

## **Colonialism and Amalgamation of Southern and Northern Protectorates: Analysis of Emerging Issues in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This study situates the Nigeria's contemporary national issues especially those that emanated from the obvious domination of the polity by the Hausa-Fulani extraction, lack of respect for true federalism and federal character principles on the one hand, and on the other hand the paradigm shift from the security challenges occasion by the agitations for resource control, constitutional reforms, restructuring of the current security architecture, and threats posed by increased activities of criminal gangs, as well as the failure of the central government to effectively address these situations that are traceable to Lord Frederick Lugard amalgamation of the Southern and Northern of protectorates in 1914. The study adopted historical design which is qualitative, explorative and explanatory in nature to examine the perceived consequences of the merger of the protectorates of Nigeria. This means that secondary source of data via: textbooks, journal publications, official documents and internet sources were reliably used to gather relevant materials for the study. The study adopted George Stigler's "Capture theory" and Oakland 2005 "Structural Conflict theory" to juxtapose the link between Nigeria's contemporary national issues and the 1914 forceful marriage called amalgamation. In order to eliminate these national issues in the Nigerian system, the study proffers some useful solutions such as respect to the sanctities surrounding the unity of the country. Rather propagating ethnic consciousness inherent in the Nigeria's system, the leaders of our country should de-emphasize mediocracy, and ensure service exchange through meritocracy rather than mediocrity in appointments into government offices and posting of individuals to other areas outside their states of origin to encourage unity of purpose, among others.*

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**Keywords:** Colonialism, Amalgamation, Sothern and Northern Protectorates, Nigeria, Britain.

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## 1.1 Introduction

Scholars and political analysts that previously understudied the contemporary Nigerian socio-political issues situate the present political power sharing crisis and other sundry national issues to the failure of the British colonial authority not to have consulted with the diverse cultural, religious and ethnic grouping in the country before amalgamation (Obiajulu et al., 2016:1-16). The continued insecurity issues in the form of Fulani herders and sedentary farmers' conflict; and banditry, kidnappings, armed robbery and terrorism; and previously in the form of agitations for resource control and militancy in the Niger Delta region are regarded by scholars as consequences of the forceful marriage called amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria by Lord Frederick Lugard in 1914.

In all honesty the political structure and superstructure built and left behind as a vestige by the colonial masters are often cited by scholars within and outside the country as the major source of the problems of the country. In affirmative manner, Akinola (2013) cited in Oluwatobi (2018:35) argued that the ethno-religious diversity of the various groups that presently constitute the modern day Nigeria was not given favourably consideration by the British colonisers before amalgamation or fusion of the southern and northern protectorates into one entity known as Nigeria. Akinola, thus, situates the root cause of the occasional political rivalry and disunity among the ethnic groups in the country to the unification of the protectorates of Nigeria. Complementing this stand point, Paul (2016:66) argued that the aftermath of colonialism also affected the country's socio-political development particularly that concerning the false marriage called *amalgamation* where different entities were fused together as one without the consent of the indigenous people of Africa whether it was comfortable for them to live together as one and an enlarged nation known as *Nigeria* today. He therefore situates this to the Berlin Conference of 1884 to 1885 chaired by the pre-World War II Germany's Otto Von Bismarck often regarded today as the *Balkanization of Africa* by the European powers including Great Britain.

Akinjide (2001) and Abubakar (2003) argued that the merger of the protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria by the British, fundamentally, was for the administrative convenience of the British colonialists and not for the people as was alleged. They also situate the uneven development amongst the various ethnic nationalities especially at the level of education that instigates the fear of dominance in the post-colonial polity to this fusion called amalgamation. All of these factors do not in any way undermine the fact that there were no organised pre-colonial traditional Nigerian states of the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo and the other minority ethnic groups before the invasion of the territory as alleged by the British colonisers. Suffice therefore to state that the process of British administration in what is known in our today society as the Republic of Nigeria began with the annexation and proclamation of Lagos as a Crown Settlement in 1861 following the British Settlement Act of 1843 which established British Crown Colony System of Government in her invaded foreign territories, though, Lagos which was her base was not fully recognised as a crown colony until 1886 (Abubakar, 2003).

Obiajulu et al. (2016) argued that before the coming of the British colonial masters there were in existence diverse ethnic nationalities in both the Southern and Northern areas of the Niger and Benue rivers, among which were the Hausa, Fulani, Tiv, Nupe, Gwari, Koi, Kanuri, Igala in the Northern part, and in the South Eastern part of the country were the Igbos, Ibibio, Efik, Ijaw, Ikwerre, Ogoja, and in the South Western part were the Yorubas, Edos, Itsekiris, Urhobos, Ukwuani, Ika, Aniocha-Oshimili, Isokos, among other pre-colonial ethnic minority groups. It was believed that the reason for British intervention, first in Lagos, was not just philanthropic desire to destroy the Portuguese and Brazilians slave trade activities but to exploit the resources of the vast territories and beyond the Niger River. These factors undoubtedly influenced the composition of the traditional political society of the territory, as well as the contemporary

thinking of the people of Nigeria, hence the national issues that have threatened the unity of the country in recent years.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Scholars of political science and historians alike, have had to argue that before the coming of the British colonialists, the ethnic groups that made up the entity known as Nigeria today were independently involved in self-governance; some of which were centralised, semi-centralised and decentralised in nature, and similar to what is obtainable our in modern days' system of administration inherited from British colonial administration from 1914 to 1960 when the country gained her independence. For instance, the Hausa-Fulani system was more *centralised* in nature while that of the Yoruba was a *semi-centralised* system and that of the Igbo's was more or less *republican, egalitarian and decentralised* in nature, while the other minority groups share similar cultural and political system with any of these majority ethnic group categorisations (Obiajulu et al., 2016:1). Unfortunately these traditional political institutions were altered and replaced with the Whiteman's political institutions which are more or less practiced in our modern or contemporary society.

Critics of this contact with British colonisers have argued that the forceful marriage called amalgamation of the protectorates has a link with the continued crises in the polity of the country especially that concerning the rivalries between the diverse ethnic divides over the years. The researcher therefore argued that the present national issues, particularly those occasioned by the activities of the Islamic terrorist organisation: Boko Haram and ISWAP; and other criminal vices in the form of Fulani herdsmen attacks, banditry and kidnapping, etc. have bedevilled the nation's internal security on the one hand; and on the other hand threatens the unity of the country. The disaffection and rivalry among the ethnic groups created by the 1914 fusion of the country by British colonisers has continued to breed crises. Corrupt practices, tribalism, nepotism, favouritism, and other forms of anti-oneness vices in the polity of the country, are also associated with this marriage called amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigeria.

Some political analysts, thus, situate the activities of the present administration, the posture and altercations of the Arewa Consultative Forum (the apex socio-economic and cultural group in Northern Nigeria) Miyetti Allah Kauta Hore generally known as Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria on the one hand (Oluka et al., 2019: 1270); and the incessant killings of farmers and innocent Nigerian citizens by Fulani herders across the country particularly in the Middle Belt, South Eastern and South Western parts of the country on the other hand to the *legacy of ethnic consciousness* implanted by the British colonisers. This is often regarded as a deliberate attempt to cause disunity among the major ethnic nationalities and to islamise the country by these recalcitrant elements known as Islamic terrorist organisations. Also identified as a problem is the practice of quasi federalism deliberately designed by the Hausa-Fulani and the political class of the old to control the natural oil resources from the South in the name of *One Nigeria* and for selfish gains at the detriment of the South that owns the resources.

This is what some national and international observers and critics called the capturing of the Nigerian state, human and material resources. The recent calls for restructuring of the security architecture leading to the agitation for the establishment of *state police* or what is known today in some quarters as *community policing*; and the revisit of the agitation for *resource control* and *true federalism* are also associated with the unfavourable merger of the protectorates of Nigeria in 1914. From this stand point, it could be said that our problems or the Nigerian problems in recent time are traceable to unification or fusion of the protectorates of Nigeria known as "amalgamation".

This study therefore is poised to examine the link between the historical antagonism and antecedents of amalgamation of the protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria, as well as the contemporary challenges including the obvious or seemingly abuse of the principles of true federalism adopted by the leadership of the country after independence, and which has continued to undermine and threaten the unity of the nation up till date. The study is aimed at examining the country's contemporary security challenges especially those emanating from the activities of the terrorist groups and criminal gangs such as Boko Haram, ISWA and Fulani herdsmen respectively on the one hand; and on the other hand the group of agitators or secessionist movements such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Niger Delta Liberation Front (NDLF), Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Niger Delta Revolutionary Crusade (NDRC), the Niger Delta Avenger (NDA), all in the recent past; and presently the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), in the South Eastern part of country to the forceful marriage known as "amalgamation".

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to examine the implications of the merger of Southern and Northern Protectorates of Nigeria in our cotemporary democratic society, particularly in the country's forth republic and most importantly between. While the specific objectives are to:

- (i) Examine the major reasons for the amalgamation or merger of Southern and Northern Nigeria,
- (ii) Identify the critical national issues or challenges that the amalgamation or merger of the protectorates of Nigeria poses to the unity of the country in recent time, and
- (iii) Proffer solutions to these identified national issues, problems and challenges.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following questions are raised to give direction to the study:

- (i) What are the major reasons for the amalgamation or merger of the protectorates of Nigeria?
- (ii) To what extent has the amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria affected or threatened the unity of the country in recent time?
- (iii) What are the solutions to these identified national issues, problems and challenges?

### **1.5 Method of the Study**

In this study historical design was adopted which is qualitative and explorative in nature. This means that the method of data collection in the study was secondary source and through the content analysis of previous studies conducted by scholars and professionals in the study area, particularly those from political science and international relations, and those with historical background within and outside Nigeria. In a nut shell, relevant data for the study were derived from textbooks, journal articles, government official documents, newspapers, magazines and internet materials.

### **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

The George Stigler's *Capture theory* of 1971 was adopted to analyse the Nigerian situation. George Stigler, a Nobel Laureate in Economics is associated with *Capture theory* propounded in 1971, to first, explain the capturing of the territory of Africa, and its abundance human and material resources by the European colonialists including Nigeria in the present day West African Sub-region in the past; and two, to relate same to the dominance of the present day Nigerian polity by the Hausa-Fulani extraction; and lastly, the capturing or the overbearing pressure of insecurity occasioned by activities of criminal gangs; the Fulani herdsmen attacks on innocent farmers across the country, banditry, kidnapping and other forms of criminal vices.

George in 1971 argued that the governments do not end up creating monopoly in industries by accident; rather they do so with the authority of the producers who have captured the regulatory agencies, and use regulation to prevent competition. Scholars like Duncan (1958), Buchanan and Gordin (1962), Olson (1965) and Hellman, Jones and Leaufman (2000) also contributed to the development of this theory in distinct manners but was said to be popularised by George Stigler in 1971 (Econlib 2019; Akpotor & Nwolise, 2014:139).

Akpotor & Nwolise (2014:139) described the theory as a synthesis of Decision-making theory, Elite theory, Public Choice theory, Collective Action theory, Power theory, among others. They argued that the superpowers seize or get possession of something by force, and by implication they have applied force which is what it means to capture the political institutions of a country. By implication those who intend to capture the state must be *strong as the state*, if not *stronger than the state*. Furthermore, they argued that in politics as in the case of Nigeria, *capture* has occurred because the political class, elites or bureaucrats often regarded as the *cabals* dominated and controlled by the Hausa-Fulani tribes and those with public mandates, end up acting consciously to favour their selfish interests by monopolising all the sectors of the country's socio-economic and political fronts.

In another perspective, Akpotor & Nwolise (2014) see those that capture the state resources as the "*who is who*" of the state and those that ensure that the benefits to be obtained from the state's resources exceed the costs to be incurred, thereby, investing on resources in which they can use in seeking protection from the authority. From the Nigerian experience, it is obvious that the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari like their predecessors is desperately seeking to capture the Nigerian state and her resources by all means available. The initial intent to establish for the president's kinsmen, the Fulani herders, *Ruga*, which in Hausa means a special settlement for herders and their cattle, as well as recent re-submission of an executive bill seeking to control all the waterways and their banks across the country to the National Assembly instead of carrying out effective and sincere crusade or fight against insecurity and insurgency in the country despite the capability of the Armed forces of the Federation and other security agencies to participate fully in the fight against the insurgent groups in the North eastern region and other security challenges such as banditry, armed robbery and other criminal activities across the country are obvious indication that the present administration has failed the country in terms of security (Oluka et al., 2019: 1267).

The sale and acquisition of oil blocks located in the Southern part of the country by these elite class dominated by the Hausa-Fulani extraction has giving credence to the notion of the capture theorists in the case of Nigeria. This theory, therefore, is very useful in explaining the Nigerian case where there is a persistent economic failure because of the actions and inactions of those in position of authority on the one hand, and on the other hand the inability of the government to eliminate insurgency and other criminal vices that are threatening the security of lives and properties in particular and the unity of the country in general. Indisputably, the elite class in the country over the years has monopolised governance and all the major means of production and distribution in the country through privatisation of public firms and sale of oil blocks located in the southern part of the country to themselves.

From this standpoint it can be argued that one of the fundamental obstacles to the country's economic and socio-political growth and development is lack of knowledge and understanding of the management of the state institutions and firms. The activities of these *gluttonous bourgeoisies* and their *foreign allies* who are unfortunately interested in selfish ventures are also a consequence. The country has always possessed all it requires to transform her economy and social infrastructure into one of the leading economies and industrialised nations of the

world but the selfish desires of the elite class which was alleged to have been inherited from the colonialists (i.e. a legacy passed on by the British colonial masters) have in no small measure hindered the country's socio-political and economic progress as well as national development over the years.

On a general note, it is alleged that the contemporary Nigerian society has been infiltrated by colonial legacies and external influences in the form of *Neo-imperialism or Neo-colonialism*. The Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and International Institutions in conjunction with the *indigenous comprador-bourgeoisies or political elites or captors* from the Hausa-Fulani extraction and their allies, though a few of them from Western and Southern part of the country, have been deeply involved in the act of capturing the country to their selfish interests. These classes of people through government policies run the country in a similar manner like the British colonial masters of the old; and for their selfish and private gains, and at the detriment of the *ruled or governed*, hence the *capture*. By this stand point, it is obvious that those occupying position of authority in the country have captured the country and are likely to pass this legacy to the next generation of leaders who are likely to be the children of the elite class.

## 2.1 Empirical Review

### The Pre-Colonial Nigerian Societies:

The pre-colonial territory known today as Nigeria was dominated by a number of powerful kingdoms, empires and villages among which are the Bini (Benin) Empire, the Islamic Kanemi Borno Empire in the North and West respectively; and the Igbo Kingdom of Onitsha in the Southeast and the various Hausa-Fulani Kingdoms also in the North. According to Abubakar (2014) archaeological record shows that there were vast civilisations and cultural advancement in the life-styles of these indigenous West African people before the coming of the Europeans. He described these kingdoms with their vast ancient civilisations and traced their developments to the striving trans-Saharan slave trade by the Europeans in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. He also linked the popularities of these ancient societies to the abolition of slave trade; the consequence of which was the increased Western influence during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the scramble for Africa particularly in the case of the protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria in 1900.

Obiajulu et al.(2016) argued that the ethnic groups that made up the entity known today as Nigeria are over 350, each of which were autonomous and engaged in their respective political, social and economic life, as well as cherished identities prior to the coming of the European invaders. Among these traditional Nigerian ethnic nationalities are the Hausas, Fulanis, Tiv, Nupe, Wwari, Koi, Kanuri, Igala to mention but a few in the Northern part of the country, while in the South Eastern part of the country are the Igbos, Ibibio, Efik, Ijaw, Ikwerre, Ogoja, among others. And in the South Western part are the present days Delta, and Edo, and populated by the Yorubas, Edo, Itsekiri, Urhobos, Ukwani, Ika, Anioma, Oshimili, Isoko, etc. Inoli (1979) argued that before the coming of the British colonialists, these ethnic groups were independent or self-governed. While the Hausa-Fulani system was *centralised* in nature, that of the Yoruba was *semi-centralised* and that of the Igbo was *republican, egalitarian and decentralised* in nature.

Traditionally, the pre-colonial Hausa-Fulani society lives in small villages and towns where they grow crops and raise livestock including cattle as well as engage in trade within their local environment and in distance towns across Africa. Odusanya (2018) interestingly stated that the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups are presently located in the Northern region of Nigeria dominated by the states of Sokoto, Kaduna, Kano and Katsina. She specifically identified the Hausa-Fulani pre-colonial administrative system to be complicated and strongly centralised with several political units covering large territorial areas, each of which were controlled by rulers

(*Kings or Emirs*) and their subordinates. In the same manner, Obiajulu et al. (2016) stated that these elaborate structures, units or organs perform social roles with the central having link with them. Notably also were units or structures for law enforcement, tax collection and external defense, with Islam as their major religion. Apart from the major traditional Hausa states of Sokoto, Kaduna, Kano and Katsina, there were also the original Hausa states often regarded as the *Hausa Bakwai* of Daura, Kano, Zaria, Gobir, Katsina, Biram and Rano, as well as the *Banza Bakwai* states of Zamfara, Kebbi, Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Kwarafa and Ilorin (Obiajulu et al., 2016:5).

It was recorded that Fulani took over the political leadership of the Habe (i.e. Hausa states) in early 19<sup>th</sup> Century through jihad led by Usman Dan Fodio and subsequently established the Sokoto caliphate with a well-structured centralised political system of government. The caliphate was later divided into emirates and each was led by an Emir who has the responsibility of making laws, enforcing and maintaining peace and order in his domain. All the Emirs were made to pay tributes and allegiance to the Sultan of Sokoto who was the overall head of the caliphate (Maduawuchi, 2019). The Emirs were assisted in their administrative duties by other junior official such as the Waziri who was the head of the entire official; Galadima who was in charge of the capital; the Madawaki or Madaki who was the commander of the army; the Dogari who was the head of police; the Maaji in charge of the treasury; the Sarkin Ruwa who was the river fishing official; the Sarkin Fada who was the head of the palace workers; and the Sarkin Pawa who was the head of the butchers. There was also a well-structured judicial system where Islamic law was the practice. The judicial administration was based on Sharia laws and was administered by Alkali Judges (Odusanya, 2018; Passnownow.com, 2020).

Apart from the pre-colonial account of the structure of the Hausa-Fulani group there are also the accounts of the pre-colonial Igbo groups with semi-independent village developments all of which are at present located in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. These Igbo communities developed from the previously scattered semi-independent villages into larger units that later developed into autonomous clans. The Igbo pre-colonial civilisation flourished from food gathering to food cultivation, as well as commercial activities which have often involved indigenous traders exchanging their locally produced goods for items from other parts of the country. An important stage in the development of the pre-colonial Igbo society was the ability of the society to invest in iron technology which was said to have first developed in Awka in the present day Anambra state. Blacksmithing was a well-known profession among the Awka people, Arochukwu, Onitsha and Oguta in the pre-colonial days (Ifemesia, 1979).

Obiajulu et al. (2016) noted that the social organisation of the pre-colonial Igbo society was based on distinct levels of kinship system, as well as social relations such as religion, marriage, confraternities or secret societies, wealth, etc. Practices like incest was treated with utmost disdain and regarded as “Nso-ani” which in local palace means a “taboo”. Unlike the Hausa-Fulani pre-colonial political structure, the Igbo society was segmented. The elders at all levels of government played prominent roles in their leadership, though they did not rule alone but along with the “Ofor” title holders (Council of Elders) which was the Igbo symbol of authority, right conduct, justice and link between the dead and the living; the “Ozor” title holders which is only for wealthy and influential men; and the age grade traditional group, etc. The Igbo pre-colonial political institution was said to be egalitarian and republican in nature and not centralised or semi-centralised like the Hausa-Fulanis and Yorubas respectively.

Falola et al. (1991) opines that like the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo pre-colonial societies, the Yoruba pre-colonial society located in the present day South Western part of the country has its own unique way of life before the coming of the British colonialists. There is this general belief that they are the descendent of “Oduduwa” who was supposed to have descended from

heaven and his children from *Ile-ife*, the founders of the kingdoms and dynasties in Yoruba land. Like the Hausa-Fulani people, the Yoruba people of the old had a centralised system of government controlled by the kingdoms of Ife, Oyo and Bini, etc. Each of these kingdoms was controlled by monarchs known as the “Obas”, though the title of Oba differs from community to community. For example, the Oba of Ife was known as the “Oni” of Ife while that of the old Oyo was known as the “Alaafin” of Oyo. Apart from the Obas there were provincial or village Chiefs who exerted some administrative, military, and spiritual powers within their domain. The Obas were also supported by members of the Oba-in-council, occupational groups and secret societies like the other pre-colonial societies, the Yoruba people were also engaged in some commercial activities on arts and culture. The very fertile land of the area made agriculture to flourish and the location of land along the savannah belt made the land suitable for commercial enterprise in salt and leather goods that were sold in Yoruba markets.

It is important to note that the conquest of these pre-colonial Nigerian communities and the subsequent establishment of British authority changed the history of these ancient communities. With the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates of Nigeria and the introduction of indirect rule system the stories of these pre-colonial societies changed completely. This change in culture and tradition from ancient traditions to European culture is what the researcher infers as the root cause of the country’s problems. First, the traditional rulers; the native chiefs, the Obas and Emirs following the introduction of indirect rule system were regarded as the integral part of the British colonial government in the protectorates. This system exposed the traditional rulers to the extent that they exercised so much power than they would have ordinarily done. Extant literature revealed that the indigenous Nigerian colonial gazette or adopted chiefs, Emirs and Obas were involved in arbitrary use of powers either against their opponents’ wives, lands, etc. This exposed the myths and sacredness surrounding the people’s tradition and culture.

At independence in 1960, colonial influence and legacy has strongly influenced the indigenous rulers that emerged as the new political leaders of the new state of Nigeria. The struggle for supremacy, corruption, tribal or ethnic politics, and nepotism or favouritism dominated the post-colonial politics of the country. This era was also truncated by military rule that existed between 1966 and 1999 when the military eventually handed power back to the civilians. Though, there was a short return of power to civil rule in 1979 to 1983 before the present day uninterrupted democratic rule in the history of the country. According to Max (2009), Nigeria has over the year experienced several successful and failed military interventions in politics, first with the 1966 coup and counter-coup by some military men from the Igbo extraction including Late Major Kaduna Nzeogu, Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna, among others.

On 28 July 1966, there was a counter-coup which saw Major-General Gowon as the successor of Major-General Ironsi whose regime lasted for only a few days. There was also another military coup popularly known as the “Dimka coup” which led to the assassination of General Murtala Muhammed and the emergence of Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo as the Head of State from 1976 to 1979 who handed over power to a democratically elected President Shehu Shagari whose second term in office as the president of the federal republic was interrupted by another military coup in August 1983 led by General Muhammadu Buhari. In December 1985, there was an alleged coup known as *Vatsa Coup* where several military officers were arrested, tried, convicted and eventually executed for conspiring to overthrow General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida who initially overthrew the regime of General Buhari. This regime was followed by another, popularly known as General San Abacha regime which overthrew the Interim Government led by Chief Ernest Shonekan in 1994. The demise of General Abacha in 1998



saw another regime led by General Abdulsalami Abubakar who is today known as the founder of the present day democracy enjoyed by the present crops of Nigerian politicians (Max, 2009).

### **Reasons for the Amalgamation of the Protectorates of Nigeria Re-examined:**

Extant literature has shown that the major reason for European merchants' incursion into the African coast, especially Spanish and Portuguese merchants; who were the first to have embarked on the voyage of discoveries around the coastal fringes of Africa was as a result of the substantial profits they recorded from trade. The consequence of this was colonisation of African, hence the journey of colonisation of African including Nigeria which began from the pretentious establishment of mutual trade relations with the indigenous traders through the efforts of Sir Taubman Goldie's Royal Niger Company (RNC). The RNC was undoubtedly entrusted to establish an empire on the Niger and Benue river basins in the 1877 and beyond. The action of the European invaders was complicated by the Conference held in Berlin in 1884/1885 to demarcate the territories of Africa for Europeans convenience and to avoid clashes in their exploits of the territories of Africa (Obiajulu et al., 2016).

According to Fabiyi (2014) there are three primary reasons that inspired British expansionist conquest; first he argued was because the nation offered them lands that were very rich in minerals, superbly arable and rich for agriculture and animal husbandry; as well as rivers and ocean that were sufficiently filled with aquatic lives. Secondly, the nation offered them a favourably inland and waterways and unfettered access to the sea that allowed moving their goods comfortably. And finally, the nation offered them abundance of hardworking and enterprising people who transformed the factors of production into finished products and services that were also taxed.

Yakubu and Ntim (2014) argued that: *the primary reason for amalgamation was economic reason having noticed the disadvantaged nature of the northern protectorate which was larger in size but had no direct access to the sea and could not raise sufficient revenue for the colonial administrators; hence, they opted for merger of both protectorates.* The fusion of the protectorates of Nigeria was facilitated by the British colonial power's alleged tiredness of funding of projects such as railway construction; river dredging and other sundry projects without generating sufficient revenue from northern protectorate to fund these projects of economic pertinence to the British. This implies that the Southern protectorate was relatively richer in resources since it was surrounded by rivers, sea and lakes that made the protectorate economically relevant to the British. The Northern protectorate on the other hand was a dry land surrounded by deserts which equally made the protectorate irrelevant economically to the British. In a nut shell, the prime objective of British amalgamation was to have a uniform, effective and total control over the protectorates of Nigeria.

In another development Falola et al. (1991) cited in Yakubu and Ntim (2014:3) while expressing their perceptions for the reason for the 1914 merger of the protectorates of Nigeria argued that "apart from the fact that the real essence or reasons for the marriage called amalgamation was economic, the British also initiated the merger because of the realisation that the revenue generation from both protectorates was imbalance due to the landlocked nature of the north". There was also the realisation that the merger would provide the British colonialists conducive atmosphere to control both protectorates under a unified system and a better ground to also coordinate their development policy or plan for the entire country which was particularly targeted at coordination of the railways project. Another obvious reason was the urgent need to ameliorate the tension occasioned by the disagreement over policy implementation, as well as to ameliorate problem of shortage of personnel or officials. In the affirmative, Fabiyi (2014) opines that the reason for amalgamation of the protectorates was

because the South had abundance of coal (fuel) that provided the Europeans the energy to power the available means of transportation and machines for production as well as abundance of enterprising citizens while the North on the other hand offered them minerals, diverse lands, people and climates that the South could not offer them, although, there were no oceans to transport people and products in the North. In other words, amalgamation was the only alternative to harness the resources of both protectorates of Nigeria.

Isiani and Obi-Ani (2019) in an elaborate manner argued that the marriage called amalgamation was nothing less than administrative fiat of the Nigeria by the British colonialist overlord for economic and administrative convenience considering the large size of the protectorates, as well as religious and cultural differences among the indigenous people of Nigeria. While the Northern protectorate was predominantly Muslims and animist, the Southern protectorate was predominantly Christians and aggressively westernised. This implies that the two protectorates were culturally distinct, yet in 1914 Lord Frederick Lugard unified both protectorates to create the entity known as Nigeria for economic and ease of administration and control of the entire country (Omoruyi, 2002; Isiani & Obi-Ani, 2019). The consequence of this forceful marriage is the political and religious violence that characterise the politics of the country since independence in October 1, 1960. This no doubt has lend credence to the belief by the critics that the contemporary emerging national issues or conflicts are as a result of the merger of diverse traditional societies with distinct identities, traditions and cultures without their preparedness and consent.

#### **The Amalgamation, its impacts and Emerging Issues in Nigeria:**

The consequences of this unceremonious marriage known as amalgamation, though with some noticeable benefits have over the years impacted negatively on the socio-political relations among the diverse ethnic groups in the country. However, the post independent state of Nigeria has experienced one problem or another since her birth by the British colonialists. Most remarkable of all has been the occasional agitations for state and local government creation by the minority ethnic groups in the country. Critics have always slammed this event of 1914 to be a total failure and the source of some of the problems occasionally experienced in the country in recent years. One of such critics, Ogbu Charles, a columnist with the Guardian Nigeria Newspaper on 6 February 2017 opines that, every problem Nigeria has ever faced and will ever face can be traced to that demonic event of 1914 when the British merged the Southern and Northern protectorates into one country that is today known as Nigeria". "The British had only one thing in mind while carrying out this marriage called amalgamation: their administrative and economic convenience, nothing more.

To him, this action of the British through her representative, Lord Frederick Lugard, can be compared to a man who intentionally bought herbivorous and carnivorous animals from the market and decided to put them in one cage for his convenience to transport them home knowing full well that herbivores feed only on herbs, harmless and easy going while carnivores are the opposite and feed on flesh, aggressive and violent in often cases. Such is the marriage called amalgamation because the only concern of the colonialists was economic and administrative convenience and not minding the aftermaths or consequences that will follow the merger after independence. Moreover, the *One Nigeria* slogan is one of the biggest and organised lies we have ever conceived after independence considering the emerging national issues occasioned by amalgamation since from independence till date (Ogbu, 2017).

On a general note it has been observed that amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria has ushered in some noticeable changes. Omotola (2017) while x-raying the changes associated with the amalgamation of the protectorates argued that it has not only brought in changes that affected the British colonialists but also to Nigerian citizens. To him, some of these changes

were felt first on the colony when the protectorates fell under one government. By implication this restructuring was advocated by Lugard purposely and most importantly to consolidate on the contentious railway policy of the Southern and Northern protectorates in order to facilitate a swift transportation of goods for the convenience of the British merchants, etc. This no doubt gives credence to the belief that the various groups that constitute the country today had little or nothing in common in the past and were never involved in the processes that gave birth to the country.

Literature revealed that this marriage call amalgamation made the political management of the country very difficult. It created a lot of challenges in recent times. This means that the creation of the country by the British colonialists without the consent of the people has been the bane of the country's political development. The contemporary effects of amalgamation, therefore, cannot be overemphasized considering the socio-political and religious issues that have engulf the nations over the years. This notion was complemented by Akinola (2013) cited in Oluwatobi (2018:35) when he argued that the 1914 unification of the ethno religious diversity of the various groups that presently constitute the modern day Nigeria is a mistake made by the British colonisers. In the same manner Akinjide (2000), (2001) in Oluwatobi (2018:36) argued that the implication of the 1914 unification of the protectorates of Nigeria was for administrative convenience of the colonisers and not for the people, the impact of which is still felt in our contemporary Nigeria society. In a similar manner Abubakar (2016:2) argued that the emergence of ethnic militias; the struggle and agitations for recognition and self-determination; as well as religious, ethnic and communal conflicts; all of which are evident in the activities of Boko Haram and ISWA terrorist groups; and the Niger Delta militia groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta Liberation Front (NDLF), Niger Delta People's Volunteer Forces (NDPVF), Niger Delta Revolutionary Crusaders (NDRC), Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), all of which emanated from the oil rich South-South region of the country are the consequences of the fusion of the protectorates of Nigeria. There are also the presence of the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the more recent case of the revived movement of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) both from the South Eastern part of the Country as consequences.

Analysts, historians and political scientists alike have had to situate the root cause of some of these national issues to the disaffections, marginalisation and failure of the central government to fully integrate the people of these regions into the affairs of the state and recognise the fact that the country is made up of people of diverse ethnic nationalities, religious groups and located in different geographical environment and must be treated alike and equally. Some alleged or argued that the attitude of the Nigerian leaders from the northern region and their allies from the south is inherited from the *British supremacist legacies*. Indisputably, the forceful marriage call amalgamation and the attitudes of Nigeria leaders of the past and present is the problem of the country today. This has exacerbated the fear of dominance among the ethnic groups in the post-colonial epoch.

However, the daily realities of the merger are clearly felt in recent time in distinct forms and natures. For instance, the lingering inter group and intra group domination in the country over the years has been trace to the *consciousness of identity* initiated by the colonialists, evident in the occasional challenges of ethnic divides and religious bigotry in the country. This has continued to pose challenges that threatened the corporate existence of the nation over time. Politically, it has created distrust among the ethnic nationalities that found themselves in the same state or local government areas, as evident in the 1997 *Ode-Itsekiri communal crisis* often refers to as the *Warri crisis*, a clash between the Ijaw and the Itsekiri and to a lesser extent, the

Urhobo ethnic groups in Delta state triggered by the announcement made by the then Military Administrator, Colonel David Dung in a broadcast to the state that the headquarter of the newly created Warri South Local Government Area was to be located in Ogbe-Ijoh, an Ijaw community (Adebayo, 2003).

Another obvious example was the Arogo Ijaw-Ilaje conflict of 1998-1999 which was caused by an unresolved land and boundary dispute, struggle for resource control, fear of domination, marginalisation, religious leadership crisis and quest for political autonomy from the conflict between the two groups. Also identified as the cause of conflict in the country are the existence of artificial boundaries along ethnic lines across the Federation, evidenced in the Ugep-Idoma 1992 crisis; Itsekiri-Ijaw 1995-1997 crisis; Ife-Modekeke 1997 crisis; and Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba in Sagamu 1999 crisis. Others include Kaduna and Kanu ethno-religious riot 2000-2001; Aguleri and Umuleri conflict in 2001; and the Fulani and Berom; and Tiv-Jukun conflicts in 2001 respectively (Ayoyo, 2015: 321). According to Otite (1999) and Albert (2001) these violent community crises are now part of the regular features of the social life of the people from independence up to the recent days political Nigeria. In another development Otite and Ogionwo (2006) cited in Ayoyo (2015:321) argued that one of the principal causes of social conflicts among groups in the present day Nigeria is occasioned by the growing inequality in the distribution of resource endowments among the people. This was attributed to the failure of the Federal Government to respect the principles of federal character and true federalism in the distribution of political appointments and allocation of revenues derived from natural resources to the States and Local government areas of the Federation.

In recent time conflict arises from the impunity exhibited by the Fulani nomads, a reflection of the hereditary legacy planted by the British colonial masters who saw the Hausa-Fulani tribe as a special group of people, and as such favoured them fervently during colonial era, creating the impression that the country belongs to them. Rather than addressing the menacing orchestrated by the Fulani herders against sedentary farmers and local communities across the federation, the federal government engages itself in unwarranted arrests and malicious confrontations of some notable individuals and non-combatant socio-cultural groups such as Ibrahim El-Zalzaky and his wife, and members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) respectively, amongst others. Most provocative of all was the unalloyed support of the federal government failed plan to establish *Ruga settlements* (a special settlement for Fulani herders) across the states of the federation by Miyetti Allah Kauta Hore, generally referred to as Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), a socio-economic and cultural group from the Northern part of the country. It was alleged in some quarters as a conspiracy to indirectly establish Fulani local government in all the states of the federation (Oluka et al., 2019: 1267-1270).

It is alleged by critics and observers of the Nigerian situation that the federal government, security agencies and Fulani herdsmen conspire to perpetrate countless attacks and killings of sedentary farmers and other Nigerian citizens, the consequence of this gave birth to the agitation for restructuring of the country's political apparatus and the security outfits. The prime of which is the establishment of *Amotekum* security outfit by the Governors of South-West states of the federation purposely to serve as a counter unit to combat the alleged conspiracy and terrorist attacks on non-Fulani tribes and farmers across the region. In other words, the intent is to establish a security network that will be working in collaboration and as a complementary network with the police and other security agencies to combat security challenges across the region. It has been argued that the governors of the six states of the region, Kyode Fayemi of Ekiti State; Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State; Dapo Abiodun of Ogun

State, Seyi Makinde of Oyo State; Gbenga Oyetola of Osun State and Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State agreed to establish and jointly fund the security network (Bayo, 2020; Okojie, 2020).

### Summary and Conclusion

The Southern and Northern protectorates known today as Nigeria, a name coined by Flora Louise Shaw, a British journalist, writer, and Lord Frederick Lugard's spouse, undeniably, has a unique and peculiar situation among the other contemporary states of Africa. Like the other Anglophone countries of Africa, the major reason for the acquisition of the territory of Nigeria by the British colonialists was economic expansionism. Geographically, it is favourably located along the northern hemisphere with 5,529.20mi (i.e. 8,898.39Km) south of the North Pole and 691.15mi (i.e. 1,112.30km) north of the equator. It has an estimated annual rainfall ranges from 381cm along the coast and 64cm or less in the far north and surrounded by Niger Republic in the North, Republic of Cameroon in the East, Benin Republic in the West and Chad Republic in the North-East (Yakubu & Ntim, 2014:1). These unique attributes of the pre-colonial Nigerian society was the prime reason for the acquisition of the territory by the British colonial masters. This situation no doubt changed the history of the country as well as complicated her domestic events from 1900 up to her independence in October 1, 1960. The post-colonial political history has been complicated by the initial contact with the British colonialists and imperialists, hence, the mixed feelings or critics against the 1914 unification of the protectorates of Nigeria.

By implication and to a large extent, the 1914 unification or amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria left behind an unsolved conflict of *ethnic and tribal consciousness* among the diverse ethnic nationalities that were forcefully unified by the actions and inactions of the imperialists. Also worthy of note was the *divide and rule policy* initiated by the colonisers after 1914 amalgamation that is reinforced in our post-colonial era. The consequence of this is mistrust between the ethnic groups, thereby widening the gap that has existed between them. Suffice therefore to state categorically that the initial coerced marriage with the British colonialists that lasted from 1914 to October 1, 1960 when the nation gained her independence left behind a chronic and damaging legacy that till date very much visibly *unpropitious, counter and anti-democratic* in nature. In other words, impunity, pretence and disaffection become the bane or threat to the nation's political unity. From the foregoing analysis it could be said that Nigeria's national issues are rooted, as it were, from the "amalgamation" of the protectorates of the Southern and Northern Nigeria. It is a total political blunder and not in the interest of Nigerians as they were not consulted, hence the following recommendations.

### Recommendations

Any resolution of the Nigeria's problems must first of all address the antagonism created by 1914 amalgamation of the protectorates of Nigeria. Since our problems did not begin yesterday neither today, we should accept, our destiny in good faith and look beyond the deceit under which we were brought together and work towards the unity of the country and on just cause. In other words, the government must revisit recommendations made preciously made by Nigerian scholars, analysts, constitutional conferences and custodians of Nigerian history as reiterated below:

1. As a matter of urgency, the government should organise another Sovereign National Conference devoid of any interference from the incumbent government, to decide with utmost sincerity whether to disintegrate into separate entities or to remain as one Nigeria. In the affirmative, the government should address the emerging socio-political issues, such as marginalisation of the minority ethnic groups in the country if it wants

to sustain its *unity* and remain as *one Nigeria*. This can only be achieved by addressing the imbalances caused by the demarcation of states and local government areas. For instance, the Yorubas in Kwara and Kogi states should be removed from these states respectively and merge with their kinsmen in the South-West of Nigeria.

2. Rather than propagating *ethnic consciousness* inherited from the British colonialist, the leaders of our country should address this issue through respect for provisions of the constitution of the federal republic, particularly the federal character principles and true federalism. In a nut shell, the central government should allow decentralise its functions and allow the states or regional government to explore and control their resources and made to pay royalty to the central government at Abuja, Nigeria. In other words, there should be decentralisation of power, equal rights to all citizens before the law, equal opportunity for employment anywhere in the country, equal rights to protection of life and property, and significant others. These are likely to de-intensify the unhealthy agitations and struggles for resource control across the federation, especially from the Niger Delta region.
3. The spirit of *black consciousness or brotherhood* should be encouraged rather than propagation of ethnic consciousness which has dominated the socio-political environment of the nation. Nigerians should see themselves as one rather than differentiating themselves along cultural, religious and ethnic lines.
4. For this marriage known as amalgamation to be sustained without disaffections, the government should also discourage a situation whereby charlatans (pretenders) and ethnic jingoists (those who feel their tribe is superior to that of the others) jostle for state or political powers in order to control the nation's resources. This is has created problem in governance, therefore should be eliminated from the Nigerian system in order to afford a situation whereby some charlatans and jingoists place their personal interests above national interest.

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