



Navigator Newsletter

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Nigeria at 50 - A forced marriage that has not, does not and will not work.

On Monday 27th September 2010 the Alkebulan-Revivalist Movement (ARM) broadcast a discussion entitled *Nigeria @ 50 A triumph over sabotage?* on Voice of Africa Radio (VOAR)

In the promotional email flyer ARM provided some interesting context including:

However, there is much evidence to suggest that the 'Nigerian project' was sabotaged from the outset. For example the former British diplomat Harold Smith has gone on record extensively to expose the role of the colonial administration in derailing Nigerian independence. He was particularly candid during an appearance on BEN TV on 16th Mosiah (Aug) 2007:

"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. Our mission was accomplished by destroying the opposition at all fronts. The west led in the fight for the independence, and was punished for asking for freedom. They will not rule Nigeria!"

In a 2006 lecture entitled *Lugardism, UN Imperialism and the prospect of African power*, renowned academic Baba Chinweizu shared his evaluation of Nigeria since independence:

"Since 1960, many attempts have been made to diagnose the trouble with Nigeria. Chief among the usual suspects have been, "tribalism," corruption, and bad leadership. May I submit that these are symptoms, not the underlying causes; the fevers, not the malaria or typhoid parasites."

Unfortunately I did not get to listen to the broadcast, however the ARM email together with my current re-reading of Samuel P Huntington's book *'The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order'* (which I would recommend you buy second hand) has led me to put together some thoughts on Nigeria, the most populous country in Afrika. If time allows I will flesh these out into a proper newsletter however for the time being some bullet points to stimulate your thinking:

a. **Nigeria was a forced marriage and artificial creation from the outset.** Nigeria is 'plastic nation' as many of the nations/colonial territories created at the 1883/1884 Berlin conference. It was even named by a British woman after a competition in the Times newspaper.

b. **Nigeria is composed of historic nations such as the Yoruba, Hausa etc.** with their own distinct cultures and crucially loyalties who were put into this shotgun wedding.

c. Even if Nigeria had good leadership/governance, no 'tribalism', no corruption **the fundamental faultline in this artificial state** would remain, which is **Religion**.

d. **Why is Religion the fundamental faultline in Nigeria?** There are two legs of culture, Language and Religion and I have written previously about the problems this presents in terms of uniting Afrikans.

More people draw their identity from their religion than any other single factor. 'Conscious' Afrikans living in the diaspora may talk 'race' however most Afrikans on the continent draw their civilisation identity from religion, although of course they have other identities related to language, nationality etc. When push comes to shove people will tend to side with people who share their civilisation identity.

As Huntington points out this helps explain why:

- the 'West' failed to provide meaningful support to Bosnian Muslims (even though they are Caucasians) or denounce Croat atrocities in the same way they denounced Serb atrocities (against Croats)

- the unwillingness of Russia (Orthodox Christian) to join other UN Security Council members to try to force Serbia (Orthodox Christian) to make peace with the Croatian government (Unitarian Christian) and the offer of Iran and other Muslim nations (classified as non-Caucasian) to provide 18,000 troops to protect Bosnian Muslims (Caucasians)

Huntington provides many other examples, however to bring it back to Afrika I would add:

- The internationalisation of the formerly largely ignored, but terrible and long running civil war in Somalia, with the intervention of the USA ('Christian') and its ally Ethiopia (Coptic Christian). This intervention led to Mujadaheen fighters entering Somalia from other parts of the Muslim world.

The complexity of these issues, but reality of the importance of civilisation identity and the interweaving of issues of race is highlighted by:

- The failure of almost all Muslim states (in Afrika and outside) **and the impotent AU** to condemn the genocidal war being waged for decades by wannabee Arab Afrikan Muslims and Arab Muslims from the north of Sudan against; first the non-Muslim Nuba and other Afrikan people of southern Sudan and more recently the Muslim Afrikans of Darfur in South-West Sudan.

- The almost total worldwide silence in response to the ongoing enslavement of the Afrikan Muslim majority in Mauritania by the Arab Muslim minority.

These latter two Afrikan examples are important since they highlight the paralysing effect that religion can have. Most Afrikan Muslims will not condemn, let alone suggest action, against the wannabee (they are wannabee in terms of skin pigment and 'race' but are 'real' Arabs in terms of culture) and real Arabs in Sudan and Mauritania against Afrikans who are both Muslim and non-Muslim. You have a growing number of majority Afrikan states in Afrika (e.g. Sudan, Eritrea, and Djibouti) that have joined the Arab League. The Arab league is a sub-racial political entity designed to promote Pan-Arabism. These Afrikan nations are neither in Arabia nor have majority Arab populations. It is their inferiority complex together with their civilisation identity that makes them yearn to be Arabs.

e. Christianity and Islam are both proselytising, universalistic religions.

Gaining adherents is a religious duty as there is only one way (through the religion) to salvation. **Imperialism goes hand in hand with proselytisation and universalism.** Hence the violence associated with the spread of both religions. Both Arabs and Europeans brought Racism, Slavery and Colonialism into Afrika (see Chinweizu Corner of my website www.houseofknowledge.org.uk for a comparison of Arab and European Racism, Slavery and Colonialism) however most Afrikans steadfastly refuse to deal with Arab and Arabised racism and enslavement.

To quote from the book 'The legacy of Arab-Islam in Africa' by John Alembillah Azumah,

"The third issue is that of Muslim slavery, which in theory and in practice is directly linked to the jihad tradition and African conversion to Islam as a religious system. here the myths range from denials of Muslim enslavement to rationalizing and claims that it was less brutal than the Western-Christian transatlantic dimension." (page 10-11)

He goes on to note "a complete academic u-turn" (page 11) by Mervyn Hiskett author of 'The Sword of Truth' which tells the story of Shehu Usuman Dan Fodio's nineteenth century jihad movement in northern Nigeria in the second edition of his book where he writes:

"...the non-Muslim, 'pagan' point of view has been left largely untold. The brutality and intolerance of all 'jihad' of the Sword', and especially that of the nineteenth-century western Sudan, has been veiled by an assumption of moral righteousness based on the Muslim claim of divine revelation and a written law, that leaves no place for an approach from the point of view of the victims. The stark intransigence of this stance has not diminished over the generation." (pages 11-12)

Azumah highlights the reality of the foregoing in reproducing a "Hausa praise song which refers to a

"notorious Muslim slaver of nineteenth-century Hausaland, Masaba, in the following terms:

Mahamman Saba, Man of fine character, Chief who has no equal, Whoever discovers him will praise him Masaba...Desirers of gowns and cowries, let them come, All is to be obtained here from Masaba, He who desires a slave girl or horses, let them speak, Let them come and obtain them here from Masaba ... Even if you go as far as Egypt, a chief like him you will not find, there is only Masaba, Burner of pagan villages, there and then, there is none like Masaba, the mighty Masaba." (pages 15)

Let's carry out some textual analysis to see the critical lessons in this praise song. Firstly, the praise for this enslaver of other Afrikans. Secondly, the praise for religious pogroms against other Afrikans "Burner of pagan villages, there and then,". Thirdly, the use of Egypt as the limiting point of comparison and reference in terms of the fineness of Masaba as a chief i.e. they look to the Arab north as the out limits of their world and the qualitative benchmark.

I know that I will get responses telling me about all the tall skyscrapers in Abuja to prove that Nigeria is not an economic and political basket case so here is an article from Business Day online cited by the World News Network on 16 April 2010 highlighting the reality of life for the vast majority of Nigerians:

www.businessdayonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10162:over-86-percent-nigerians-earn-less-than-2-daily-report&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=18

Business Day online 2010-04-16

•More than 90 percent lack access to good housing Over 86 percent of the Nigerians live below [poverty](#) level and earn less than two dollars per day, a United Nation's Human [Development](#) Index (HDI) has shown. In addition, 90 percent of the citizenry who are regarded as poor lack access to good housing. Nduese Essien, [minister](#) of lands, housing and urban development, unveiled the report at a meeting held in Abuja with heads of departments and parastatals of the ministry.

Even if you do not believe the exact numbers let's not pretend Nigeria is working for the majority of its people.

Conclusion

Nigeria, has not worked, does not work, and will not work. The only way you can get harmony in Nigeria is if one of the two major civilisation groups, Muslims and Christians, can overwhelm the other. Whilst you have a roughly evenly split population; you have two expansionistic belief systems facing off. Hence why the periodic bouts of mass religious murder occur in the central; contested part of the country. This is Nigeria's political, cultural and civilisational equivalent of the San Andreas fault. Earthquakes are bound to occur, it's a question of when not if. If Nigeria were to split the Northerners could have Sharia Law and an Islamic State and the Southerners could have a Christian state. Keeping Nigeria together is like keeping the India together after the end of British colonial rule. In the end Bangladesh and Pakistan had to be created to Accommodate the civilisation identity of the people in these areas even though they looked just like their Hindu/Sikh countrymen/women. Hindus and Sikhs are able to

live together reasonably well in India because neither belief system is proselytising i.e. you are born into those religions. By contrast the big religious conflict in India is between Hindus and Muslims, particularly in Kashmir and India's bitter enemy is Muslim Pakistan not the more powerful, but mainly non-religious China.

Garveyites in 'the West' need shake off their parochialism and learn that *'Melanin is necessary, but not sufficient.'* Just because someone looks like you does not mean they are like you. 'Our enemy's (Europeans) enemy (Arabs) are not our friends' or as Amos Wilson often reminded us *'In politics there is no such as permanent friendships, just permanent interests.'*

I don't care whether you are a Muslim or Christian, or Hindu or Buddhist. I do however care about where your loyalty and allegiance lies. A man/woman cannot serve two Masters so my question is:

When push comes to shove who will you side with? Me; an Afrikan who does not share your religion or s/he a non-Afrikan who does share your religion?

The answer determines who I can rely on and who I can't rely on. For most people religion trumps race/ethnicity and Garveyites need to face that reality. This is why Nigeria does not work.

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