other military and paramilitary agencies) is being bribed with \$432,000 for the Joint Task Force (JTF) not to only give them access to crude oil pipeline but to monitor and secure the operation. This translates to a bribe of approximately NGN373.68 million monthly. Hence, the security agencies often turn a blind eye to oil theft due to financial settlement or gifts.

The human rights lawyer and senior advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Femi Falana, has on the 31st July, 2018 revealed that a ship carrying stolen crude of over 6.2 million barrels from Nigeria Sea Port without the knowledge of the Federal Government was traced to a Port in Philadelphia in the United State of America (USA) where the produce was discharged. And the question that comes to mind was who those responsible are? It was in this view that Olateju decried thus:

Let no one be deceived for the rich, powerful and connected are Nigeria's Oil Mafiosi (member of a Mafia). Oil theft is a big criminal ring with sophisticated organization and international network. Where will poor people get the millions to buy or rent vessels, bribe customs and get military cover for their operations? Oil theft is not for the poor, it is an extensive racket involving military, security apparatchiks (an official in a large political organization), politicians, dubious industrial moguls and Oil companies ...³⁶

10. Elite Struggle

After over 100 years of the historic 1914 amalgamation, Nigeria nation building has remained a dull rather than a grandiose process of bringing the diverse peoples and heterogeneous compositions of the nationalities. This Afigbo had noted thus:

Not for the purpose of creating a smooth amalgam of one people and one culture but harmony and satisfaction in the management of their common interest and thus reducing tension and acrimony in their intergroup relation.³⁷

In a nutshell, nation building is determined by the character and orientation of the elites; To corroborate this Ojukwu and Shopeju observed that the role of political leaders cannot be downplayed in directing and defining the policies of a nation in respect to its order of importance in nation building.³⁸ Paradoxically, the political leaders in Nigeria today are more selfish than nationalistic, thus, since independence Nigeria has suffered from religious and ethnic sentiment which has adversely affected the growth and development of the Nigerian nation.

In addition, Ogundiya has rightly observed that the firm stand on primordial bureaucracy by political leaders has not only beclouded their sense of judgment and fairness but also weakened their power to work. Again, he added, at least in terms of action and behavior, there is no Nigerian State in the mental picture if an average Nigerian political elite³⁹. To buttress this, some of the statements made by some prominent Nigeria elites below would suffice. According to Awolowo;

Nigeria is not a nation; it is a mere geographical expression. There are no Nigeria in the sense of there are 'English', or French, the word 'Nigeria' is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria from those who do not.⁴⁰

In similar view Lord Milverton said that 'Nigeria was more of a geographical expression than a nation.'⁴¹ In other words, there is no nation called Nigeria instead it was coined by the British who felt that the entity cannot exist together until it is governed by a single power.⁴² In 1948, Sir Tafawa Belewa, a leader of the then Northern people's congress (NPC), who eventually became the first prime minister of Nigeria was quoted to have said;

Since 1914 the British Government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country but the Nigeria people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite, Nigerian unity is only for British intention.⁴³

A critical examination of utterances and actions of Nigeria elites shows elites without a historic mission, without imagination, without ideas of state constitution (nation building) out of the mosaic ethnic groups thrown together by accident of history.⁴⁴ Hence, at any given opportunity; they loot from the common wealth for personal accumulation.

11. Building the Nigeria Commonwealth through the Lenses of Philosophy

After decades of political independents Nigeria has achieve virtually nothing, rather than negative gains of greed and treasury looting, ethnic religious discrimination and violence, immature leadership, injustice and corruption etc. one then asks, what is wrong with Nigerians? Considering the sorry state of the country, Nigerians (both the leaders and the led) who traced almost every problem in the country to the 1914 amalgamation, have done well by identifying the root of their many problems. However, this act of exoneration and continuous shifting of blame to Lord Lugard has stunted the Nigeria's progress and commonwealth-building.

It is right time for Nigerians to leave Lord Lugard alone to rest in peace and face the bitter reality that they are the architects of their misfortune. In other words, the British also colonized other people; what is today known as the United State of America was a hodgepodge of thirteen British North American colonies.⁴⁵ When America woke up to the reality that she should no longer wear the chains fashioned for her by the British, a committee of freedom fighters headed by

Thomas Jefferson declared the freedom of the colonies from the British and affirmed their intention to become an independent nation called United State of America.

Today, the same America which was once colonized by the British that once colonized the greater part of Africa including Nigeria is the richest and most powerful nation in the world. Americans do not go about lamenting over what the British did to them many years ago. The people who came from different parts of the world such as Japan, Italy, Ireland, China, Spain, India, Germany, Israel, and France to make up United State,⁴⁶ have no time to think of some Lord Lugard to blame for bringing them together under the umbrella of American citizenship. As soon as they told the British to go, they started putting their house in order. The contrary is the case with Nigeria. After the British had gone, their so-called leaders settle down for the real destruction of the country.

No wonder Chinua Achebe traced the trouble with Nigeria to leadership failure.⁴⁷ The problem is not the system but the individual. Lord Lugard and the political leaders should not be blamed for the troubles of Nigeria rather the quality of leaders and the system which they have operated since independence and are responsible for the state of the nation. This resonates questions such as, what do we expect in a situation where the presidency is made so sumptuous that it has become more or less a birth-right of a particular age group and section of the country?

This becomes the area of Plato's relevance, until philosophers become leaders or leaders take the study of philosophy seriously, this 'vicious cycle of sycophancy and what I will here call the 'trial and error' approach to leadership by buffoons will continue indefinitely.'⁴⁸ In other words, if historical trends must guide Nigerians in their reflections and endeavors to have a firm grip of the future, then corporate leadership and governance must be understood as an evolution from the society and a by-product of man's quest to better his conditions of life that is an extension of the contract obligation. Corporate governance as a form of government epitomizes equity, fairness and justice.

The problem of philosophical understanding of religious tenets and teachings base on narrow, literalist, and contradictory exotic religious hermeneutics, exegesis, and practice, which has always resulted to the 'holier than thou mentality,' and thus discrimination, intolerance and violence would be a thing of the past. Just as Pythagoras would say, 'I have come not to teach but to heal,' Socrates has also likened himself to a midwife, ensuring a healthy birth of the soul of his students, and Plato had formulated this praxis into the work of catharsis the purification of the soul from ignorance. There is therefore, the need to philosophically re-orientate the soul of the religious in Nigeria away from activities which brings pain and disturbances. This can be achieved through promoting the tenets of integrity hard work, fairness, justice, respect for constituted authorities, as well as the respect for the orderliness of others (Peaceful Co-existence) and promoting moral and social wellbeing of the Nigerian citizen.

12. Concluding Remarks

Despite the laudability of current substance of democracy in Nigeria, the question remains as to how fair have the Nigerian democratic leaders justified the essence of the nations' commonwealth and democratic leadership? Our discussion thus far, have stressed more on the political instability, ethno-religious intolerance and violence, failed leadership, and corruption have trailed the Nigeria's history since independence and very much rooted in the blame game approach and ignorance.

Elite struggle and wealth accumulation, misuse of official privileges and misappropriation of public funds etc., that characterize Nigeria today cannot stop overnight, until there is a fundamental change in people's philosophy and attitude towards their fellow citizens, the state, its rights and status as well as its function towards the common good. Hence, the need for political training and more importantly education for rulers or 'philosopher kings' as stressed by Plato must necessarily extend to the masses.

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