

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND THE QUEST FOR EQUITABLE
RESOURCE CONTROL AND POLITICAL RESTRUCTURING IN NIGERIA:
THE OGONI-NIGER DELTA EXPERIENCE**

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Abstract

Ken Saro-Wiwa saw the need for the Ogoni-Niger Delta to have much more control over their environment and resources, he took the campaign to the international community. However, the state responded with terrors killing and maiming defenseless Ogoni-Niger Delta people and burning down their homes. In the event, leader of the movement for the survival of Ogoni people (MOSOP) including the write and environmentalist ken Saro-Wiwa were murdered. This therefore raises the following posers which are the concerns of this paper; is oil a blessing or a curse? Does the killing of the Ogoni Nine (including Ken-Saro-Wiwa) stop the agitation for environmental justice and resource control? Why has there been no meaningful development in the Ogoni-Niger Delta region at least to compensate for the ecological and main time devastation of the region due to oil exploitation? How long shall, the Ogoni-Delta people continue to line in deplorable conditions even when complains are made? The reality of the movement is that of a Nigeria caught up in its own monster. Hence, the essence of this paper as it explores the reasons behind the continuous agitation in the Ogoni Niger Delta, the role Ken Saro-Wiwa's philosophy in solving the Nigeria's dilemma, using the historic philosophical method.

Keywords: Environment, Justice, Resource Control, Restructuring, Ogoni

Introduction

Nigeria is made up of independent ethnic groups, kingdoms and empires lumped together into a nation state via the 1914 Fredrick Lugard Amalgamation (Deezia, 2018:167), without giving them the opportunity to know themselves, and build a consensus for the union. Thus, the gap between the North and South; minority and majority Chauvinism, and the truth claims between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Consequently, the relations and political behaviour of the people are characterized by mutual suspicion, subterranean struggle for domination and invidious hatred since they are strange bed-fellows.

The discovery of oil in the 1950s in Nigeria contributed immensely to the widening gap between the South and the North. The Ogoni-Niger Delta region of Nigeria is sitting on a treasure trove of oil and natural gas. However, oil exploration and exploitation from the region have gone on with little or no considerations, consent or approval of the people credited with the natural ownership of the land, owing to the obnoxious land use Decree of 1977 which ceded all lands to the government (Kii, 2017:10). By this singular act, land which for ages had been accepted by all nations as valid inheritance of the people, is here in Nigeria, made an inheritance of the federal government, in flagrant negation of natural law. For the same reason, all resources extracted from the same land and accruing economic earnings are solely and wholly made a federal government inheritance, which in turn decides on ways and means of appropriating such funds to various parts and components of the federation.

For over four decades, the Ogoni-Niger Delta region, where the oil is drilled has remained the metaphor of ecological and socio-political and economic injustice. The people are so poor that there is nothing show for the wealth of the region as it suffers a deficit of infrastructure in all ramifications. Oil exploration has turned the Ogoni into a wasteland: lands, streams, and creeks are totally and continually polluted; the atmosphere has been vapours, methane carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and soot emitted by gas which has been flared twenty-four hours a day for over thirty-three years in very close proximity to human habitation. Acide rain, oil spillages and blow-outs have devastated Ogoni territory.

Ken Saro-Wiwa saw the need for the Ogoni-Niger Delta to have much more control over their environment and resources, he took the campaign to the international community. However, the state responded with terrors killing and maiming defenseless Ogoni-Niger Delta people and burning down their homes. In the event, leader of the movement for the survival of Ogoni people (MOSOP) including the write and environmentalist ken Saro-Wiwa were murdered. This therefore raises the following posers; is oil a blessing or a curse? Does the killing of the Ogoni Nine (including Ken-Saro-Wiwa) stop the agitation for environmental justice and resource control? Why has there been no meaningful development in the Ogoni-Niger Delta region at least to compensate for the ecological and main time devastation of the region due to oil exploitation? How long shall, the Ogoni-Delta people continue to line in deplorable conditions even when complains are made? The reality of the movement is that of a Nigeria caught up in its own monster. Hence, the essence of this paper as it explores the reasons behind the continuous agitation in the Ogoni Niger Delta, the role Ken

Saro-Wiwa's philosophy in solving the Nigeria's dilemma, using the historic philosophical method.

Theoretical Framework

The politics of revenue allocation from the nation's common-wealth constitute a major threat to Nigeria's federal structure. This study therefore adopts John Rawls theory of justice and fairness, John Rawls's, *A Theory of Justice* (1971) is often described as one of the most influential political philosophical works on justice during the 20th century. The epistemological foundation of Rawls theory of justice could be traced to the socio-political philosophy of "social contract" which dominates the works of authorities like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Rousseau etc. The major conceptual perspective of Rawls is that the principles of justice which is to be the foundation of society on the result of an agreement in what he calls "the original position" or a social contract theory (Kanu, 2015:80), he maintained that the original position is "the appropriate initial status quo which ensures that the fundamental agreements reached in it are fair". This manifest the legacy "justice as fairness" (Rawls, 1974:47).

This theory holds that justice is fairness which has to do with right dealings among people who are co-operating with or competing against one another and distribution of social primary goods (Rawls. 1971:50), that justice should seek first to provide adequate principles to ensure that all people are treated equally with the realization that respect for human beings, for human life and dignity are non-negotiable points of justice, and that the basic requirements of all people are provided. In his philosophical analysis of the concept of justice from "original position" that is the Hobbisan state of nature and the "veil of ignorance", Rawls develops tow principles of justice;

1. Each person has the same indefeasible claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme of liberties for all.
2. Social and economic in equalities are to satisfy two conditions; first they are to attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity, and second they are to be the greatest benefit to the least advantage member of society (Rawls, 2001:43).

Rawls concept of justice depicts two fundamental principles: the principle of equal liberty, and the principle of equal opportunity. The principle of equal liberty upholds the basic right of individuals in the nation state. For Rawls the liberty of the individuals as assigned by nature must not be hampered, restricted

nor destroyed by the nation. He further stress to ensure the preservation of equal liberty and opportunity of citizens. Citizen must be given equal economic and political opportunities and level plain ground for participation.

Apparently as democratic principles are portrayed theoretically, it is believed that democratic practice is the best chance of establishing humanity's vowed harmonious society and guaranteed between ling. But the contrary is the case in Nigeria in spite of the advantage of quata system as enshrined in the acclaimed constitution.

Conceptualizing Environment, Justice, and Resource Control

The word environment emanates from the French word "Environ" which denotes circle, surrounding or circle around. Human surrounding includes biotic factors like human beings, plants, animal, microbes, etc, and abiotic factors such as light, air, water, soil etc. In other words, considering the etymology of the term, two important things are involved, namely: the circumstances and the conditions that surround an organism or group of it; secondly, there are the social and cultural conditions that affect an individual or community. Environment is therefore the surrounding of an organism in the place where it lives or exists. (Gbenda, 2010:15). It is the complex set of physical, geographic, biological, social, cultural and political conditions that surround an individual or organism and that ultimately determine its form and the nature of its survival.

Justice is giving to another what is due, either strictly or proportionately. Justice is a universal concern, and it is loyalty in one's debts to others (Stravinskias, 1994:10). Justice is correlated and dependent on other virtues for its meaningful actualization. In other words, justice is the "sovereign virtue (Aristotle, 1976:173) and the major purpose of the state. It is treating equals equally in proportion to their relevance and differences. It is the strong and firm will to give to each his due (Aquinas 1979:129).

Environmental justice is therefore the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income with respect, to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies (Bullard, 2005:3). Bullard added that fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socio-economic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, State, local, and tribal programs and policies. This implies that all human beings are entitled to equal protection, and equal enforcement of their environmental land use ... Energy, laws, and regulations (Bullard, 2005:3).

In other words, environmental justice is about social transformation directed towards meeting basic human needs and enhancing the quality of life-economic quality, health care, housing, human rights, environmental protection and democracy (MacDonald, 2002:23). From his analysis of various definitions and conception of environmental justice David Sehlosberg identified four basic themes in the environmental justice, discourse, this include the equitable distribution of environmental risk and benefits; fair and meaningful participation in environmental decision-making, recognition of community ways of life, local knowledge, and cultural differences; and the capability of communities and individuals to function and flourish in society (Schlosberg, 2007:23).

Resource Control

Resource control denotes the wish, desire, effort and agitation for total control or absolute anatomy over the natural endowments within their territories. It is the demand for power and authority to order, direct and retain the exploration, allocation and distribution of these resources (Egbe and Ihejiamazu, 1999:23). It also denotes a compelling determination by communities and people whose resources have been taken away to regain ownership, control, use and management of resources for the primary, benefit of the Ogoni-Niger Delta on whose land the resources originate. In other words, resource control is the practice of true federation and natural law in which the federating units' express primary control over the natural resources within their borders or land marks and made agreed contribution towards the maintenance of common services of the government at the centre.

The Ogoni as a people: Towards, the Birth of a Protest Movement

In about 1245, the Ogoni originally known as the Khana people settled on the West African coast of Atlantic Ocean (Yira Kina, 2010:1). The Ogoni established themselves as a distinct ethnic group within the Federal Republic of Nigeira. Their territory forms the eastern Niger Delta, lying in an area between approximately latitude 4⁰.05" and 4⁰.20 north and longitudes 7⁰.15" and 7⁰.30" east. Covering a total of approximately 405 square miles, it forms part of the coastal plains terrace, with here appears as gently sloping plateau. The central part of this plateau is about 100 feet above sea level. The Ogoni comprised Babbe, Eleme, Gokana, Ken-Khana, NyorKhana, Tai, Oyigbo and Ban-goi (special unit).

The advent of British colonialism was to shatter Ogoni society and inflect on them a backwardness from which they are still struggling to escape. It was British colonialism which forced alien administrative structures on the Ogoni

and handed them into the domestic colonialism of Nigeria. Right from 1908 when Ogoni was administered as a part of Opobo Division, through the creation of Rivers province in 1947, Eastern Region in 1951 and Rivers State in 1967, the Ogoni people have struggled to resist colonialism and return to their much-cherished autonomy and self-determination.

Prior to oil exploration in 1998 in the Ogoni-Niger Delta region, agriculture was the mainstay of the economy in Nigeria, with agricultural produce exported to the more industrialized regions of the world. By 1971, there has been a slight shift from agriculture to petroleum production, such that agricultural exports fell from more than USD 1.5 billion to about USD 0.3 billion (UNEP, 2011:20). Currently, oil provides 80 percent of the foreign exchange earnings. In other words, oil from the Ogoni-Niger Delta region in Nigeria has over the years sustained the country's revenue earnings, bringing in billions of petrodollars that has helped to transform other areas notably in the North and Western part of the country. The Ogoni-Niger Delta area that produce the oil have suffered many years of neglect, economic exploitation, impoverishment, ecological degradation and under-development.

Trapped between a military regime which appropriated the bulk of the revenue and a cynical and complicit Shell, Ogoni community leaders established the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), a mass-based social organization, in 1990 and took to the path of peaceful protest. The demands of these movement became codified for the first time, as Bills of Right Charters, Resolutions or Declarations directed at the Federal Government and the oil multinationals.

The Ogoni adopted an alternative weapon of peaceful mass protest and enlightened propaganda. The Ogoni Bill of Rights issued in 1990 sought pacific means to resolve the conflict of poverty in the midst of oil wealth (Dara, 2005:27). The Ogoni demanded equity in resource distribution. They asked for adequate representation in federal establishments. They demanded an end to the rapacious exploitation of oil and gas in their lands. More significantly, the Ogoni presented a case of reparation for the restoration of damage ecosystems. Rather than use arms, the Ogoni armed themselves with the righteousness of their case. To propagate their plight and demands, they employed the media of mass rallies and folk festivals. The Ogoni Day of January 4th was the superstructure of this cultural mobilization.

For years, Ken Saro-Wiwa led the campaign against the ruthless exploitation and pollution of the Ogoni-Niger Delta environment. He effectively presented the Ogoni case to internal human rights groups. It received sympathetic hearing and interest from the Holland-based Unrepresented Nations

of people organizations (UNPO), the British Parliamentary Human Rights Groups (BHRG), the international federation of the rights of ethnic linguistic, Religious and other minorities based in New York. In the summer of 1993, MOSOP members attended the Vienna world conference on Human Rights and Geneva meetings of the committee on Racial Discrimination (CERD), Amnesty International (News Watch, January 25, 1993), and the Green Peace Organization (GPO), and the London Rain-forest Action Group (LARG), etc.

During one of the world cup soccer in the United State in 1994, the Ogoni issue was again brought to the forefront. There was a match between Nigeria and Italy on July 5, 1994 at Massachusetie was going on, a small plane flew over the stadium with a banner carrying inscription: RED CARD, SHELL OIL, STOP Ogoni SUDDEN DEATH. This made Ken Sarow-Wiwa the Worst enemy of the federation and state securities that he was secreting by printing of the Ogoni flag and Anthem. Ken Saro-Wiwa speech and campaign brought down international observers that witnessed a mass rally organized by MOSOP at Bori, the traditional headquarters of Ogoni land during January 4, 1993 as their declaration day in Nigeria, which is also acknowledge by the world, it was on this day that Shells presence in Ogoni land was declared personal non-granta.

Ken writes;

I submit that we have every reason to be emotional in our struggle for the sanctity of our environment. The environment is man's first right. Without a safe environment men cannot exist to claim other rights, be they political social or economic (Saro-Wiwa, 1994:10).

In May 1994, Saro-Wowa was arrested by the government on trump up charges of murder. Several other MOSOP members were detained along with him from prison. In his testimonial, and foresight Ken Saro Wiwa writes;

My lord, we all stand before history. I am a man of peace, of ideas. Appalled by the denigrating poverty of my people who live on a richly-endowed land, distressed by their political marginalization and economic strangulation, angered by the devastation of their land, their ultimate heritage, anxious to preserve their right to life and to a decent living, and determined to usher to this country as a whole a fair and just democratic system which protects everyone and every ethnic group and gives us all a valid claim to human

civilization, I have devoted all my intellectual and material resources, my very life, to a cause in which I have total belief and from which I cannot be blackmailed or intimidated. I have no doubt at all about the ultimate success of my cause, no matter the trials and tribulations which I and those who believe with me may encounter on our journey. Neither imprisonment nor death can stop our ultimate victory. I repeat that we all stand before history. I and my colleagues are not the only ones on trial. Shell is here on trial and it is as well that it is represented by counsel said to be holding a watching brief... In my innocence of the false charges I face here, in my utter conviction, I call upon the Ogoni people, the peoples of the Niger Delta, and the oppressed ethnic minorities of Nigeria to stand up now and fight fearlessly and peacefully for their rights. History is on their side, God is on their side. For the Holy Quran says in Sura 42, verse 41: "All those who fight when oppressed incur no guilt, but Allah shall punish the oppressor". (Saro-Wiwa, 1995:45).

After a judicial flawed trial that was widely condemned by human rights groups and opinion leaders, Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other MOSOP leaders were hanged in a Nigerian prison in the morning of November 10th, 1995. By the way of philosophical reflection, Ken Saro-Wiwa's crusade was not a matter of mere emotional political outburst attracting a motley crowd of desperate tries men out for revenge and destruction (Okara, 2005:20). It was forged from a robust intelligence which provided solid theosophical bases for his agitations. His appeal was to both the national and international audience and conscience. His conduct and leadership were sophisticated, honesty, sincere and imassoilatable (Okarra, 2005:20). Only the power of his intellect as shown in his writings, his conviction and force of character could transform what some have regarded as a "sub-national" crusade into what has today provided the basic argument in the political economy of Nigeria and the question of the reality of the Nigeria nation. In a poem dedicated to the memory of a human/environmental rights activist, a business man and politician a social crusader Ken Saro-Wiwa, who died as ransom for the world minority, Deezia compare the attributes of Ken to that of Christ, in a poem he entitled *like Ken, like Christ*;

Tree of beauty, tree of light,
Tree of royal purple delight,
Like Ken like Christ
One who's dear arms so widely flung

The price of human kind to pay
And spoil the spoiler of his prey

A grief without a pang, void, dark and dread,
A stifled, drowsy unimpassioned grief
In word, or sigh or tear

In angry scheming, restlessness day and night,
They bent on ranging and prowling in our plight,
With weapons burne of monster serpent sharp with flung
unsparing dent.

I stand to defend my patrimony
To transform the jingling discord into beautiful symphony
Guns of the world, the casuistry of weapons
Casually threat my visions
But upon the Ogoni indigenous flag
I pledge my tag (Deezia, 2015:18-20).

Ken Saro Wiwa therefore occupied a special place to African political historiography today, precisely because he dared to break the deadly trap. He bravely sketched out the contours of Africa's political future; the future the continent must embrace or face extinction (Okonta, 2005:31). In other words, Saro-Wiwa not only dreamed the African revolution. He inhabited it and gave it shape and texture.

What we fail to learn from History: The Ogoni Cleanup and Shell Re-entry into Ogoni

Concerns for petroleum-related contamination have been at the heart of social unrest in Ogoni land. Although, oil industry operations were suspended in Ogoni land in 1993, widespread environmental contamination remains. In July 2006, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) received an official request from the Federal Government of Nigeria to conduct a comprehensive assessment of oil environmental and public health impacts of oil contamination in Ogoni-land, together with options for remediation.

In 2011, the UNEP published a ground-breaking scientific study on the impacts of oil pollution in the Ogoni region of Niger Delta. This reports sets out the background and context to the present day conditions in Ogoni land, provides a synthesis of UNEP's finding and gives a set of overarching

recommendations to deal with the multi-facet environmental challenges currently facing the Ogoni people.

The report stated that a vast area of Ogoni land are unsafe for human habitation due to oil pollution. The report found that, in over 40 locations tested, the soil is polluted to a depth of 5 meters. Ogoni land's water bodies are all polluted. The level of benzene is approximately 901 of the location is more than 900 times above accepted world health organization standards (Ojo, 2015:6). This dangerous contaminated water is the source of drinking water for the local community. The UNEP recommended that US \$1 billion should be allocated fund to begin the clean-up. Some of the recommendations include the following;

- Provision of water in Ogoni land
- A focused medical study should be initiated to track the health of the Ogoni community over their lifetime to ensure any possible health impacts are identified early enough and acted upon.
- A public health registry should be established for the entire Ogoni land in order to determines health trends and take proactive actions individually or collectively where impacts related to long-term exposure to hydrocarbon pollution are evident.
- A centre of excellence for environmental restoration should be established in Ogoni land
- A proposed integrated contaminated soil management centre will be a modern industrial enterprise in Ogoni land employing hundreds of people.

However, effort to clean up Ogoni by Shell and the Federal Government has been slow. Since UNEP report was release. The Ogoni have witness an unholy alliance of the Nigerian government and Shell which manifested in half-steps, deliberate attempts to muddle the issues and the setting up of a Hydrocarbon Pollution Restoration Project (HYPREP) that has been use to decline and muzzle the Ogoni people (Ojo, 2016:131). Shell through the federal ministry of petroleum rather than the federal ministry of environment took the lead in selecting stakeholders and extended invitations to meeting other civil societies groups critical to Shell. Currently, HYPREP claimed to have started the actual cleanup process in Ogoni without the provision of any of the emergency measures recommended in the UNEP report. This justifies the claim that Ogoni cleanup is a scam, a mere smokescreens of deception. HYPREP came with a hidden agenda to prepare the ground for Shell reentry into Ogoni. Amidst resistance, and campaign for environmental justice, the Muhamadu Buhari led federal government directed the Nigerian National Petroleum

corporation/Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC) to take over operation from Shell in the Ogoni area of OML II. An NPDC Ogoni re-entry execution plan and first cost summary obtained by the Guardian revealed that the federal government and its joint ventures (NNPC, Shell, AGIP and TOTAL) partners intend to commence crude oil and gas production in Bomu (52 Oil Wells), Ebubu (17 Wells), Tai (13 Wells), Yorla (14 Wells) and Bodo West (12 Wells) as major fields of interest (Guardian, 2019).

While MOSOP under the leadership of Legborsi Pyagbara, KAGOTE under the leadership of Dr. Peters Medee and the Supreme Council of Ogoni Traditional Rulers under the leadership of HRM. King G.N.K Giniwa seems to be accommodation seeking and weak to resist this rising smoke, nor present a holistic template for oil resumption in Ogoni some Ogoni elders, under the ages of the Gbo Kabaari Ogoni, had petition president Muhammadu Buhari to halt planned resumption of crude oil and gas production in Ogoni without due consultation in order to avert blood bath in the area, as they have started burning houses in the area again, based on the information or misinformation that some Ogoni leaders have taken bribe to clear road for Shell re-entry into Ogoni.

Gbo Kabaari Ogoni Chairman and secretary Senator Benneth Birabii and Dr. Desmond Nbeta said government must bear in mind that oil activities in Ogoni and OML II have a unique history that cannot be wished away by an executive flint for a restart of oil production, without duly engaging the people in a proper and painstakingly conservation. They said "production activities in OML II stopped about 29 years ago, and in line with industries practices, such fields like OML II ought to be treated, as green fields and not brown fields", (Guardian, 2019). At this point, the question that comes to mind is, if Shell and the Nigerian government have address all the issues raised in the Ogoni Bill of Right, that made the Ogoni Declare Shell personal non granter 29 years ago?

The author of this paper lamented that the Ogoni Bill of Right (OBR) is yet to be address, and some people have started flying to Abuja and foreign countries to discuss with Shell in regards to the moves by Shell to return to Ogoni whereas the smoke of genocide has not been snuffed out and open wounds are yet to be healed. The paper reminded the Ogoni people that reconciliation cannot be built on hypocrisy, deceit, or oppression. The demands of the Ogoni before Shell was declared person non granta remain unattended to, (Bassey, 2005:22). The Ogoni environment remains one laboratory or museum of degradation. While the people agree that the absence of Shell has given the land the space of time in which to recover somewhat, it has been the case that everyone can see that polluting acts of oil Corporations are left unattended to the passage of years do not mean their disappearance of self-remediation.

One Nigeria Relationship Syndrome and Socio-Economic Injustice

Nigeria is a country of loosed union of various ethnic groups with diverse and evidently irreconcilable and mutually antagonistic cultures and religions. The Nigerian contraption was put together by the foreign power (The Great Britain during the colonial days) without any reference to the opinions of and due consultation with the indigenious ethnic peoples as to whether they would like to associate with one another as citizens of the same country. By this action independence and sovereignty of the various ethnic people were forcefully taken away from them. Therefore, the Nigerian state or country is not a union of voluntarily consenting partners as is supposed to be the case in all modern definition of the state as of contractual agreement where willing adults enter into agreements with specific conditions on which to relate with one another, execute projects and resolve resulting disputes. Nigeria is an entity where most of the members do not even know why they there in the first place (Osita, 2014:10). Hence, Nigeria was conceived in greed, born in deceit and nurtured in falsehood and violence. Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Pellow writes;

The New nation called Nigeria should be an estate of our grandfather Uthman Dan Fodio. We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power, we use the minorities sin the North... and never allow them have control over their future (Parrot Newspaper, November 13, 2002).

Obafemi Awolowo in his *Part to Nigerian Freedom* (1947:10) asserts that "Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression. He further describes the amalgamation of 1914 as "the mistake of 1914". Abubakar Tafawa Belewa writes;

Since 1914 the British Government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country, but the Nigerian people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs and so not show themselves any sign of willingness unite... Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country (Belewa 1948:55).

The amalgamation of the southern and Northern protectorates therefore complicated the Nigerian destiny. The Noble Laureate, Wole Soyinka has lent his voice to the growing call for the restructuring of the Nigeria's federation, saying the sovereignty of the country is negotiable;

The sovereignty of Nigeria is bloody well negotiable... and we better negotiate it, not even at meeting, not at conferences, but every day I our conduct towards one another... we cannot continue to allow a centralization policy which makes the constituent units of this nation resentful; they say monkey day work bamboo day chop. And the idea of centralizing revenue allocation system, whereby you dole out... I call it anti-healthy rivalry (Wole-Soyinka Punch, June 29, 2016).

What we are saying in effect is that, Nigeria was put together by force and violence. Now each group should be free to choose what it wants to do for itself. Hence, one must not think that there is this thing called Nigeria and its untouchable.

In June 2017, Femi Fani-Kayode wrote a piece which he called *The Seven-fold yoke and the cabal that own Nigeria*. The piece which first appeared in freedom journal vol 2. No 4, 2017 edition, is a shocking revelation of how the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group has been holding the rest of Nigerians in bondage. He enumerated the seven yokes as follows: (1) The political yoke; (2) The economic yoke; (3) the religious yoke; (4) the cultural yoke; (5) the administrative yoke; (6) the diplomatic yoke; (7) the military/security yoke. He went on to substantiate his claim as follows;

- ▶ Army: Northern Muslim
- ▶ National security Adviser: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Minister of Defence: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Minister of Internal Affairs: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Air Force: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Police: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Economic and Financial Crimes Commission: Northern Muslim
- ▶ National Civil Defence Corps: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Immigration: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Prison Service: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Federal Road Safety Corps: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Nigerian Customs Service: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Chief of Defence Intelligence: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Director of Militancy Intelligence: Northern Muslim
- ▶ Fine Service: Northern Muslim

► National Emergency Management Agency: Northern Muslim

This clearly shows that the polity of Nigerian unity is indeed a journey without the will. Nigeria is structurally unworkable and must either be restructured or broken.

Economically, the jettisoning of derivation as the cardinal principles for revenue sharing came with the emergence of crude oil produced mainly in the Ogoni Niger Delta when cocoa of the Yoruba, cotton/groundnut of the national budget, derivation was religiously adhere to (Amanyie, 2006:7). In appraising the various yardsticks used or suggested for the use in revenue sharing in Nigeria, Chief Obafemi Awolowo in his *The Tacties and Strategy of the Peoples Republic of Nigeria* had this to say;

Where the opponents of the principle (of derivation) believe that they have the advantages of members, they insist on all the revenue being collected into a common pool and then shared out on the basis of population. Where the advantage is absent, they will insist on a common purse from being made on the bases of equality... in a capitalist society whether it is a federation or not, it is unatenable and dishonest in the extreme to insist on sharing another state's wealth on any basis other than that which the rules of the capitalist game allow. In this kind of society, every state is perfectly entitled to keep any wealth that accrues to it either by the sweat of its brow, by cunning or by unaided bounty of nature. And to accuse a rich state of lack of fellow feeling or patriotism because it insists on keeping practically all that comes to it by whatsoever means is reasonable and unrealistic (Awolowo, as cited in Amnyie, 2006:7).

The only striking feature of the Ogoni Niger Delta special Area after over 50 years of independence is the uninterrupted and regular oil and gas exploitation activities. The civil war was indeed a war for the Niger Delta oil. This oil attracted international attention to the crises. If the oil belonged to any of the three major ethnic nationalities, Nigeria would have ceased to exist. When the majority states were highly favoured and agriculturally buoyant as areas producing cash crops such as cocoa, groundnut, coffee as major resources, this country never thought of derivation until when oil became the nation's gold (Amanyie, 2006:8). Such agricultural producing areas would now prefer population, need, national interest, landmass and such criteria bases for revenue allocation. Saro-Wiwa writes;

To use population as a reason to deny them (the people) the right to self-determination usurping their resources for the use of more populous peoples is illogical and cruel in the extreme. Nor are population and economic resources the only determinants of the right to self-determination (Saro-Wiwa, The News, May 1993:17).

Nobody ever thought of the above factors as reasonable for sharing the national cake as at that time. Now is time for oil, the argument now is that since the nation's resources belong to all there must be a mean of helping the poor states as to maintain their service and prevent their citizens from migrating elsewhere. The politic of revenue allocation constitute a major threat to the Nigerian's Federal structure from various observation's on revenue allocation formular communities, when formed, the minorities were not consulted or made members. The spirit of favouritism and Nepotism had often been a play.

Does Religion have a Bearing on Environmental Issues? Towards the way Forward

God gave man a mandate to subdue creation and have dominion over it. Unfortunately, this has been misunderstood. Today, man's activities as earth's caretaker portend grant danger to the earth. William is therefore of the fact that "the modern crisis in the earth's environment are due to man's greed, selfishness, and carelessness (William, 1995:33). Man rather than being in charge, a controller, a maintainer, an ambassador and a steward to his environment has misused abuse, exploited, despoiled and manipulated the earth (Eze, Okwor & Ibenwa, 2013:78) to his own disadvantage thereby jeopardizing his existence on the planet earth. It was in this view that Saro-wiwa lamented thus;

Christianity does not a prove of you robbing peter to pay Paul. Yet it was a Christian (Olusegun Obasanjo though land use decree) who unabashedly took away the oil money of the Delta minorities to give it to others. What does the story of the Good Samaritan mean in modern Nigeria life? (saro-wiwa 1994:5).

Similarly, the holy Quran pictures the universe as a perfect creation of Allah; "And the earth we have spread out (like a carpet); set of things in due balance (Quran 15:19)." In order to stop man from disrupting this balance, Allah, forewarned in Surah 7:56 "do not mischief on the earth, after it hath been set in order" therefore, Islam attributes environmental pollution and its consequences to failure of man to obey Allah's injunction.

From the Ogoni religions philosophy, the earth is not only believed to be a deity but the earth is considered on living being that feels pains when innocent human blood is spilled, grass is burnt, sacred trees are cut down, women raped, the ground is cultivated without due regards to the performance of necessary without due regards to the performance of necessary rituals and a man sleeps with his wife outside a living room, among other such taboos. As observed therefore, in almost all the religious traditions in Nigeria, the earth belongs not to humanity but to God. These trustees or leaseholders are, therefore, not very responsible for maintaining it in good condition as the owner experts, but are also answerable to him/her for the way they handle the lease. The federal government should not limit its interest to the resources of oil and gas, naturally belonging to Deltas only but to also exploit and extend its interest to other resources. Nigeria should adopt like other countries of the world where federalism is practiced where the central government collects only taxes and rents from the federating units which own resources on which taxes are levied. The Niger Delta should prefer at least 50/50 of revenue allocation formula because of the total neglect so far.

Conclusion

Concern for equity, justice and fair play leads one to the recognition of injustice not only that it is impossible but also that it is in reality within the Nigeria context. Yet, one notice's the high handedness of brutality with which the people of the Ogoni-Niger Delta are subjected to each time they legitimately demand for their rights. Yet what is right and what is wrong is wrong.

Central to the dialectic of confrontation in the Ogoni-Niger Delta is the intractable issue of resource control characterized by perpetrated, isolation and negation of the oil producing communities perpetrated thing a system of domination, based on coercive economic and legislative controls within the restructure of Nigeria's centralized federalism. It is therefore suggestive that an urgent need to remedy these imbalances in the lack of social amenities in the region, if the federal government would want to prevent anarchy and social unrest. The federal government should further endeavour to initiate projects that affect the lives of the people as a way of showing solidarity with than for the difficulties they face.

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