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**RISING NATIONALISM: THE LEGITIMACY OF BIAFRA'S
DEMAND FOR AN INDEPENDENT STATE**

Master's thesis

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the paper independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors has been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading. The document length is 16708 words from the introduction to the end of conclusion.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APOC – Anglo-Persian Oil Company

BLC – Biafra Libration Council

BYC – Biafra Youth Congress

BZM – Biafra Zionist Movement

COBLIG – Coalition of Biafra Libration Group

FESTAC – Festival of Arts and Culture

IPOB – Indigenous People of Biafra

I.R – International Relation

MASSOB – Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra

RNC – Royal Niger Company

U.K – United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

When it comes to Africa, there are a lot of prejudices in relation to how to understand the State, society, ethnic compositions and even religion. Often, ideas about Africa are generated through categories and sciences that bear the hallmark of a western standpoint. These ideas are usually a result of direct comparisons between western state and societal perspectives and models. It is these sorts of categorizations that has often led to a lack of understanding of African States and their struggle with power. When it comes to an issue such as nationalism, these prejudices become very explicit. There are not very many considerations that looks at Africa's nationalism from a post-colonial perspective rather than looking at it from a western standpoint. This is the case when it comes the persistent agitation for Biafra in Nigeria. Several views about Biafra's nationalism have often considered it in light of a specific problem in Nigeria's politics and hence questioned its legitimacy if it may be assuaged by fulfilling certain political demands. The Nigerian state have also termed Biafran nationalist agitators miscreants and terrorists. Thus, bringing into question the legitimacy of their agitation. For some authors the agitation for Biafra can be linked to particular social issue in Nigeria. However, this thesis argues that such understanding does not give a wholistic view. Biafra's nationalism and hence the agitation for the restoration of the Biafran state can be better understood in light of the deep historical incongruence of amalgamated nationalities that make up the Nigerian state. Even though there are certain issues like marginalization and injustice in Nigeria's politics that may increase the voices of the agitation, these are merely symptomatic of a deeper problem of misrecognition of identities caused by colonisation. Analysing the historical cum colonial dimension of the problems that fuels Biafra's agitation is what can yield an understanding of the extent to which the demand for the restoration of Biafra becomes legitimate. Legitimacy is considered in this case as a character of explanation rather than as a criterion. This thesis uses the theory of post-colonialism and a method of process tracing as a wholistic approach that can help to give an understanding of the reasons for the Biafran nationalist agitation. Using this approach, it is then possible to determine the extent to which Biafra's nationalist demand for independent Biafra may merit international recognition- a form of legitimacy.

Keywords: Legitimacy, Post-colonialism, Causal mechanism, Nationalism

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to analyse the causal mechanisms in the form of post-civil war Nigerian policies and other cognizable events both past and present that continue to shape and influence the persistent demand for an independent state of Biafra from Nigeria. The outcome expected in doing this analysis is that it will help to determine whether Biafra's demand for an independent state should gain international recognition-a form of legitimacy. This is a normative endeavour. The epistemology that will guide the whole objective of this thesis as well as help in the final analysis of whether Biafra's demand for an independent state should merit international recognition based on its causal mechanisms is the theory of post-colonialism. The methodology that will guide the entire approach of this thesis is a method of process tracing.

Before introducing the cases of Nigeria and Biafra in this thesis it is important to make an initial sociological inference that is crucial. This analysis underscores that shared memories passed across generations are a basic factor in forging, shaping and influencing collective identities. When passed down to youth, their mobilization becomes a crucial element towards the rise of nationalist movements within the state. This applies to the case of Biafra and Nigeria and is an important factor that shaped the objective of this thesis to analyse causal mechanisms.

According to Ana Maria Alonso (1988), Social memory is a vital component in the creation of social meaning. This means that in the context of states, the way a state seeks to represent or control its past are symbolic of the social groups and identities that emerge. The way a state seeks to represent its past either in communicated or symbolic elements, either by systematic covert or popular overt means, are all series of framing mechanisms that can be communicated to the communities that make up the state. The way a state manages to construct or reconstruct its past and frames it in communication is symbolic of the truth and its values that emerge in the state. These representations, construction or reconstruction of the past brings into action the status and furtherance of the established ideological forms of knowledge that the state adopts. These in turn have consequences for the dissemination of knowledge and its truth value and content within the societies that make up the state.

Now, there are multiple ways these representations, construction or reconstruction of the past can be framed in communication. These could be done either covertly or overtly through written

accounts or in oral communication. Once these representations, construction or reconstruction of the past has been framed and disseminated in communication as ‘past’, that is as history, the circumstances, events and individuals of such historical accounts become symbolic signs of the realities that has been established and thus become independent of any representations. What then follows from this independence is to try and seek to establish the truth of such historical accounts and these could employ several means. Coming either from the side of the state seeking to establish a truth value or from the society, two strategies are of great importance. The first strategy is that of manipulation of voice. Manipulation of voice- the observer’s account – (the one who saw and is narrating this history), may be established in order to establish a truth value on the history that is being represented. In the manipulation of voice, the authority the voice has which grants it legitimacy then relies on a latent idea inherent in societies that seeing is believing. The second strategy is that of the symbolic figure which exists and is intertwined with the truth value of the history being framed and communicated. Through this symbolic figure, the history being narrated is viewed in light of the unfolding events of the past in the present. This happens even if these appear in the present in new forms.

Now, the significance of this initial sociological inference for this thesis that aims at analysing the causal mechanisms in the form of post-civil war Nigerian policies and other cognizable events both past and present that continue to shape and influence the persistent demand for an independent state of Biafra from Nigeria is twofold. The first is that it helps to underscore the significance of the memories that events in Nigeria have placed on those calling for the independence of Biafra. This includes how these memories have shaped their perception of the Nigerian state and how the Nigerian state in turn perceives them. It is the case that shared memories passed across generations are a basic factor in forging and shaping collective identities. The second is regarding the way history has been represented, constructed or reconstructed in the Nigerian state both by the Nigerian state and by the Biafran society including Biafran nationalists and how this history has been framed and communicated and its relation to truth values in the Nigerian state. It is as a result of this sociological inference that this thesis aims to be as empirically objective as possible in its analysis of the causal mechanisms that has shaped or continued to influence the persistent demands for Biafra. Being aware that the way the Nigerian state may have tried to handle or communicate its past may have also shaped events for the recognition of international society and that the way the Biafrans have also communicated their history may be fuelling persistent demands for Biafra, the task left for this thesis is to take an empirical approach. This approach entails analysing concrete policies and cognizable events which are empirical realities that may not be refuted. This is in order to fulfil the normative endeavour of this thesis. That is, towards the outcome of whether

Biafra's demand for an independent state should gain international recognition-a form of legitimacy?

As a result, this thesis raises two interconnected questions:

1. What are the causal mechanisms in the form of post-war Nigerian policies that has shaped or continued to influence persistent demands for an independent state of Biafra?
2. Are these causal mechanisms sufficient to make Biafra's demand gain international recognition-a form of legitimacy?

When Nigeria gained independence from Britain in 1960, it had great promise as the largest convergence of African people in a single state in the world. Yet despite this promise, there were exhilarating and glaringly obvious pluralistic divisions among the different ethnicities that were merged together by British colonisation to form the country. The Igbos in Eastern Nigeria, Hausas in Northern Nigeria and Yoruba in the West were the dominant ethnic groups with other minority ethnic nationalities living often in the shadows of these giants within these areas. The diversity of these ethnic nationalities was evident in every facet of life. From politics to religion to language, culture and beliefs. There was little or no basis upon which these ethnicities were compatible. Yet as was customary with colonial governments, these complexities were often seen as an avenue to gain advantage through banking on the divisions within the groups in a system of indirect rule. Nigeria's case was like so many other African states.

After the 1960 independence, it didn't take long for these divisions to threaten the young Nigerian state. In 1962, an emergency rule in the western region brought with it a crisis of its own magnanimity. Between 1962-1963, there was the question of fraud in the national census. By 1965, there was an election crisis. However, none of these crises were in proportion to the January 1966 military coup that set-in motion series of events of which their effects are still felt today in present Nigeria and for which the analysis of this thesis is important. On January 15, 1966, a group of military officers mostly of Igbo ethnicity carried out a coup that led to the deaths of several Nigerian leaders and ultimately resulted in the collapse of the first republic. Due to the case that the majority of the officers that carried out this coup were Igbos and the casualties were mainly the leaders from the North and the West, the coup was given an ethnic connotation and became referred to erroneously as an Igbo coup. That this coup successfully got an ethnic profile should not surprise due to the pluralistic nature and incompatibility of the ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria.

Now, six months after this coup on July 29, 1966, the Northern Fulani (often referred to as Hausa-Fulani), carried out a retaliatory coup that targeted and killed Igbo officials including the military head of state who was an Igbo. This retaliatory coup and the anarchy that ensued, led to the murder

of over 30,000 Igbos and other minority tribes who were domiciled in Northern Nigeria. This led to a security crisis in the country. Following this security crisis, the military leader of Eastern Nigeria demanded protection for the Easterners in the north. After series of failed negotiations, unending refugee crisis with several Easterners returning back to their homes in the East, the Igbos with the minority tribes of Eastern Nigeria declared independence and seceded from Nigeria in May 30, 1967. Several months later on July 6, 1967, the Nigerian state declared war on Biafra. After almost three years of the Biafra-Nigeria war, the Biafran state collapsed and surrendered to Nigeria on January 15, 1970.

Now, in order to heal rifts caused by the war, the military leader Yakubu Gowon unilaterally declared a “no victor, no vanquished” (Jorre 1972) since the war was between brothers. He also promised to promulgate and pursue a policy of “Reconciliation, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction popularly known as the 3Rs toward the losers of the war who were considered as not vanquished. This was seen as exemplary in several quarters. However, in contravention of these promises, the Nigerian state instead promulgated policies that may be described as retaliatory, reproachful and anti-Igbo. The approach of the Nigerian state may be described in light of the sociological inference mentioned earlier as covertly and systematically making representations, construction or reconstruction of the past in a manner that it framed and disseminated in communication policies that ultimately ensured that the social memory of the issues that led to the war in the first place as well as the bitterness of the war and its loss lingered. The Biafrans on their own part covertly passed on the stories of Biafra to the younger generations who have constantly witnessed the reality of the Nigerian state unfolding before them. Among these realities are several issues of injustice and marginalization against the Igbos that have appeared to shape their identity and social meaning in Nigeria and hence the waves of Biafran nationalism that persistently demands for Biafra as a representation of the truth-value passed on to them that they are marginalized and treated unjustly in Nigeria and that Biafra means freedom from the oppression of the Nigerian state.

Therefore, it is in light of these that the aim of this thesis at analysing in light of these demands, the causal mechanisms in the form of post war Nigerian policies and other cognizable events that are at play and to determine whether their demand for an independent state should merit international recognition-a form of legitimacy based on these causal mechanisms. The reason it is important to do this stems from the violent response of the Nigerian state on Biafran nationalists including tagging them terrorists (Akujizeze 2019). Although an important question is towards the value of legitimacy (International recognition) for Biafra’s’ demand since Nigeria remains a sovereign state. However, the value of normativity in international society remains crucial and cannot be neglected.

Methodology

Now, according to Leander (2008), research methods are able to be applied and used in varying ways and for various things in social sciences. However, the important thing in research is to ensure that the method being used yields to the research question. That is, that the method and research question cannot be detached from each other. Since this thesis seeks to analyse causal mechanisms in the form of Nigerian post-war policies and other cognizable events that has shaped and continued to influence the persistent demands for Biafra and to determine whether Biafra's demand should merit international recognition- a form of legitimacy, the method of process tracing is used in this thesis as an analytic tool used to trace descriptive and causal assertions from organized sequence of events or phenomena in the Nigerian history that has led to the feeling among Biafrans that they need to establish their own state from Nigeria.

The epistemology behind the use of this method in this way draws from David Collier's (2011) explanation about the use of process tracing in qualitative research. According to Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel (2015) a method of process tracing is necessary due to current developments in the philosophy of science that continues to emphasise causal explanation through reference to theorized causal mechanisms. David Waldner (2015) explains that a method of process tracing gives a causal and explanatory competence by at first formulating and basing itself on a causal graph where individual parts are connected to the extent that they together are enough to explain an outcome. A method of process tracing bases itself on an event or historical record that institutes factual correlation between the events in specific cases that it studies and the individual parts in the causal graph. It also enables theoretical statements regarding causal mechanisms to connect the individual parts in the causal graph to generating issues and the observation of the case study then giving the chance to infer that the events in question were by a matter of actuality a result of the mechanisms relevant to it. Now, in the case of this thesis, the knowledge of the theory of postcolonialism and Nigeria's history are substantial categories of recurring events and explanations that demand the analytic tool of process tracing for tracing descriptive and causal inferences for the demand for Biafra.

The sequence of events that are analysed in this thesis can be seen from within the Nigerian case which will be systematically investigated. The objective is to at first identify the social and political phenomena within Nigeria's post-war policies and other cognizable events in Nigeria and then to systematically describe and analyse them. These social and political phenomena will be drawn from the historical understanding of Nigeria's history and its social and political situation and conflict with Biafra. From here, there is then an evaluation of previous explanatory premises

especially those drawn from the use of the theory of post-colonialism while taking note of new premises as these events are analysed and then evaluate their causal claims. It is from these analysis and evaluation that the understanding of causal mechanisms in the Biafran agitation in the aspect of generalized themes is gained while providing an alternative means for dealing with challenging issues such as of reciprocal causation, bias of selection and factitiousness. This will be the use of both secondary and primary sources. Official Nigerian policy documents are taken as primary sources while other sources that aid analysis and understanding of issues are secondary.

1. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS: POST-COLONIAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BIAFRA AGITATION

Since the aim of this thesis is to analyse the causal mechanisms in the form of post-civil war, Nigerian policies, and other cognizable events both past and present that continue to shape and influence the persistent demand for an independent state of Biafra from Nigeria with the aim towards international recognition for Biafra's demand. To do this, it is important to use the theory of post-colonialism. The reason the theory of post-colonialism is useful in this analysis is due to the epistemology behind the theory. Postcolonialism is a broad and evolving movement that continues to question in varying ways and degrees the nuances of colonization and its diverse implications and manifestations (Hiddleston 2009). It is not a model or a single set of practises or planned method of resistance rather it is a critical examination that embodies multiple strategies and modes of critique. Postcolonial theory in I.R aims to engage in the questioning of the political structures of colonialism and the mechanisms of its declaration and later dismantling. A postcolonial critique proceeds to question the structure and value of certain forms of nationalism as they emerged at the time colonial ideology had weakened. Also, other forms of postcolonialism in modern thought compels people to reevaluate and understand the initial relations between peoples, cultures, or communities and their moral standings before colonialism led to its subjugation, interruption, and subsequent denunciation. A good part of postcolonial critique focuses on the condemnation of malevolent political ideology and the other part focuses on how that condemnation can help to spur on how to see the 'other' in a social world. Therefore, in the case of Biafra post-colonialism will show how Nigeria emerged as a sovereign State not through the collective will of the people but through subjugation and imposition.

1.1. Post-colonialism

This thesis would like to reference Robert Young's (2001) perspective on postcolonialism and Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (1963), pointing out the core points of the post-colonial movement and why it can be seen to be relevant for the objective of this thesis which is to analyze the causal mechanisms in the form of post-civil war Nigerian policies and other cognizable events both past

and present that continue to shape and influence the persistent demand for an independent state of Biafra from Nigeria. Also, this thesis would also like to reference Leezenberg and Vries' (2017) perspective on postcolonialism and its relevance for the application of this theory in this thesis.

As a starting point, it is important to note that according to Robert Young (2001) postcolonialism was conceptualised as a systematic theoretical framework that underscored the political formations that emerged in the world after the second World War. These political formations took place were all former colonies gained independence on the surface while various colonial and quasi colonial systems persisted for them and continued to have an effect on the newly independent states. Some of these systems included government structures and even cultural symbols like language which were predominantly French and English that served as the continuing official languages of these states. With these sort of dependencies, economic reliance as well as domination was carried from the colonial period to the period after colonisation.

Looking at Young's (2001) perspective, it is possible to see its relevance in the Biafra-Nigeria case. The maintenance of colonial borders even after decolonization without respecting the diversity of the different ethnicities that were kept together by colonization made Nigeria's independence appear to be on the surface. In Nigeria, the structure of colonial systems like the parliamentary system that Nigeria practiced immediately after independence were modelled similarly around the British system. Nigeria's dependency on colonial system ensured that its institutions were not structured with the Nigerian diversity in mind. It is therefore possible to understand how six years after independence in 1966, a group of young army officers carried out a military coup citing corruption in the Nigerian polity as the reason. Therefore, for the Biafrans seeking to restore the independence of Biafra after its secession from Nigeria which prompted a civil war from 1967-1970, Biafra would represent the final liberation of the Black African from colonial structures and subjugation.

From Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (1963) perspective, Fanon concerned himself with the decolonization of Africa. He argued that total liberation should not signify merely an idea that is thrown to peoples, rather, independence is an indispensable condition for the existence of people who are truly liberated. To be truly liberated means to truly be masters of all the material processes and means that makes the possible radical transformation of society possible. From this perspective, looking at the unitary-federalist system that Nigeria practice, it is possible to analyse the problem the economic dependency of Nigeria on the oil resources coming from the Eastern part of Nigeria has had on ensuring the support for statehood of Nigeria in international society.

Ensuring that the control of the oil resources was left in the hands of those willing to share it with the British colonial power has been one of the reasons that British colonisation ensured the unity of Nigeria. It is from this perspective that the ethnic divisions of Nigeria and the incompatibility of Nigerian ethnicities as a country can be analysed. The resource curse of Nigeria stems from its struggle and history with colonization.

Therefore, just as Fanon argues, the Biafrans also argue that the poverty and injustice of the Nigerian system and its composition has rendered the people of Eastern Nigeria poor even when they have the resources that can lead to the transformation of their society. This argument can also be seen considering Kwame Nkrumah's (1965) idea of neo-colonialism. According to Nkrumah, neo-colonialism is another form of colonialism where a previous colony gets independence on paper, but its economic and thus political policies are being directed by the colonial power. The British indirect ownership of the oil that is found in Eastern Nigeria through the support of the Nigerian state and its sovereignty is an important element for analysis and understanding the perception of neo-colonialism in Nigeria.

For Fanon, colonial rule is a form of violence (Fanon 1963) because it denies and robs the colonized of their dignity and humanity. It destroys their past and suppresses their national culture. Also, it is violence that sustains colonial rule. Whether or not there are elections or education in a colonized place, these does not legitimate it because elections and education are aimed towards subjecting the subjects as citizens and keeping them shackled using the might and power of the military and police. No colonist wilfully gives up their power and possession of the land being colonised. It is only through violence can colonization be ended. Violence acts then as a force with cleansing properties. For the individual, it liberates the native of his feeling of inferiority and inaction. It emancipates him from fear and mental subjugation and reinforces his self-respect and dignity. In the preface to the *Wretched of the Earth*, the philosopher Jean Paul Sartre echoed Fanon's sentiment, "Natives of all underdeveloped countries unite!" (Fanon 1963, 10). It is only through a radical emancipation of the black slave will his recognition arise.

From Biafra's perspective, the support given to the Nigerian government validates Fanon's argument that colonial rule is a form of violence. Since the British government intended to continue its external control and influence over Biafra, they supported the Nigerian government during the war. In the declaration speech for Biafra's independence (Ojukwu O. 1969), Ojukwu argued that the covert support including covert arms supply through alternative means that the British colonial powers gave to the feudal northern oligarchic system they left to rule Nigeria after

colonisation showed they could use any means possible even violence to ensure Nigeria's unity. He argued that Nigeria is not a state that can guarantee justice because it was systematically structured to enrich the colonial powers rather than for the good of the people. Also, ethnic divisions were evident from Nigeria's independence and showed that the political formation of Nigeria was flawed because it did not represent the identity of the people. The counter coup carried out by members of the Nigerian military of northern extraction in 1966 led to the deaths of several Nigerians of Eastern Nigerian origin living in northern Nigeria. This led those who survived to flee the north and return to their homes. The core argument made by the Biafrans is that were Nigeria a state formed with the identities of the people, then people would be free to live in any part of the country without fear of being ethnically profiled and killed. Therefore, the Biafrans saw the civil war considering Fanon's argument that it is only through violence that colonization can be ended. This was what perhaps gave them impetus as well as other factors, to sustain the war for as long as they did.

1.2. Explaining the Application of Post-colonialism in the Case of Biafra's Demand for Independence

From the perspective of Leezenberg and Vries (2017), the theory of postcolonialism also focus on how racism and systemic colonial domination are the foundational aspect of European humanism. It is for this reason that postcolonial theoretical application offers a critical idea of European, Western domination not just as a critique of state domination but also as a critique of the assumptions and foundations of the study of humanities in general that developed in Europe. This perspective is also supported by Young's (2001) explanation, who argued that the theory of post-colonialism takes into cognizance the fact of historical avalanche of domination that led to the subjugation of peoples and their enduring effects when trying to study the political, socio-economic and cultural developments of the people and their relations with others in international society. It is from this perspective that postcolonialism extended to the humanities.

Taking these explanations given by Leezenberg and Vries (2017) and Young (2001), it is then possible to explain how this thesis will use the theory of post-colonialism as a parameter to analyse whether the causal mechanisms for Biafra suffice to make their demand gain international recognition. In keeping in line with the perspective that the theory of post-colonialism advocates for a different perspective in understanding phenomena in the social world, the Biafran's demand will be analysed from the perspective that their nationalism is different from the nationalism of

western states. This will also be drawn from Michael Nzeadi (2019) who argues that due to the origin of western nationalism and its consciousness, there has been a lot of bias in I.R that assumes that western nationalism is the same as post-colonial nationalism. While western nationalism may seek or be fuelled by economic or political autonomy and hence be pacified by it, post-colonial nationalism constantly seeks the dissolution of the sovereign state. Therefore, the analysis will adopt a different paradigm that takes into cognizance the fact of historical avalanche of domination that led to the subjugation of peoples and their enduring effects in studying the political, socio-economic and cultural developments of the people and their relations with others in international society.

2. LEGITIMACY

Since this thesis aims to analyse the causal mechanisms in the form of post-civil war Nigerian policies and other cognizable events both past and present that continue to shape and influence the persistent demand for an independent state of Biafra from Nigeria with the aim towards international recognition for Biafra's demand, it is important to theorise on the meaning of legitimacy in I.R. By clarifying the meaning of legitimacy in I.R it is then possible to understand its meaning and usage in this thesis.

2.1. The concept of Legitimacy in International Relations

Within IR as well as the social sciences, legitimacy has often appeared as belief in the rightfulness of an authority. It is the belief in the rightfulness of authority that enables the authority to exert power over those who believe in it. Thus, as Peters Bernhard (2005) argues, legitimacy needs that the people will believe in the permanence or the order of politic that then moves them to support the political order, be receptive towards obligations for the political order and then to also act according to the rules and stipulations made by the political order. It is legitimacy that makes orders, rules, and decisions acceptable to individuals and makes them amenable to complying with them. It is on this basis that Max Weber (1963) sees legitimacy within its binding character that makes rules and complying with rules prestigious. Therefore, the legitimacy of an institution or authority signifies the right to govern whereas an illegitimate institution or leader is one that does not have the right to govern. Here, govern can also be replaced with lack of democratic recognition and accountability, legal justification, religious and even traditional backing as well as absence of ideals necessary for the common good.

Within the classification of legitimacy as a consensus that signals the right to govern, two issues become very pronounced. The first borders on the meaning of governance, that is, what does it mean to say to govern? The second centres on the right to govern. That is, what does it mean to have the right to govern? It is an attempt at answering these questions that grounds legitimacy of institutions in the process of normative evaluation. This is the case because the question on the

meaning of governance relates to the sphere to which the concept of legitimacy can be applied or used. It is not for every question or issue that legitimacy question can be raised. The second question relates to the nature of what is implied or claimed when governance is considered legitimate. It is this second question that connects legitimacy and institutions. It is due to this that IR scholars have often devoted attention to the issue of defining governance (Bernstein 2010).

2.2. The Normative Aspect of Legitimacy in I.R

Therefore, when the question of legitimacy is pronounced in International politics with the end of the post-world war era, the initial approach by scholars attempted to apply a normative standard of legitimacy which is based on domestic democratic accountability and institutions to international institutions and governance. It was because of this that Robert Dahl (1999) criticised what he considered to be the democratic deficit in international governance. State consent was considered as the direct approach that united the traditional approaches to legitimacy and post-world war international politics. Institutions such as the United Nations could argue for their legitimacy based on the treatise that led to their creation. However, scholars like Allen Buchanan and Robert Keohane (2006) rejected state consent as a basis for legitimacy. At the centre of the reason for this rejection is the argument that several States are undemocratic and therefore are on their own lacking legitimacy. In these States, State consent is usually attributed and given by the executive arm of government which on their own lack legitimate authority to make rules that united private and individual actors.

With this rejection of state consent as legitimacy, Allen Buchanan, and Robert Keohane (Buchanan & Keohane 2006) argued for a standard of legitimacy that is complex. This complex standard of legitimacy uses a combination of several factors including substantive elements such as moral responsibility, proportional benefit, practical elements such as level of transparency, the integrity of institutions which also includes an institution complying with its own processes, and a lot more nuanced parameters of accountability to the civil society, the level of consent it has from democratic states as well as ethical virtues. According to Ruth Grant and Robert Keohane (2005), the key unifying element behind a normative idea of legitimacy is accountability. Accountability as a concept, encompasses the elements that make democracy not just attractive but also achievable on an international landscape (Risse 2006).

In terms of accountability, elections in democracy is one way to show accountability even though transparency and some other criteria may be applied.

2.3. The Theoretical and Empirical Aspect of Legitimacy in I.R

Within IR, theoretical and empirical elements have started to become very important in discussions of legitimacy. In contrast to the normative approaches that includes issues of morality and political theory, theoretical approaches to legitimacy raises empirical questions that have become the focus of IR recently. Under this domain, legitimacy is considered as consensus (Achim, Steffen, & Jens 2007). As consensus, scholars are beginning to look at legitimacy by investigating the parameters of legitimacy actors use in assessing the legitimacy of international institutions and the extent to which international institutions are accepted as being legitimate. This also includes the causal outcome of an institution's legitimacy or illegitimacy.

The unifying element of the normative, theoretical, and empirical approaches to legitimacy in IR is based on the situation that legitimacy considerations within the discipline, usually assumes that an organization or institution perceived as legitimate will subsequently gain consensus and compliance. Underlying the normative perspective of legitimacy is the idea that legitimacy is the acceptance and rightfulness of political authority (Achim, Steffen, & Jens 2007). In this sense, the meaning of legitimacy assumes a normative sense and is seen as a normative concept. Under the normative perspective on legitimacy, the legitimacy of political hierarchies, institutions, structures of governance, rulers, laws, and policies are evaluated to either be affirmed or denied based on certain laid down criteria. Now, although these criteria might vary and have often varied throughout political thought, the element that remains constant is that underpinning these criteria is the idea of a rightful authority. Rightful authority means that a generalizable character that signifies validity is associated with the normative conceptualization of legitimacy. It is this character that differentiates legitimacy from relatable concepts such as compliance which might be necessitated by fear which could include a fear of sanctions (Pakulski 1986) or a habit of obedience, or by material calculation of the benefit of such compliance.

Now, the big question surrounding legitimacy from the normative perspective centres on what constitutes an appropriate criterion for assessing the legitimacy of political orders in the normative sense. Although presently, these criteria are now anchored on democratic theory, they still leave room for questions due to the divergencies in degree of participation in democratic processes, a sort of input legitimacy versus output legitimacy (Achim, Steffen, & Jens 2007) which centres on solving problem effectively and maintaining control over power holders. Now, all these initial explications of the normative approach to legitimacy are centred on state and citizen approach. When it comes to the aspect of I.R, these state and citizen approach becomes

problematic due to the lack of a centralized world governance structure or system as each state in the international sphere is governed by their domestic laws.

However, in both political theory and sociological dimensions of the legitimacy question, one empirical tool that can be used to underscore and underline all these discussions is consensus. There appears to be the belief that legitimacy is achieved only when enough of those addressed by a rule accept and agree on these rules. In this case then, the question when it comes to international politics remains in the aspect of whose consensus is required for the rules of international society to become legitimate. Should legitimacy be achieved when states agree on a certain rule or should it be the belief of citizens that matter? However, this also raises questions whether this can be empirically verified and the extent to which causal factors such as power and self-interest play a role in deriving legitimacy. Hurrell (2005) raised a crucial question that perhaps legitimacy talk could merely be a pretext to a political move that is strategic. This also includes questions surrounding whether it is possible for weak powers to use the legitimacy argument to spring legal and moral constraints on more powerful states. IR's consideration of legitimacy is based on the normative assumptions that then influences both the theoretical and empirical aspects. While normative considerations take into cognizance the attractiveness of an institution, it is the empirical aspect that investigates the level of acceptance. Even if legitimacy is normatively and theoretically justified, it belongs to the empirical aspect to determine the extent and level of this legitimation.

2.4. Explaining the Choice of Empirical Legitimacy in the Analysis of Biafra's Demand

Therefore, since it belongs to the empirical aspect of legitimacy in I.R to determine the extent and level of legitimation even if legitimacy is taken as consensus, then the central question in the case of Biafra is: Should their demand for an independent state be considered legitimate when states agree on it or should it be the belief of citizens that matter? Even if Biafra's demand is considered legitimate, can the legitimacy argument be used to fuel legal and moral obligations on more powerful states to recognize them? All these questions persist amidst a bigger question of the extent to which power and interest of states play a role in deriving legitimacy. It is important to note that underlying these questions the key words remains state, interest and power and the general influence these have on a meaning of legitimacy. Therefore, central to the idea of determining whether Biafra's demand for an independent state should gain international

recognition-a form of legitimacy, lies an idea of state in I.R that serves as a parameter or yardstick for legitimation or non-legitimation.

3. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The objective of this section is to analyse the causal mechanisms in the form of post-civil war Nigerian policies and other cognizable events that continue to influence the persistent demand for an independent state of Biafra from Nigeria.

3.1: The Colonial Cause

3.1.1. Nigeria as a British Company: The Foundations of a fractured Nigeria

Now, there are three key factors that led to British amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914. The first is to curb the growing influence of France and Germany in neighbouring Cameroon and within the Bight of Biafra (Toyin & Heaton 2008). The second is to foster indirect rule over indigenous populations because their decentralized system of governance was a hindrance to British colonial rule. The third was to consolidate British interest and Business across the geographical region subsequently called Nigeria. All the societies that make up present day Nigeria was initially called The Royal Niger Territories. When the Biafran territory which offered great resistance against colonial rule finally capitulated in 1885 under the force of British arms and bombardment, The British moved quickly to consolidate these territories as theirs due to the threat posed by France and Germany. The Biafran region especially its delta and Calabar societies and regions that were gaining attraction and interest from France and Germany had rich mineral resources. Also, their access to the Bight of Biafra and opening into the Atlantic made them lucrative areas for shipping slaves from Eastern part of Nigeria. Now, when slavery was outlawed, the British found its interest abound in the great mineral resources of the Delta. Most importantly, the Palm plantation which was a big international business gave a lot of economic benefit to Britain. Subsequently, the discovery of oil in these parts also served to shore up reasons for British occupation.

Now, armed with deep knowledge of the political structure of the region and to foster indirect rule, the British did not move to proclaim the territory as protectorate. Rather, the British took a different initiative and granted a royal charter to George Goldie's National African Company in 1886 which was subsequently renamed to the Royal Niger Company (RNC) (Toyin & Heaton 2008). Within

this charter, the National African Company had the power of political administration over the territory. The company could make trade agreements and policies with any local society and sign treaties without interfering in local religions, customs, laws, and practices unless such practises were of slavery. The terms of the charter made by the British with the RNC stipulated that the company would control trade from the Delta to Nupe and through the Benue and as far as Yola. Although the political power of administration varied across these trading regions, the central objective of the company was to monopolize the rivers that make up the Nigerian territory and therefore monopolize trade.

At this time, the British referred to the current Nigerian territory as the *Niger* territory. It is important to note that *Niger* in this sense is not to be confused with the current phonetic symbol of nī'jər but rather from the etymology of the word as *Niger* from Latin which means "Black". The current phonetic symbol of nī'jər was a later adoption to mitigate the Latin connotation which was a slur for Africans. Therefore, the Niger territories were given to the RNC for administration with revenues coming from the company rather than the British government. These moves solidified British hold on the territory and diminished any French or German interest. Thus, it can be said that in doing this, the British perfected the game of the colonist. The game British colonial government played in this territory sparked a monopolization of the entire space of the present-day Nigerian territory. Goldie who oversaw the RNC had argued that too much competition between European firms on the Niger territory, reduced profit for themselves. Therefore, his plan was to amalgamate the diverse trading interests of the European companies. In 1879, Goldie brought together three largest British firms on the Niger area comprising Holland Jacques and Company (which he had a share in), Miller Brothers and James Pinnock. These companies made up the 1882 National African Company that gained political rights of administration from the British government as well as power to negotiate treaties with local rulers.

Now, being the leader of the National African Company, Goldie moved further to acquire three French companies that were competitors in 1884. This consolidated the National African company as the largest firm on the Delta. Since Goldie had a monopolistic ambition which was aided by the Royal charter, the renamed RNC from the National African Company became so powerful and an empire of its own. It dominated local and foreign trade thus ending any competition on the Niger. Therefore, when in 1897 the Northern Nigeria British governor general Lord Frederick Lugard was preparing his articulations for a unified Northern and Southern protectorate of Nigeria, Flora Shaw a London times journalist whose previous work as an anti-slavery journalist gained her a seat at the 1886 anti-slavery conference in Brussels, named the British colony Nigeria. The name

Nigeria (loosely *Niger* Area or Black Territory) was in connection to the success of the Royal Niger Company in the administration of the colony. The activities of the RNC were crucial in consolidating British power and economic subjugation of the Niger areas for the 1914 amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates.

3.1.2. Oil and British Interest

With Nigeria as a successful British business, when oil was first touted to be available within the colony, it was the British colonial government that was responsible for regulating oil exploration in Nigeria. This regulation is contextualized in the “Mining Regulation (Oil) Ordinance of 1907”, which governed oil exploration in the then Southern protectorate (Uche 2010). At this point in history, there was a close affinity between British politics in their colonies and British businesses. It is for this reason that the mining Ordinance contained an explicit injunction which disqualified non-British companies from oil explorations in this colony. Despite this law, in 1908 Bitumen corporation a German subsidiary, after being granted a special dispensation by Britain, began oil exploration in the southern protectorate. At the onset of the first world war, Bitumen was forced to withdraw from the colony and at the end of the war, licences were given to British companies: D’Arcy Explorations Company and Whitehall Petroleum Corporation. D’Arcy Explorations Company which was founded in 1901 by William Knox D’Arcy was for the purpose of making major oil exploration concession in Iran but after encountering several failures was forced to into an agreement with Glasgow based organization, the Burmah Oil Company. By 1908, this alliance yielded great fruit culminating in the discovery of oil in Iran. This oil discovery in Iran led to the creation of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) which was to serve as the spearhead for further exploration of the discovered oil.

Furthermore, due to the alliance between D’Arcy and Burmah, D’Arcy became a subsidiary of APOC, to this end, by the time D’Arcy was granted oil exploration licence in the southern protectorate after the world war, it had already gained valuable experience in oil exploration. The same thing could also be said of Whitehall Petroleum Corporation, which was founded by Weetman Dickson Pearson, a pioneer of the Great Mexican Oil province (Uche 2010). In 1918, Shell bought out Pearson’s interest in the Mexican oil after Pearson had transferred his petroleum operations to his owned Whitehall Petroleum Corporation. However, despite the experiences of these companies in oil exploration, they could not replicate their success in the southern protectorate and thus after the amalgamation of 1914 which saw the Northern and Southern

protectorate become a single state Nigeria, by 1923, the companies surrendered their oil licences and left Nigeria being unable to find oil in a commercial quantity in the country.

Earlier in 1908, with the merger of Royal Dutch Petroleum Company and the Shell Transport and Trading Company Ltd of the UK, Royal Dutch Shell group of companies was created. By 1936, APOC returned to Nigeria after forging a joint alliance with the Royal Dutch Shell Group. The result of this joint alliance gave birth to Shell D'Arcy Exploration Parties, which obtained an oil explorations licence covering the whole of Nigeria. However, by 1941 with the outbreak of the second world war, the company temporarily left Nigeria to return in 1946. In September 1951, armed with perhaps the knowledge that oil could be found in commercial quantities in Nigeria, Shell D'Arcy Exploration Parties changed into a new company called Shell D'Arcy Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria. Although the new company was equally owned by Shell and D'Arcy, Shell was fully in charge of operations. To the Nigerian, the name D'Arcy meant nothing (Uche 2010). Subsequently, in 1956, following the renaming of D'Arcy Explorations Company as BP (British Petroleum) Explorations Company, the company was renamed Shell/BP Petroleum Development Company. It was in this same year that oil was discovered in commercial quantities in Oloibiri and later in Afam.

By 1958, Nigeria became an oil exporter. However, With the movement towards independence, Shell/BP began to lose its monopoly in the Nigerian oil scenery as the market was opened to other oil companies from other countries. At this juncture, the political influence of the British government began to decline even if its Shell/BP remained the dominant player. By 1970, it controlled 74:47 per cent of Nigeria's oil production (Uche 2010) During the period from the discovery of oil to the civil war in 1967, Nigeria's oil production and exportation grew exponentially.

Now, to bring into context how oil and political influence as a panacea to economic and political control of Nigeria became cognizable in the Nigeria-Biafra civil war, it is important to look at oil production and subsequent discussions between Britain and its business during the civil war. The total production of crude oil in Nigeria at the time before the onset of the war averaged 580,000 barrels a day, of which Shell/BP a U.K company produced 84 per cent. Coupled with this, U.K was also the major recipient of Nigerian oil. About 40 per cent of the total oil produced in Nigeria ended up in the U. K (Chibuike 2008). The position of U.K thus became complicated when the Biafra Republic was declared due to the reality that Shell/BP's position in the Nigerian conflict

had been complicated by the fact that its oil production was mainly from the Eastern region which had seceded to become Biafra.

Now, the military leader Yakubu Gowon who took over control of the Nigerian state from Aguiyi Ironsi in 1966, was a British loyalist and supporter. Aguiyi Ironsi did not receive U.K support due to his anti-colonial sentiments. Upon assuming power, the British High commission immediately drummed in Gowon's ears that secession was damaging on the economy of the north as all the oil can only to be found in the East. It is little wonder then that Britain was publicly accused by Jean-Claude Fortuit, a ' young Gaullist deputy, of inspiring the July 1966 coup that led to the assassination of Ironsi (Chibuikwe 2008). As the talk of secession was going on in the Eastern part of Nigeria, the British government officials advised that the country's ' investments in oil in Eastern Nigeria could prove a critical factor in the British government's support.

In a secret memo dated 30 September 1966, Chibuikwe (2008) notes that during discussions that concerned the political organization of Nigeria, the commonwealth office gave instructions to the British high commissioner thus:

“In your discussions with the Nigerians, you should be guided by the following considerations of British Interest in the outcome of the current discussions: (a) Nigeria is potentially one of the most powerful African states, both economically and politically. The General Approach of successive Nigerian Governments to African and World affairs has been on the side of moderation and their influence has been exerted in ways generally favourable to us and the West as whole. It is probable that a fission of Nigeria into smaller states will lay several of them open to undesirable outside influence both because of the precarious viability of some of them and because of attractions from elsewhere in Africa. A particular danger in this respect is the traditional links of the North with Cairo. We regard it as an important British interest therefore that the unity of Nigeria should be maintained in as close a form as is politically possible, (b) There are extensive British commercial interests in Nigeria, and a total British expatriate population of approximately 17,000. A comparatively recent development of importance is the oil installation in the Delta area of the Eastern Region which is being developed by British capital and management and which last year was responsible for exports from Nigeria worth £78 million. Separation of Nigeria into states of doubtful economic viability would jeopardize the substantial commercial and investment interests we have in the country.” (Chibuikwe 2008, 121)

The reference to Cairo made sense in that Britain had already started anticipating the culmination of what happened in June 1967, when there was the Middle East Six Day War, which resulted in the blockade of the Suez Canal. This blockade upset the supply of Middle East oil to Europe. Without access through the Suez Canal route, oil tankers from the Middle East were forced to travel a longer route by going round the Cape. This impacted on both the delivery time and cost of Middle East oil supplies to Western Europe. Also at this time, the United Kingdom was reeling

from the ban on oil sales to the United Kingdom by several Arab countries and so for the British government, continued production of Nigerian oil was important in order to mitigate the precarious oil supply position in the United Kingdom at the time (Chibuike 2008). Therefore, as time passed, Britain becoming more and more aware that Nigeria was moving towards the path of disintegration and so was willing to compromise with the north on ways to keep them in power in order to maintain their oil interest.

When the argument on who to pay royalty ensued at the formal outbreak of the war when the Biafran republic demanded that Shell/BP pay royalties to it rather than Nigeria, Shell BP sought the advice of the British government which advised caution due to the understanding that once royalty is paid to Biafra, the Nigerian government would extend sea blockade to include tankers and as Britain was faced with massive issues in the middle east, it could not afford to miss out on the Nigerian oil. While the government of Britain after due pressure from the Biafran government allowed Shell/BP to make the first instalment of the royalty payment albeit with a clause of doing so under duress, with the Nigerian government getting wind of it, blocked tankers movement out of Nigeria. With Britain in a precarious situation, the following advice was given to Shell/BP:

“How are Shell-BP to resolve the consequent permutations? If the side they have offended loses all is well. If it wins, they are, I think, a little worse off if the side they have offended is the Federal government. Ojukwu, even victorious, will not be in a strong position. He will require all the international help and recognition he can get. The Federal Government would be much better placed both inter- nationally and internally. They would have a cast iron case for the severest treatment of a company which had subsidized a rebel, and I feel fairly convinced they would press their case to the lengths of cancelling the Company's concessions and nationalizing their installations. I conclude, therefore, if the Company does change its mind and asks the British Government for advice, the best that could be given is for it to clamber hastily back on the Lagos side of the fence with cheque book at the ready.” (Chibuike 2008, 123)

3.2. The Civil War

Following the January 1966 military coup where a group of army officers led by a young military officer Chukwuma “Kaduna” Nzeogwu killed and dethroned the government of the first Nigerian republic, the subsequent civil war that broke out about a year later after military officers carried out a retaliatory coup that further destabilised the country were all symptomatic of the pluralistic nature of the Nigerian state. The initial 1966 military coup was not an Igbo affair but was given an ethnic connotation due to two principal reasons. First, the distrust of the Igbo by the other tribes a distrust that goes back to colonial rule, but which shall not be discussed here. Second, the

casualties of the coup were mainly leaders from other tribes. Although the leaders of the republic, beginning from the prime minister Tafawa Balewa and others that were killed were mostly from the Northern part of Nigeria, the finance minister Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh was from the Eastern part of Nigeria. According to an interview by Chief Mbazulike Amechi (Ujumadu 2016), the coup plotters would have killed the leader of the Eastern Region Dr Michael Okpara except that Archbishop Macarius, the president of Cyprus was visiting Dr Okpara as a guest. The officers did not want to risk killing the President of Cyprus and so spark an international conflict. Also, the president Nnamdi Azikiwe was sick and away in London and so he was not killed.

That the coup was tagged an Igbo affair fitted the narrative of a divided state. Six months later, military officers from the North led by Lt. Colonel Murtala Muhammed organized a counter coup that Killed Nigeria's first military president General Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi an Igbo who was the military head of state at the time. This counter coup which was reactionary targeted Igbo officers as well as Igbo people and so began a slaughter of Igbo people living in the northern part of Nigeria. The coup also installed General Yakubu Gowon as the military head of state. Now following the slaughter of the Igbo head of state and Igbo civilians in Northern Nigeria, the military governor of Eastern Nigeria Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu had to protect the Easterners from Northern violence. As waves and waves of Igbos migrated from the North back to the East, Ojukwu and Gowon decided to engage in peace talks to avoid the outbreak of conflict as the Igbos were becoming increasingly open to retaliate. Between January 4 and 5 1967, the meeting was held in Aburi Ghana in the presence of the Ghana's leader Lt.-General J.A. Ankrah as Chairman and the military governors of the other regions in Nigeria present.

Now, the Aburi conference culminated in several agreements that can be summarized as autonomy for regional governance and economic development within the State of Nigeria. The Aburi accord did not grant independence to any region but established that each region would have the autonomy to legislate themselves and control their mineral and natural resources. However, after the accord, the military ruler Yakubu Gowon reneged on the agreement after the British government convinced him that the Northern part of Nigeria would not be economically developed as the West and Eastern region. The British argument reiterated their stance with the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914. With this sort of interference and narrative push by Britain, Yakubu Gowon reneged on the Aburi accord. With the continuous slaughter and inability to guarantee the safety and rights of the Eastern people in Nigeria, Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu declared the independence of Biafra, that is the Eastern region from Nigeria on May 30, 1967.

Ojukwu's Reason for the Declaration of Biafra's Independence

Ojukwu (1969) summarises the reason for the declaration of Biafra in the following words:

“Our disagreement with the Nigerians arose in part from a conflict between two diametrically opposed conceptions of the end and purpose of the modern African state. It was, and still is, our firm conviction that a modern Negro African government worth the trust placed in it by the people, must build a progressive state that ensures the reign of social and economic justice, and of the rule of law. But the Nigerians, under the leadership of the Hausa-Fulani feudal aristocracy preferred anarchy and injustice.”

3.3. Post-war Nigerian policies and how it has shaped/influenced the current demand for Biafra.

Although after the civil war ended in 1970, there was a feeling among some observers that perhaps things may return to a state of normalcy in Nigeria following the “No Victor, No Vanquished” mantra of the end of the war. This sort of hope could be perceived in the work of John de St. Jorre (1972) whose account of the civil war called it “The Brother’s war” due to the case that despite the ferocity of the war, no reprisals or executions occurred after it. However, these feelings and account of the war were in a way simply able to mask the main events and realities that the post-civil war policies failed to lead to concrete peace making process. If anything, post-civil war Nigeria appeared to be a real show of the marked differences between reconciliation and reintegration as well as between different levels of reconciliation (Kirk-Greene 1971). This is very cognizable in that post-war reconciliation claims and efforts may not be enough to assuage feelings of hurt and hate emanating from a war even if people have gotten back to a sort of everyday life procedure. What happened in post-war Nigeria may be likened to a psychological situation where instead of visiting memories and issues that are troubling, it becomes more convenient and perhaps less painful to a patient to confide those memories to history. Therefore, post-civil war Nigeria may be likened to a geographical space of psychological trauma that has memories of hurt and yet decides to hide, subdue, and suppress them instead of facing them. This memory of hurt is not just peculiar to the losing Biafrans but also to the wining Nigerian side.

The initial approach of reconciliation adopted by the Nigerian state did show a policy course that aimed at abolishing group differences and distinctiveness while creating a sense of pluralistic ethnic cohesion. Therefore, the initial narrative for post-war Nigeria was such that it gave the possibility to imagine that Nigeria came out of the civil war a prosperous, stronger and a more united country. There were three important and crucial developmental elements that made it

possible to assume that the policies that were going to emerge in Nigeria post-war would be linked with the national stability that Nigeria aspired to achieve as a strong and united giant country of Africa. One of these developmental elements was the thriving of the oil market that happened almost in tandem with the end of the civil war. This oil boom gave the government of Nigeria the influence and stimulus it needed to be able to duty-bind the elites of the different regions that make up the Nigerian state to support the central government that have now duly centralized power and governance to the centre.

The second developmental element that contributed to the expectation of favourable policies was the effect of the obliteration of the four regions that were in existence in Nigeria prior to the civil war in 1967. Although this developmental element happened prior to the war and was at the time merely a tactical plot by the Nigerian government to incurs on the Biafrans' claim of the oil in the Niger Delta that was part of Eastern Nigeria. The positive effects seen by the emergence of the twelve states that replaced the regions post-war was heralded on the basis that it was something that eradicated the regional autonomy that had been deemed problematic in the new Federal republic. The trial with governance built around a 'Federal Republic' structure brought the aftermath of events including military coups that happened post-independence.

The final developmental element was the sort of foreign policy adopted by Nigeria post-war. The sort of foreign policy adopted by Nigeria may be deemed hegemonic in that it was the foreign policy of a state emerging from a war that had series of interests playing out either in support or against it. This hegemonic perception may be argued from the investment of Nigeria into founding ECOWAS as an economic and political regional powerhouse in West Africa was in a way a means of projecting power and authority in the region that could be construed as 'African oriented' with the aim of eradicating neo-colonialism in Africa. Therefore, Nigeria's foreign policy post-war centred on referencing colonial shared historical experiences with other African states as an avenue to push and support the movement towards Pan-Africanism both within the region and externally with other African states. Shortly after the civil war in 1973, Nigeria was able to host the second All African games and FESTAC known as the World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture in 1977.

Now, with these developments occurring simultaneously with an economic prosperity propelled by the oil boom in the world, Nigeria had little worries and thus there was the desire to display a Nigeria that could be the image of greatness and hope for Africa. However, what was also lost in this period was the opportunity to heal domestic rifts rather than try to silence them. Therefore,

reconciliation efforts were propagated in Nigeria as leaving behind regional or ethnic pursuits in the interest of “one Nigeria” as a display of patriotism. With the economic boom at the time coupled with the developmental elements and the propagation of reconciliation as abandonment of regional interests for Nigerian patriotism, the war memories were buried privately in families, in small town unions, communities and every sphere of the Biafran life. One of the frequent stories the Biafrans told their children was how after the war, they returned to their homes only to see that those homes had already been occupied by other tribes and so they had to find ways to start afresh without any help from the Nigerian state. Onyeka Owenu a famous Nigerian singer of Igbo extraction once recounted how her family lost their home in the present Nigerian state of Port-Harcourt. Although most of these homes were occupied by minority tribes, there was the complicity or at least neglect on the part of the Nigerian state at true reconciliation to the point that the true owners of these homes did not have any support in regaining their homes as Owenu recounts. The reasons for this neglect or complicity will be explored in specific Nigerian post-war policies. At this point, what is important to note is that these neglects and or complicity had far-reaching consequences.

According to Murray Last (2000) by keeping true reconciliation out of the public sphere, the sense and feeling of irresolution were not resolved. Rather, what this only achieved was that the magnitude of anger against the Nigerian state was masked and therefore its source or place could not be identified or quantified. Therefore, it could be argued that if the Nigerian state had pursued true and genuine reconciliation, this could be achieved through recognising the effects and damages of war, recognising the plurality of the Nigerian state and the internal differences and strife among its ethnic nationalities, it may have been possible to arrive at policies that would assuage or calm the anger ensuing from the war. Post-war Nigeria may not have had to be grappling with rising demands for an independent Biafran state. Rather, what the Nigerian state immediately pursued were policies that would impact on the understanding and memories of the war to suit the “one Nigeria” mantra. As opposed to policies that would emphasize the ideals of a new republic with lessons learned from a civil war, the Nigerian state pursued policies that could distort memories by focusing on creating, disseminating, and reinforcing the idea of a magnificent national Nigerian identity and memory which every Nigerian group and ethnicity must proclaim their loyalty and faithfulness to. Some of these policies and other events were political in nature while some were economic or at times mirroring both. They include: The Public Officers (special provisions) Decree of 1970, The Banking Obligation (the Eastern States) Decree 1970, The

Indigenization Decree and the Formular for Allocation of Revenue, State Creation and Federal Presence.

3.3.1. The Public Officers (Special Provisions) Decree No.46 of 1970

The Public officers decree of 1970 could be considered one of the foremost policies that showed if anything that the Nigerian state was not sincere in pursuing reconciliation and nation building after the civil war. Before the Biafran surrender in January 1970, the Gowon military regime had promised that all the Biafrans who participated in the war including armed military personnel and public servants were going to receive amnesty. However, the regime reneged on this commitment and instead promulgated the decree that The Decree No.46 provided that:

“Where the appropriate authority was satisfied that between 15th January 1966 and 15th January 1970, a public officer was involved in any hostile or subversive act or rebellion against any of the governments in the Federation, such an officer would be dismissed, removed or compulsorily retired from service. Also, any public officer found to have engaged in counselling, aiding or abetting any other person involved in any hostile or subversive act or rebellion against any of the governments in the Federation would attract similar punishment of dismissal, removal or compulsory retirement from the service. Where the conduct of a public officer was such that his further or continued employment in the relevant service would not be in the public interest, such an officer would be dismissed, removed, or retired compulsorily.” (The Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 1979)

According to the Gowon administration, the reason for going back on its promise of amnesty and unreserved re-integration of working people of Eastern Nigeria extraction into their previously held Nigerian public office was to avoid fuelling the perception that secession pays (Obi-Ani 2009). Now, the question that could be asked is could a people willingly engage in a war that could cost millions of lives merely to achieve some economic or political purpose? This decree promulgated by the regime could be construed as flagrant disregard and insensitivity to the plight of a people. It would serve no purpose but sow seeds of discord and disunity something the Nigerian government had claimed to pursue post-Biafra. Prior to the civil war, the anti-Igbo sentiment in Northern Nigeria and massacre of people of Eastern origin left a lot of people scrambling back to the East for protection. Insecurity in Nigeria had even prompted the people to flee their posts in other parts of Nigeria and may have had nothing to do with the civil war that ensued. Also, as other parts of Nigeria were relatively calm during the war, the Eastern part of Nigeria was suffering destruction because of the Federal bombardment. Now, could it have been possible for the people to return to work even if they may not believe in Biafra’s declaration of

independence. Therefore, this seeming ignorance feigned by the military leader on circumstantial evidence for the war served to reinforce the belief that reconciliation was not the real intent of the military regime that defeated Biafra. Not only did the people lose their jobs after the civil war, but they also lost all their pensions. There was no avenue for any civil court proceeding to challenge this decree once it had been promulgated. This policy was not just ill fated but also reinforced among the minds of the Biafrans that they indeed were not welcome in Nigeria. A feeling which had even led to the war in the first place. Under this policy, one of the prominent Igbo authors Cyprain Ekwensi lost his job in the Nigerian public service and became a petty trader (Obi-Ani 2009). In the military, these provisions were also observed. There was forceful retirement of officers of Biafran origin and many of them were even put in detention for several years. In the Eastern states inhabited by the Igbos, several of them were completely disbarred from public office.

3.3.2. The Banking Obligation (the Eastern States) Decree 1970

In the aftermath of the civil war, the Nigerian state proceeded to continue the process of changing its currency. This change of currency had officially begun in 1968. In the history file of the Central Bank of Nigeria, the reason for the change of currency in 1968 was because of the misuse of the currency (Central Bank of Nigeria 2020). There are officially no statements regarding what constitutes this misuse. However, to contextualize this change of currency it is important to note that initially Biafra had been using the Nigerian currency by the beginning of the war. Therefore, the change in currency had a neutralizing effect on Biafra's foreign exchange which they needed to procure weapons for the war. Albeit this, the Biafrans found that they needed to establish their own currency considering the decree of independence. Now, there are other effects that this change of currency had during the war that is not the objective of this analysis. The important aspect of this currency change is more apparent in the 1970 Banking decree that exchanged every Biafran pound deposited in the Nigerian Bank at the rate of 20pounds.

On April 4, 1970, the Nigerian military government promulgated a moratorium order on every bank transaction in Eastern Nigeria. The 1970 decree is as follows:

“Subject to this Decree, where the Commissioner in consultation ‘with the Central Bank of Nigeria is satisfied that it is expedient to do so, he may by an order in the Federal Gazette (referred to in this Decree as a “moratorium order”) grant a moratorium on banking obligations in the - Eastern States of Nigeria. (2) A moratorium order shall extend only to banking obligations in the Eastern States of Nigeria which commenced after 30th May 1967 and such banking obligations as existed as at that date but in respect of which transactions had subsequently been ‘conducted in any manner whatsoever by the customer, (3) A moratorium order shall apply to such part of the

Eastern States as is specified. in the order and shall have effect for a period beginning on 31st May 1967 and ending— (a) on the date specified in the order, or (5) where no date is there specified, on the revocation of the order or on such date as may be specified in a second or subsequent order. (4) A moratorium shall not apply in relation to any banking obligation unless the obligation—, (a) represents an obligation to be discharged at the bank or branch of the bank in the area to which the order applies, and (b) would, if the order had not been made, have been dischargeable at the bank or branch of the bank during the period for which the order is effective.” (Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 1970)

The devastating economic and political effect of a fiscal policy such as this for any future reconciliation need not be overstated. This banking policy the Nigerian government promulgated after the war were on their own discriminatory for two reason first because they applied to just a section of the country who had lost the war. Secondly, its intent was purely aimed at the period of the war. This is because the decree maintained that commercial banks may otherwise decide to honour at an equal rate any deposits made prior to the war but not during the war by the Eastern states people. Prior to the promulgation of this policy, the Nigerian state had asked all those from Eastern Nigeria to deposit the Biafran currency in their bank account to have it exchanged to the Nigerian legal tender. All those who complied were given just 20 pounds irrespective of any amount deposited and those who had any Nigerian currency prior to the war had it confiscated with the moratorium order on commercial banks. Also, an important point to note is that Calabar was the only Eastern town to be exempted by this law simply for the sake that Calabar was the first Eastern town captured and occupied by the Nigerian forces once the war had begun (Obi-Ani 2009). This policy did not just end at its promulgation. The Nigerian government ensured that it would be enforced through obligating all the commercial banks in Nigeria to submit to the Central Bank periodic statements of all financial obligations it had in the East. There were also fines in the amount of 50 pounds per day from the date the default was committed for banks who failed in this obligation. Chinua Achebe (1984) argues that this policy enriched the Nigerian government to the amount of 4 Million Pounds while impoverishing the Easterners.

3.3.3. The Indigenization Decree

Another post-war policy that was not a reflection of reconciliation was the Indigenization decree of 1972. To understand the impact of this policy some background information is necessary. When Nigerian nationalists began to agitate for independence from Britain, one of the many clamours they raised was in denouncement of the economic imperialism that colonialism had brought. What they advanced was the total nationalization of foreign owned enterprises as soon as independence is achieved. It is important to note that one of the biggest drives for this nationalization was oil

which Shell B/P controlled. The total production of crude oil in Nigeria at the time before the onset of the war averaged 580,000 barrels a day, of which Shell/BP a U.K company produced 84 per cent. Coupled with this, U.K was also the major recipient of Nigerian oil. About 40 per cent of the total oil produced in Nigeria ended up in the U. K (Chibuike 2008). Therefore, there is a sense in which the leaders of Nigeria wanted to nationalize the oil companies. However, by the end of the war it became apparent that the exact intentions of the military government that had taken overpower following the coups were not at any patriotic nationalization of foreign companies but was for the sake of selfish economic interests principally to own and control the oil in Nigeria for personal aggrandizement.

To frame this race towards oil ownership considering the indigenization decree, it is important to understand what the decree entails. The indigenization decree entailed putting the ownership of Nigeria into the hands of Nigerians. The Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1972 stipulated that from its adoption from February 23, 1970, only a Nigerian citizen or association may be the owner or part owner of the twenty-two enterprises in Nigeria. The decree further stipulated fines in the amount of up to 7,500 pounds or five years imprisonment or both for violators. These stipulations were made because there were post-independence clamours that Nigerians were not in control of several aspects of the companies that had been operating in the country. Therefore, the military government promulgated the decree to keep Nigerians as owners of foreign enterprises in Nigeria. This decree predictably had a lot of fallouts with foreign companies which are not important to be discussed here. However, the significance of this decree is one policy effort that did not just ensure the economic subjugation of the Easterners after the war but was also what ensured the big inequality that exists currently between the rich Nigerian elites and the citizens. The civil war was used as a pretext to promulgate this decree that put firmly away the economic sovereignty of Nigeria into the hands of a few individuals. The influence of the civil war in the promulgation of this decree cannot be understated.

The success with the promulgation of this decree came in that the Easterners were seen to be at a lowest point in terms of economic viability. The pluralistic division in Nigeria played into the hands of the military leaders in that, while other tribes were firmly against the Easterners for attempting to leave Nigeria, the indigenization decree was promoted at a time when the Easterners would not be able to economically purchase the shares that would make them owners of investments in Nigeria. This decree has been a double-edged sword ever since. The attempt to devalue the Easterners further economically was hijacked by the military leaders who now proceeded by virtue of this decree to acquire shares that would give them ownership and ability to

grant ownership of oil blocks in the Eastern part of Nigeria. Although it was not until the 1990 version of the indigenization decree that oil block ownership began to really boom, the 1972 indigenization policy quickly rushed and implemented to further the agenda against the Easterners post-war continue to have pose big economic and political questions to Nigeria even until recent times. This policy is one policy that has directly played a big role not just affecting the Easterners but the whole Nigeria. Some of these effects will be further exemplified later in analysing current causal issues in Nigeria for Biafra.

3.3.4. Formular for Allocation of Revenue, State Creation and Federal Presence

Now, by 1970, oil became the major export of Nigeria and the producers of these oil were the Easterners and the Mid-Western parts of Nigeria. Prior to the war, the major export were tin ore and cocoa which were produced by the North and the Western regions, respectively. At this period, the revenue allocation was based on a policy of derivation that gave a good quarter of the derivatives back to these regions. After the civil war, these policies were rescinded and a formular for an equal distribution of revenue based on size became the practice. Although the population of the Easterners are not insignificant to the other regions, they occupy a lesser land mass than the northerners. Therefore, a revenue allocation based on size were influenced by the size of the region not necessarily its population. It is also important to note even if it is not the objective of this analysis to focus on this but to mention that that the census that gave the North significant numbers were challenged as fraudulent (Okolo 1999). It was a result first orchestrated by the colonial administration. If the Biafrans who were then incorporated back into Nigeria were given a significant share of their produce, then they may have developed faster than the other regions. In this case, it is important to refer to the initial analysis of revenue allocation prior to the war and to see how the issue of allocating revenue was always a significant part of Nigeria's constitution and impacted on the federal character of the state. According to Isawa Elaigwu (2009), the argument the Northern and Western regions used to clamour for the change in revenue allocation was that there is need to emphasize a principle of need, where the nature of oil does not directly involve human labour of peoples the way that cocoa and groundnuts required. Therefore, with the war at an end, the opportunity became available to implement a different policy of derivation and allocation in favour of the winning Northern and Western regions that remained as part of Nigeria.

At this point, it is important to note that there are two principal ways oil revenues allocation were altered after the civil war. The first was the stipulation of revenue allocation based on landmass and the second was based on the number of states. Now, states creation which were also supported

and encouraged after the civil war shared in the problems of the inaccuracies and contestations of census. Yet these criteria were adopted in the oil revenue allocation. The Eastern region being disadvantaged in all these areas and yet produce the nation's oil receive less allocation in comparison with the others. To put this into context, as noted by Obi-Ani Paul (2009) The unequal distribution of states warranted Francis J. Ellah a senator of the second republic to resign when his motion to push for a redress on the number of states allocated to the East were refused in the senate. Chinua Achebe (1984) captures this injustice as a problem of the Nigerian state:

“Mr F.J. Ellah has drawn attention to what can only be called the Muhammed-Obasanjo conspiracy by which four States and a considerable interest in a fifth were given to the Yoruba while their Igbo competitors of about equal population got two. This was done in preparation for a new fiscal arrangement in which States would determine what share of Federal allocations went to whom. The gross inequity here must be apparent to anyone who is not blinded by prejudice or self-interest.”

The final aspect of these post-war policies which is also in a way linked to the provost decree centres on the lack of a federal character in the Eastern states after the war. The dismissal of public officials of Eastern origin meant that in the grand scheme of things, all important military and public offices were located either in the north or in the West. Chinua Achebe (Achebe The Trouble with Nigeria 1984) recounts how a five-steel mill project with a cost estimation of 5billion Naira were situated in the North and the West leaving out the East. This according to him is a flagrant disregard for social equity and justice in the Nigerian political system.

3.4. Framing Classical Arguments in Contemporary Manner: MASSOB, IPOB In a New Nationalist Demand for Biafra (Insecurity and other Challenges)

Although these policies and events mentioned are events of over forty years, their relevance in contemporary Nigeria cannot be overstated. It is possible to take all these policies one after the other and still find the practice or effect in the present-day Nigeria. The spill-over effect of these policies into contemporary Nigerian politics should not go unnoticed. What these policies did or served to ensure where that the memories of the reasons for Biafra would remain in the minds of the people. These are in turn transferred to future generations who grow up seeing the evidence of the story they were told in the grand scheme of things in Nigeria. Two immediate post-war policies that can help to frame the current causal mechanisms of Biafra are the Indigenization decree with oil as a drive and the Revenue Allocation Formula, State Creation and Federal Presence. These bring in themes of Economic causes, political causes, and security causes as causal mechanisms

for current Biafran demand. Since these causal mechanisms are intertwined in the arguments of the nationalists, it is important to analyse these themes together considering the Biafran nationalists' movements.

The status of the Igbo ethnic group and its surrounding minority tribes as less Nigerian citizens than others became more prominent from 1999 with the return to civilian rule and democracy. This does not mean that the question of these ethnicities or their treatment as people of Eastern Nigeria who declared for Biafra only became prominent from 1999. Military rule, however, have its propensity to silence dissenting voices and make it appear as almost non-existent. Therefore, within about four months of civilian rule, the first neo-Biafran movement known as Movement for the actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) was established on September 13, 1999. From this first group, several other pro-Biafra groups began to emerge such as the Biafra Youth Congress (BYC), Biafran Liberation Council (BLC), Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and the Coalition of Biafra Liberation Groups (COBLIG). There is no point analysing the emergence of these groups based on the sociological explanations offered at the beginning of this thesis. What is important though is that it shows that memories of Biafra and its root causes were not adequately managed by the Nigerian state. The failure of leadership to promote unity and foster reconciliation led to covert expressions of social memory and their communication.

The new movements for Biafra it should be noted are composed of young people who neither lived nor experienced the true tragedies that led to the declaration of Biafra in the first place nor the tragedies of the war. Yet these have all continued to demand for a Biafra which they never experienced nor witnessed its brief independence marred in conflict with the Nigerian state. One explanation for this can be gotten from Karl Mannheim (1952) who argued that it is political and social occurrences that construct youth culture through their shared experiences in the early period of growth. Also, Howard Schuman and Jacqueline Scott (1989) links the way youth memories play out in a generational impression of political memories. This thus make the new generations define and construct their own realities and aspirations and then position themselves against the older generations who they may feel have not lived up to expectation. This initial postulation is crucial to understanding the arguments made by current pro-Biafra movements. The views of these movements are all made even defiance of the Nigerian governments warning to punish them for any agitation towards Biafra. These movements in turn engage in various forms of civil disobedience in their quest to push for the restoration of the Biafran state.

MASSOB was the first known movement to seek the restoration of Biafra when it hoisted the Biafran flag when it made the “Declaration of Our Demand for a Sovereign State of Biafra from the People and Government of Nigeria” on May 22, 2000. From that moment, the former Biafran state’s flag, symbols and insignia have become a massive symbol for the Biafrans. These have resulted in clashes with security operative in Nigeria that has sometimes left some dead. Although the MASSOB movement has in recent times been fraught with accusations of fraud and bribery from the Nigerian government, the most recent movement known as the indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) have been a more contending force than all previous movements. The leader of IPOB Mazi Nnamdi Kanu began disseminating information about Biafra on a radio known as “Radio Biafra” and was arrested in Lagos Nigeria on October 17, 2017. The peaceful IPOB movement that has members carrying Biafran flags and demanding for self-determination has been met with violence by the Nigerian state. This has often been the reason for tensions due to the heavy-handed approach of the Muhammadu Buhari administration on the Biafran agitators.

Since it is not the objective of this thesis to discuss the history nor activities of IPOB, these shall not be further discussed. What is vital to the analysis of this paper are the cognizable events that has shaped or influenced the emergence of these pro-Biafran nationalist movements and why they have become popular.

3.5. Leadership Issues: Discrimination, Selective Justice and Deeper Systemic Fractures

When the Buhari administration came to power it appeared to have triggered a latent memory of pain and loss among the people of Eastern Nigeria. IPOB cites the same issues that led to the Biafran war as reasons for their agitation. They argue that initially, the people of Eastern Nigeria had been at the forefront of the national movement to build a united, just, strong, and prosperous Nigeria that respects human rights and values the talents of its citizens (Ojukwu O. 1969). It was their commitment to this nation building that prompted several people of Eastern origin to buy lands and settle in other parts of Nigeria in sharp contrast to other nationalities that make up Nigeria. It was the ability of the people of Eastern Nigeria to settle in other parts of Nigeria that showed their commitment to nation building and readiness to serve their country and contribute to its growth. However, it was also this commitment that made them vulnerable to attacks from other ethnic nationalities within Nigeria. Prior to the declaration of independence of Biafra, the murder of over 30,000 Easterners by Northerners led to the massive influx of Easterners back to their

homeland. During this period, the Nigerian government failed to guarantee nor protect the lives of the people it promised to protect. It then fell to the government and people of Eastern Nigeria to protect themselves.

According to IPOB, despite the failure and complicity of the Nigerian state in the murder of 30,000 easterners, the people of Eastern Nigeria did not immediately seek the dissolution of the Nigerian state. They were at the table of dialogue to find a solution that solves the security and social problems of Nigeria and make it work for its ethnic nationalities. As a result, they sent their military governor Odumegwu Ojukwu to meet with other military governors of Nigeria at Aburi, Ghana to find a lasting solution for peace. However, the Nigerian government reneged on the Aburi agreement even though they had freely assented to it. Rather, the Nigerian government forcefully imposed sanctions on Eastern Nigeria and by acts of forceful economic and political manipulations sought to gain the allegiance of the people they had betrayed and failed to protect. Therefore, the people of Eastern Nigeria understanding their irreconcilable differences in identity both cultural, political, and religious, and since government can only gain legitimacy if it has the support and good will of the people, declared the independence of Biafra from Nigeria. This resulted in a war by Nigeria to annex Biafra back into Nigeria.

Now, on the part of Nigeria, the politics of division that spread after Biafra's independence declaration and subsequent war culminated in a ban on history studies in Nigeria (Favour 2007). Presently, there are no institutions that teach Nigerian history. IPOB considers this to be because the Nigerian state wish to side-line the truth and hide it from the consciousness of the people. Also, the division of Eastern Nigeria into South-East and South-South regions pursued after the civil war were done to sow discord that would make it difficult to have a united Eastern Nigeria that may attempt to leave Nigeria. The Muhammadu Buhari led administration has also not performed well with regards to dialogue with IPOB. The response of the Nigerian government against the Biafran nationalists has been to unleash violence against them. Currently the Muhammadu Buhari led administration is accused by IPOB of a Jihadist plot to Islamise Eastern Nigeria and bring it under the control of the Fulani caliphate that would ensure the subjugation of the Biafran people in perpetuity (Opejobi 2020). While the Nigerian government have unleashed violence against nationalist agitators who are not violent but merely asking for a referendum, they have failed to declare the Fulani herdsmen who have constantly been killing innocent people across Nigeria as terrorists. This is due to it being the case that the Fulani's belong to the same ethnic nationality with the northern oligarchy ruling Nigeria. Also, the continuous forgiveness and reintegration of Boko Haram terrorists (Toromade 2018) back into society because they are of Fulani origin all

point to selective justice and appear to confirm IPOB's claim regarding the incompatibility of these nationalities in a sovereign state.

Therefore, the agitation for Biafra intensified when Buhari came to power. This was in part due to the campaigns that led to the defeat of President Goodluck Johnathan himself an Easterner in the and the disposition of Muhammadu Buhari. During the elections, the Easterners massively voted for Goodluck and had rejected Buhari. However, the disposition of Buhari towards the Easterners made him unpopular. From lopsided appointments to statements that were not appealing. In the 2014 Nigerian presidential elections, the people of Eastern Nigeria voted massively for Goodluck Ebele Johnathan who lost to Buhari. In 2015 in a visit to the United States Institute of Peace, Buhari who had won the election said "I hope you have a copy of the election results. The constituents, for example, gave me 97% [of the vote] cannot in all honesty be treated on some issues with constituencies that gave me 5%." (Sahara Reporters 2015). This statement was taken by the Biafran nationalists as a justification that their rights cannot be guaranteed in Nigeria if the president of the country could make such divisive statement. According to IPOB, this was proof that the Biafrans and the Nigerians do not share any commonality and hence should not be compatriots. For the current Biafran agitators, their fundamental rights can only be guaranteed when they attain sovereignty and the right to govern themselves in an independent state of Biafra. IPOB insists that this right can only be gained through a referendum and not violence.

3.6. Insecurity: Boko-Haram, Bandits and Fulani Herdsmen

Without attempting to discuss the history of Boko Haram, what is important to note is that Boko Haram insurgents have tried to establish an Islamic state that considers western education as sin. The meaning of Boko Haram is that western education is sin. Boko Haram terrorists are mainly disgruntled people from the North. Now, while the current Nigerian president Muhammadu Buhari had in 2017 insisted that "I was distressed to notice that some of the comments, especially in the social media have crossed our national red lines by daring to question our collective existence as a nation. This is a step too far." (Buhari 2017). The step taken too far signalled the unleashing of violence against the Biafran agitators including an attack by the Nigerian military on the home of the leader of IPOB in the same year. This led to the deaths of several young people sympathetic to the cause. Following this attack at the home of the leader of IPOB, the Nigerian government declared IPOB a terrorist organization and that anyone sympathetic to the IPOB cause is to be treated as a terrorist (Shaban 2017).

The reasons given by IPOB for its demand for Biafra all go back to historical perception of the injustice of the Nigerian state and its wickedness against indigenous peoples. Now in Nigeria, Boko Haram terrorists are captured, rehabilitated, pardoned, paid salaries, and reintegrated back into the society while Biafran nationalists are hunted down and murdered by the state. This points to selective justice. Also, the spill over of the Boko Haram conflict, Herdsmen attacks and banditry all coming from Northern Nigeria and current threats of a massive terrorist influx in Nigeria as alleged by the governor of Oyo state has made the ethnic nationalities in Southern Nigeria to establish security networks to protect their people in what is seen as the failure of the Nigerian state at security. On December 13, 2020 Nnamdi Kanu announced that IPOB has launched a security outfit called the Eastern Security Network (ESN) to protect the people of Eastern Nigeria from terrorist incursion. This was met with great acceptance among the Easterners as they perceive that the Nigerian state cannot guarantee their security. This situation has also given a lot of legitimacy to IPOB within Eastern Nigeria as capable of protecting people's lives. Also, the security crisis in Nigeria have also been a trigger for the rise of Yoruba nationalism which has begun to take shape alongside Biafra's.

3.7. Economic Reasons

The Biafrans believe that the system has been rigged to suppress their entrepreneurial growth in Nigeria. Without revisiting the indigenization decree, this decree has been at the forefront of Nigeria's struggle with its economy because this decree placed the economy of the state in the hands of a few. The lack of federal presence, environmental degradation due to the activities of oil companies which also led to events such as the execution of Ken Saro Wiwa have also been used as an example that the Nigerian state only cares for the oil in the East and not for its peoples.

CONCLUSION

While initially it could be said that although Nigeria's post-war policies has been a concrete factor that has shaped and continue to cause and influence the current feeling among Biafrans for an independent state, these does not legitimise their demand. A feeling of marginalisation policies that have economic or political undertones among citizens are not necessarily enough to warrant demands for a new state. If these were the case, several new states would have been created in International society the size of which would be unimaginable. In Spain, the Catalonians argued for independence and yet Spain's position has so far been upheld not just because it is a sovereign state but because independence is not a word to be used each time there is a feeling of unhappiness by citizens with their government.

Now, although this initial postulation may be made, in the case of Biafra, there is one factor for Biafra that cannot be overlooked while looking at the post-war policies and other cognizable events that continue to influence or shape the demands for Biafra. It is the political history of Nigeria as a colonial state. As shown in the theoretical section of this thesis where Fanon (1963) argues that true liberation must include total and radical independence where the people control the means which makes possible the radical transformation of society. The Biafran's demand for an independent state should gain an international recognition because the causal mechanisms for Biafra are both cognizable historical facts and cognizable acts of the Nigerian state that shows the incompatibility of the ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria. If Nigeria was made for British interest these raise not just a political question for international society but also a moral one.

The big question for international society is: Granted the causal mechanisms discussed and analysed above-which includes the nature of Nigeria as a colonial creation, the seeming inability of both past and present Nigerian leadership to run an inclusive government that can incorporate a plural society of Nigeria's size and complexity, the economic and emotional memories of the civil war that has shaped the Biafran identity and perception of the Nigerian state, does it not seem inevitable to raise both a political and moral question whether it would not have been better to allow Biafra independence from the Nigerian state?

Due to the impact that memories can have on a society and state and due to the covert or overt ways past histories may be communicated. As Jacob Climo (1995) and Iwao Ishino (1995) argues that the communicative expressions of memories allow those who did not participate in an event to recollect them in their own memory and daily life. The memories of Biafra as a state where the Biafrans will have justice and freedom, a state they created by their own will, becomes a collective memory shared by the Biafrans and continues to strengthen the nationalist demand. Although one question could be whether these memories could ever be erased or altered? This perhaps was the intention of the Nigerian state in trying to suppress and create counter memories of Biafra. To this Michel Foucault's argues that it is only the idea of counter memory that may vary and contest dominant discourses. The ability of memories to be formed makes it capable to be controlled and channelled towards a people's progress. At this time, the Nigerian state has hindered every ability to create a counter memory due to the possibility that the truth value of expressed histories may be tested and observed. Therefore, the marginalization, injustice and discriminatory policies of the Nigerian state has continued to show the Biafran nationalists, the youth that their freedom and progress cannot be achieved in the state Nigeria.

Now, with state violence against Biafran nationalists a constant phenomenon, the incursion of bandits, herdsmen and terrorists in parts of Eastern Nigeria, and the inability of the Nigerian state to make policies that are integrative and reflexive of Nigeria's diversity in truth and freedom, the moral question that will remain for international society is: Until when should a people's generational plea for freedom and recognition-a right they possess and for which generations died (Leapman 1998) continue to be sacrificed on the altar of power, politics and interest.

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