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Dialectics of Freedom in Franz Fanon: A Potent Tool towards Achieving Political Stability in Nigeria

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Abstract:

The history of political development in Nigeria from independence in 1960 till date is characterised by mutual suspicion and fight for supremacy amongst the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Militarized political structure, violent agitations of youths from different ethnic groups with clear or unclear demands like Niger Delta Avengers, IPOB, OPC, Boko Haram Insurgency, corruption, poor leadership and passive followership characterize every paragraph of Nigerian political history. Thus, there is tension and violence in Nigeria which has resulted in political instability in the polity. This paper investigates the root cause of political instability in Nigeria and how an understanding of Frantz Fanon's dialectics of freedom can offer the basis for stability. The dialectical and hermeneutical methods are used in this research. The dialectical method is used because in dialectics of freedom, freedom is realised through the contradictions arising from the colonial and anti-colonial tendencies in the colonial situation. And hermeneutical method is used because the researcher tries to interpret and apply dialectics of freedom within the context of Nigeria's quest for freedom and stability. The paper traces the root cause of political instability in Nigeria to the inherited colonial pattern of authority in the political structure. After independence, the political structure was preserved, was not restructured and thus became antithetical to democratic values which would have brought about political stability in Nigeria. The researcher concludes that the application of some principles of Fanon's dialectics of freedom, especially the active participation of the masses in politics, will lead to the restructuring of the inherited colonial structure in Nigeria's political system and thus bring about political stability in Nigeria.

Keywords: Dialectics, freedom, political instability

1. Introduction

The history of Nigeria's political development since independence has been a story of political instability and violence. This history points to the fact that though Nigeria gained her independence in 1960, colonial structure imposed by Britain has been preserved in Nigeria's political system. An aspect of the colonial structure is the policy of divide - and - rule of the colonial masters. The British fueled ethnicity in the mentality of the Nigerian intellectuals and nationalists in a bid to weaken any united and strong opposition. The political elites are maintaining and preserving the colonial structure for their personal interests. The political situation is such that the political elites are using all means available to stay in power for their personal aggrandizement to the detriment of the masses. Most of the elites are neither interested in the welfare of the masses nor on the progress of the country. These political elite create many political crises in the course of pursuing their selfish agenda. Many of the masses are frustrated by the situation. Some of the masses are indifference to the situation because the situation has overwhelmed them. Not a few of the masses have resorted to violence agitations in order to register their displeasure with the ugly scenario. So, the actions of the elites and the reaction, and in some cases, inactions, of the masses threaten the corporate existence of Nigeria. In the light of these crises which Nigeria has found herself, this paper explores Fanon's theory of freedom, which is known as dialectics of freedom. This is more so because there are similarities between Fanon's colonial world and Nigeria's political situation. Both are characterised by violence as a result of the exploitation of the colonized by colonizers in Fanon's world, and the masses by the political elite in Nigerian situation. Similarly, both situations consist of a binary world of the colonizers and the colonized and the political elite and the masses respectively. And the political elite could be viewed as the representatives or rather a replacement of the colonial masters. The political elite lack the political will to move away from the colonial structure. The situation in Nigeria is such that the masses are being exploited by the elite for their selfish interest. Thus, the masses are the people, who should initiate the movement towards restructuring of Nigeria in order to usher in true decolonization. But the Fanonian world is different from the Nigeria political situation because that of Fanon was a colonized world and Nigeria's case is that of neo- colonial world. Hence, effort will be made to examine those principles in Fanon's theory of freedom that can be adequately applied to Nigerian political situation.

2. Towards Understanding of Dialectics of Freedom in Fanon's Perspective

The idea of freedom is inalienable from the nature of man. Philosophers right from antiquity to the present moment have tried to propound different theories of freedom. But the idea of freedom took a new dimension with Hegel

and Marx. Hegel located freedom in the realization or rather the actualization of the Absolute Spirit. But Marx argued that freedom can only come about through liberation from the alienation of labour by capital. Between Hegel and Marx, Fanon spoke about another aspect of freedom - the freedom of the colonized. He has throughout his works fought and advocated the freedom of the colonized especially the Blacks. Fanon's works have been interpreted, presented and applied to a wide variety of disciplines, stand points and perspectives. In this section, effort will be made to evaluate some of the scholars' views on Fanon's theory of freedom. This will facilitate a better appreciation of the dialectics of freedom as advanced in the theory. In the first place, Jock McCulloch saw Fanon's works as forming part of a single theoretical construct. This construct is both unified and essentially coherent even though the manner of Fanon's presentation of his theory is often fragmented and obscure. According to him, 'there is no epistemological or methodological break between Fanon's earlier and later works' (Jock McCulloch, 2002:3). In same vein, Ato Sekyi- Otu agrees with Jock McCulloch that 'we should read Fanon's texts as though they formed one dramatic dialectic narrative'(Ato Sekyi - Otu,1996:4).

On the role of violence in Fanon's dialectics of freedom, Irene Gendzier argues that for Fanon, violence was indispensable to the process of decolonization but it was inadequate to it, and it was not raised to the state of a permanent policy either in the decolonization process or after (Irene Gendzier, 1973:50). On the same note, Jinadu Adele argues that there is a major weakness in the discussion on violence by many scholars which is the failure to distinguish between Fanon's thesis that the colonial situation is inherently a violent one and his ethical justification of violence as a potent instrument of liberation. Adele gives Gendzier the credit for avoiding the one-sided treatment of the role of violence in Fanon by placing the topic in the wider perspective of colonial violence. Adele points out the weakness in Fanon's thesis that true liberation is achieved only when one fights for it: while false liberation occurs or obtains where freedom is granted or conceded by the alien power. According to Adele, Fanon's mistake is in confusing two different issues. It is one thing to state a preference for struggling to free oneself. It is another thing to claim that where freedom is achieved without struggles people will not appreciate it or will eventually compromise their newly-won freedom (Jinadu Adele, 1980:82). Furthermore, Anna Carastathis maintains that freedom for the colonized is bound up with violence. According to Carastathis violence is found not only in the Manichean division between settlers and colonised in the colonial situation but also 'violence is the means through which the colonized find their freedom' (Anna Carastathis,2010:87). So, the revolutionary violence for Carastathis, reciprocates the violence of colonial rule. Violence constitutes the negative moment of decolonization which is necessary for the liberation of the colonized and by extension, of the colonizer.

Similarly Mohammad Tamdgidi was quick to point out that to detach Fanon's argument about the role of violence in the dialectics of freedom for a cruder form of revolutionary violence pertaining to a particular stage of colonial administration: and to advocate that for all anti- colonial struggles, including those in the neo - colonial period, when the modes of domination are mediated through the machinery of a capitalist enterprise firmly established in the former colonies, would be an exercise in an historical analysis(Mohammad Tamdgidi, 2010: 123) Equally, Robert Bernasconi argues that violence has a different result, depending upon who does it and who suffers it. It is only the violence of the colonized against the colonizer that is positive. Whereas the colonizers are committed to keeping the oppositional relation intact, the violence of the colonized is dialectical because it transforms both colonizer and colonized into a new humanity (Robert Bernasconi, 1990:119). It is in the fighting for liberation that the liberation struggle is dialectical. It is the dialectical development where something that was viewed as part of colonial system of oppression is taken over by the colonized and used by them in the struggle (Isife Evaristus,2018: 25).

Lewis Gordon tries to define the meaning of dialectics of freedom. According to him, there is a dialectical movement, which follows thus: bondage is an imposition on freedom, on human being with the aim of creating non- human physical object - namely, animals that could obey complex commands. The reassertion of humanity of such beings is that call for liberation, which requires the co-ordination of freedom and liberty (Lewis Gordon,2010: 9). So, the dialectic becomes movement from freedom to bondage and to liberation. The middle stage requires more than a curtailment of liberty since the goal of oppression is also to make the subject give their freedom. Another important observation that Gordon makes is that as a matter of praxis, decolonizing struggles and those against racial oppression do not begin on ethical but peculiarly political premises of constructing a genuine self -other relationship through which actual relations can become possible. According to him, the dialectics of freedom becomes one from violence to politics and then to ethics. A more stable human environment is needed for ethical life, and this environment is only possible in a society where there is freedom (Gordon,2010: 9). La Rose Parris continues by arguing that Fanon reveals the liberated consciousness of the colonized subject, and the resultant liberated society, as the pinnacle of psychoanalysis, dialectics, materialism and existentialism. For her, Fanon accomplishes two unprecedented feats: Being and Freedom seemingly reach apotheosis within the historical and political context of African diasporic liberation. Secondly, and somewhat paradoxically, European-centered schools of Western thoughts are used to posit the colonial subject: liberated consciousness as the quintessential site of existential actualization and the foundation for collective revolutionary action (La Rose T. Parris, 2011: 8). Fanon's position is that resistance to colonial oppression takes freedom out of the realm of abstraction and into the concrete, inequitable world of human relations. Thus, the inequalities of racism and colonial oppression can only be eradicated through a struggle for equality and freedom. This struggle begins with the individual's ontological and political awakening, the understanding that colonized subject must break the chains of mental enslavement. Consequently, there is an absolute necessity for a liberated consciousness in the creation of a liberated society. There is always a movement from self to the society in Fanon's dialectics of freedom. This section has tried to x-ray how scholars understand and interpret Fanon's theory of freedom. Many of the scholars examined and tried to evaluate the dialectics of freedom from different perspectives. But two things are not adequately evaluated in the above studies of scholars on Fanon. First, although many scholars have tried to capture the character of dialectics in Fanon's theory of freedom; they could not do justice to it. Many

of the scholars could not delineate clearly the meaning of dialectics in Fanon's theory. Also, some scholars have also attested to the fact that it is only through dialectics that a better appreciation of Fanon's theory of freedom will be done. But they were not able to trace the areas the dialectics played important roles in Fanon's theory of freedom. In this paper, effort is made to not only to fill in these lacunas but also to apply Fanon's to Nigerian political situation.

Moreover, dialectics has to do with the movement of two opposing positions or ideas towards a better position or ideas. Before Fanon, many philosophers, especially Hegel, Marx and Sartre, applied dialectics to explain the movement of history or human society towards freedom. Fanon has critically appropriated Hegel's allegory of Master and Slave in the *Phenomenology* in order to display the distinctive properties of the colonizer -colonized relation (Otu, 1996:25 -26). But there is more to Fanon's critical reading of Hegel's famous metapolitical story. Thus, Fanon follows Hegel in describing the procession of the order of things and configurations of consciousness as a 'pathway' to freedom. It is Fanon's interpretation of these movements, as demonstrated in his account of the relations between the colonizer and the colonized in the colonial situation that is called dialectics of freedom. The relations between colonizer and colonized is characterized by violence. The colonizer sees himself or herself as a master, who should be obeyed at all times. And the colonized sees himself as a slave, who wants to take the position of the master. Thus, the relation between the colonizer and colonized is that of mutual suspicion as one guards the dividing line and the other fights to cross the dividing line of colonialism (Isife, 2018:40). Furthermore, Fanon's theory of freedom is dialectic because, it narrates the contradictions and resolutions arising from the colonizer- colonized relations. This relation is between the thesis of colonialism and the antithesis of anti-colonial struggle, which would eventually be resolved in the synthesis of freedom with the attainment of real humanity by both the colonizer and the colonized (Isife, 2018,41) It is also dialectics because it testifies to the dissolution of the binary Manichean world of the white and black, beautiful and ugly, colonizer and colonized, and the master and the slave, on which the colonial world is built. Also, it is dialectics because this movement of freedom consists, according to Fanon, in a progressive enlightening of consciousness occasioned by the appearance or resuscitating of realities hidden from the inaugural purview of the colonized subjects (Frantz Fanon,1967: 115 – 16).

3. Nigerian Political Journey

The birth of the geographical entity called Nigeria was brought about with the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 by Sir Frederick Lugard. Thus, the year 1914 marked the beginning of the effective British administration in modern Nigeria. Consequently, the years that followed Lugard's governance, mark the emergence of a new class of Africans, who began to think of themselves as Nigerians rather than Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. This group, of nationalists, devoted more energy to wrestling the control of affairs from the British government than to work out the implication of the emerging Nigerian nation. With the 1954 constitution, Nigeria was set for independence from Britain. But unfortunately, six years to independence on 1st October, 1960, Nigerian leaders were so much preoccupied with wrestling power from the colonial government rather than on deciding with day to day administration and development of the country as well as settling the basis on which the different entities that make up Nigeria would cooperate with one another (Nwafor Orizor, 1981: 236). So, the political instability which was rooted in the colonial structure was to continue even after Nigeria's independence. Moreover, three political parties participated in preparatory election held in 1959, before the independence. These parties were the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), which controlled the Eastern Region dominated by the Igbo and led by Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) which controlled the Northern Region, dominated by the Hausa and Fulani and led by Ahmadu Bello and the Action Group that controlled the Western region, dominated by the Yoruba and led by Obafemi Awolowo. However, after the December 12, 1959 general election, 'no party was able to win a simple majority of the 312 seats in the Federal Legislature to enable it form a government (Miriam Ikejiani-Clark, 1989: 245). Thus, the two leading parties, Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the National Congress of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) formed a coalition government, leaving Action Group (AG) in opposition. Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Bewa became the Prime Minister, and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe became the President of the Senate, and later on 10th November 1960, became Governor General of Nigeria. When Nigeria became a Republic in 1963, Dr. Azikiwe became the first president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Since Nigeria was practicing a Federal Parliamentary system of government, all the executive powers reside, not with the President but with the Prime Minister.

The first republic was bedeviled by several crises, which the government could not manage. These crises include: The Western crises of 1962, the Nigerian census controversy of 1962 and 1963, the Federal election crises of 1964 and the Western Nigeria election crises of 1965. At the root of these crises is the ethnic politics that was inherited from the colonial system of government. The political parties were divided along ethnic and tribal lines. So, party politics (and political parties) took on the identity and ideology of each of the three main regions in the North, South and West. An example of the ethnic politics was seen in the Northern People's Congress (NPC)'s motto of 'One North, One People', which gave an accurate description of its objectives. As a party, NPC did not bother to field candidates outside the Northern region and was dismayed that it did not receive reciprocal treatment from the Southern parties. The NPC also regarded Southern campaigning in the Northern Region as assaults on its territorial sovereignty. Southerners viewed the NPC as the party of the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group. Hence, these regional based parties were pointers to two things: first that none of the parties will govern Nigeria on its own, second that ethnic conflict was only a matter of time away (Max Siollum, 2009: 12).

The political crises that erupted in Nigeria in the first Republic was mainly ethnic based and was aggravated by the political elite's inability to see Nigeria from a patriotic point of view. Thus, on 15th January 1966, the military struck through a coup led by Majors Kaduna Nzeogwu, Ifeajuna and Ademoyega. After the coup, Major General Aguiyi Ironsi became the Head of State. The coup only fueled more crises because the North, rightly or wrongly, thought it was an Igbo coup-for truly most of the victims were Northern top politicians and military men. It could be recalled that the North had

been wary of united Nigeria for it felt that the South would dominate it in a united Nigeria. The independence of Nigeria was delayed till 1960 for Britain to convince the North to join the South as one Nigeria. So, apart from the fact that the coup favoured the South especially the Igbo, one policy that Aguiyi Ironsi formulated that made the North to resist and plan a counter coup was the abolition of the regional government and putting in place a unitary government through Decree No. 34 of 24th May, 1966. Also, the Decree No. 33 promulgated on the same day abolished the political, ethnic and cultural associations that had served as the platform for the aggregation of popular opinions. Although the enactments of these decrees were well intended their timing was wrong (Isaac Adegboyega Ajayi, 2013: 138 – 142).

Furthermore, in July 1966, the Northern soldiers carried out a counter-coup that ousted Major General Aguiyi Ironsi, who was murdered and replaced by Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon. This was followed by a civil war that lasted between 1967 and 1970. Few years after the civil war, the government of Gowon was over thrown in a bloodless coup in July 29, 1975. The beneficiary of this coup was the 37 years old Brigadier General Murtala Muhammed who assumed the role of the Head of State. On Friday February 13th 1976, Lt. Colonel Burkar Suka Dimka led a mutiny that murdered Murtala Muhammed. General Olusegun Obasanjo became the Head of State and conducted the transition to democratic government. In continuation, Mallam Shehu Shagari was elected the President of Nigeria but his government was cut short by a military coup that installed Major General Muhammed Buhari as the President and Commander in Chief of Nigeria. Buhari's government was toppled by another coup led by Major General Ibrahim Babangida, who promised to inaugurate a democratic government. This was not to materialize as Babangida ruled with iron fist until 1993 when he gave room for a general election which was won by Moshood Abiola. Babagida cancelled the election and constituted and handed over to an Interim National Government led by Ernest Shonekon. The interim government was brought to an end shortly by a silence coup led by General Sani Abacha who took over power and wanted to make himself a life President of Nigeria. After Abacha's death in 1998, General Abdusalami Abubakar stepped in as the Head of State and within one year conducted a transition to the Fourth Republican Government.

Moreover, after the general election of February 1999, Olusegun Obasanjo was elected as the President of Nigeria. After his swearing in on May 29, 1999, Obasanjo moved on to work to revive Nigerian economy. His new democratic rule was seen as a watershed in Nigeria political history because the administration began with new hope and expectation. Although progress was made and many democratic institutions were erected, the administration was marked and marred by corruption and misrule. After eight years of democratic rule, Obasanjo's reign ended. A general election brought in Mallam Shehu Musa Yar'dua as the President. The election was marked by massive rigging and irregularities. Yar'dua's regime was marred by ill health, which did not allow him to concentrate in his work. After his death, midway into his administration, his deputy Goodluck Jonathan took over the reign of administration. A general election was conducted in 2010 and Jonathan won overwhelmingly. The Goodluck Jonathan's administration was renowned for its massive corruption and administrative reckless in all tiers of government. (John Sunday Ojo, 2016). In 2014, a general election brought in General Muhammed Buhari as the president of Nigeria. Buhari came under the APC mantra of change and Nigerians expected much from his administration. The government of Muhammed Buhari dashed the expectations of Nigerians to the ground as the government never brought any change rather its cluelessness and incompetency in the management of the economy has taken Nigerian economy into recession with high inflation, sacking of workers, government inability to pay workers and general hardship in the country. His government has brought more division and instability to the polity than any previous government prompting a general call for restructuring of Nigeria (Isife, 2018: 66).

4. The Root Cause of Political Instability in Nigeria

It is to be noted that inherent in the distinctiveness that characterizes Nigeria's nationalities are certain internal socio-cultural variations that impacted political development on these nationalities before colonial conquest, during colonial rule, and which have continued to impact the political development in Nigeria since independence. These variations could be understood in the light of Harry Eckstein's congruence theory. According to the theory the political (in) stability in a polity is a function of the degree to which the authority patterns of its governmental and segmental units are congruent with one another and consonant within themselves (Harry Eckstein, 1973: 1142 – 61). Apart from the Hausa-Fulani, almost all the other nationalities that inhabit the Niger basin had evolved deeply democratic authority patterns across time before colonial conquest. Society in post-Jihad Hausa land and the rest of the areas that came under the control of the Fulani-dominated Sokoto Caliphate Empire functioned on the basis of an entrenched autocratic authority pattern in which submissiveness was the norm. So, when Frederick Lugard was assigned to spear-head the conquest and imposition of classical colonial rule in the upper Niger, he was quick to notice the autocratic characteristics of the Hausa-Fulani authority patterns right after he had routed their forces in the plains of the city of Sokoto in 1904. As the first high commissioner of the Protectorate Government of Northern Nigeria, Lugard adopted the Hausa-Fulani rulers as allies and co-opted their autocratic authority patterns into the equally autocratic regime that he had already cultivated in the protectorate (Ejiogu, 2017).

On the other hand, Lugard's counterparts who were assigned to accomplish similar task in the lower Niger wasted no time to dismantle crown colony rule in the Yoruba Kingdom of Lagos where returnee ex-slaves, their descendants, and indigenes who emulated them and embraced western education, culture and new commerce, formed a vital bridgehead for the projection of British authority in a manner that proved consonant and congruent with Yoruba authority patterns. There are four main policies that Britain used to build the Nigerian state and these policies were formulated and implemented to preserve and extend Hausa-Fulani authority patterns to the rest of the nationalities that make-up Nigeria. These policies are the Indirect Rule, colonial education policy, the policy for the recruitment of indigenous men into the

military and the amalgamation policy of 1914. (Ejiogu,2017). In continuation, apart from the fact that these policies ensured the preservation and extension of the Hausa-Fulani authority patterns to the rest of the nationalities; they were also at the root of mutual suspicion between the North and the South on the wake of Nigerian Independence and up till the first six years of the civilian administration, a mutual suspicion that dovetailed into the 30 months civil war and ensured that the military stayed long in power in Nigerian political history. Apart from the 1963 constitution, which was stopped by the military, there was no serious attempt at restructuring Nigeria to an authority patterns that will be in consonant with the different nationalities that make-up Nigeria. It is very unfortunate that the 1999 constitution, which we are practicing today, is a product of the military. It is the position of this paper that other causes of political instability in Nigeria are as a result of the inherited colonial structure and are secondary to it.

5. Dialectics of Freedom in Frantz Fanon: Any Relevance to Nigeria's Political Stability?

A critical investigation into Fanon's dialectics of freedom shows that there are some seemingly categorical paired terms which are necessary for delineating the dialectics of freedom. These paired terms could be seen as features of dialectics of freedom and they include: colonialism and decolonization; racism and negritude; motions of language and desire, the self and the other; visibility and invisibility; and violence of the colonizer and counter violence of the colonized (Isife, 2018: 40 -58). This paper tries to apply these features of dialectics of freedom to Nigeria political situation.

6. Colonization and Decolonization

At the heart of Frantz Fanon's dialectics of freedom is the movement of the colonized from colonization to decolonization. Fanon has warned that unless real decolonization is achieved the flag independence got by the African States will usher in another form of colonization, that is, neo-colonization. This eventually happened in Nigeria, as the colonial structure, exemplified by the colonial constitution and the unpreparedness of the political and intellectual elites who should have played an important role as agents of decolonization, has continued to exist in Nigeria four decades after independence. It is only when the elites play an active role in the anti-colonial struggle that there will be real decolonization. Fanon was quick to note that the political elite that took over power at the end of colonial regime is an undeveloped political elite because it has practically no economic power and in any case, it is in no way comparable with the bourgeoisie of the mother country which it hoped to replace (Fanon, 2001: 119 – 20). Thus, the political elites are contented with replacing the colonial masters than in changing the colonial structure, which it neither had the will nor the wherewithal to do. In continuation, the colonial structure of Manichaeian division of the society into two continues to exist in Nigeria. The division has been between the political elites who have benefitted inordinately from the structure and the masses who have been the victims of maladministration. Because the political elites are not ready to change the status quo, Nigeria has careered from British colonization to internal colonization. The politicians have become the masters and the masses have been turned into slaves. Just as Fanon predicted, the elites have continued to serve the interest of the colonial masters even after independence. Nigeria, like other independent African countries, is battling with two enemies of decolonization since independence: the colonial masters, who are indirectly controlling the economy of the country to their advantage and the elites who have made themselves worthy instruments in the hands of the colonial masters to further impoverish their fellow country men and women.

Furthermore, the Nigeria's political situation illustrates the dual economy and divided worlds theory as Fanon posited regarding uneven and unequal development conditions that exist simultaneously with issues such as poverty and malnutrition. According to Njideka Odera Nnamdi, Nigeria's huge wealth gap depicts the continuation of the colonial legacy of preferential treatment to certain geographical regions. These inequalities have led to the incitement of old pre-colonial rivalries and tribal hatred. The recent insecurity in Nigeria's North and Islamic insurgency of Boko-Haram are simply manifestations of the socio-economic disparity and regional favoritism (Nnamdi, 2018). The issue is that the political elite cash into these problems as opportunities to confuse, manipulate and further impoverish the masses. It is because the political elites are not prepared to play active role in the decolonization process that Fanon has given the major role of bringing about real decolonization to the masses. According to Fanon, it is clear that in the colonial countries the peasants alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The starving peasant, outside the class system, is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays. For him, there is no compromise, no possible coming to terms. Colonization and decolonization are simply a question of relative struggle (Fanon, 2001: 47). Fanon had earlier described decolonization as 'always a violent phenomenon'. The role Fanon attributes to violence in decolonization process is a slippery and delicate one and some scholars, like Arendt (1965), have misunderstood him. At the center of his argument for the use of violence in decolonization is that colonization is always a violent situation and it is only a violent action that can destroy it, and that the violence of decolonization should always be equal to that of colonization. He is also insistent on the fact that violence is only a means and not an end to decolonization (Fanon. 1965,32). Thus, although violence may not be the solution to colonization but an element of violence, even if it is resistance or civil disobedience, is always needed for decolonization.

The Nigerian masses have been exploited to the extent that it could be said that the masses have become passive to the political situation in Nigeria. The politicians are manipulating the masses for their own selfish interests. How can the masses be mobilized as effective agents of decolonization in Nigeria? Fanon answers by maintaining that to educate the masses politically is to make the totality of the nation a reality to every citizen of a country. It is to make the history of the nation part of the personal experience of each of the citizen of a country (Fanon, 2001: 161). The first task before any serious government is the education of its citizens. The kind of education that Fanon advocated is more of education in civic responsibility. This is carried out not only through dissemination of ideas but also through creating of enabling

environment for the masses to participate in political activities. But it is difficult for the same politicians that know that empowering the masses will bring their privileged positions to a halt to engage in the education of the masses. On this, Fanon acknowledges that there is a sincere section of the intellectual elite who can create this awareness, for the masses. In Nigeria, many political activists, intellectuals, religious leaders and others who are not comfortable with the situation are already educating the masses politically. We see the role some intellectuals played to stop the government of Goodluck Jonathan from removing oil subsidy by mobilizing the masses against the government. Also, a mass movement, 'Our Mumu Don Do', was able to force President Buhari home after he was away for more than hundred days on sick vacation in London. The point is that it is only the masses that can free the country from neo-colonization through active participation in political activities of the country. It is not enough that the masses be educated but they 'must get angry' with the internal colonization in Nigeria and fight for their freedom. To say the masses must get angry with the political situation in Nigeria is not to advocate the type of violence described by Fanon, although violence can only be a means not an end to freedom, but that the masses must have the political will to fight for a situation change. This is where Fanon's call for education of the masses can serve as an inspiration to policy makers and as a means of achieving freedom for all.

7. Ethnic Nationalism and National Consciousness

The dialectics of race and negritude in Fanon leads either to ethnic nationalism or national consciousness. Unfortunately for Nigeria, the independence leads more to ethnic nationalism rather than national consciousness. Nationalism simply refers to patriotic feeling, or effort or the act of political awareness or consciousness of the colonized people towards freedom from imperial rule. According to Osimen Goddy Uwa:

...[H]owever, Nigeria nationalism by the 1940s was already facing regional and ethnic problems to its goal of promoting a united, Pan-Nigerian nationalism. Nigeria nationalism was geographically significant and important in Southern Nigeria while a comparable Nigerian nationalist organization did not arrive in Northern Nigeria until late 1940 (Uwa, 2013: 79-83)

Hence, because of the divide - and - rule policy of the colonial government, ethnic politics played out in Nigeria during the colonial era. Even when the nationalists organised themselves to fight for independence, they did so more as ethnic nationalists rather than real nationalists. So, there is no foundation for national consciousness at independence and ethnic politics became the bane of Nigerian politics till the present time. Both the political parties and the politicians have continued to advance regional and ethnic interests at the expense of the overall interest of Nigeria. Fanon traced the origin of ethnic nationalism to the laziness of the political elite. According to him:

National consciousness, instead of the long all-embracing crystallization of the innermost hopes of the whole people, instead of being the immediate and the more obvious result of the mobilization of the people, will be in any case only an empty shell, a crude and fragile travesty of what it might have been. The faults that we find in it are quite sufficient explanation of the faulty with which, when dealing with young and independent nations, the nation is passed over for the race and the tribe is preferred to the state (Fanon, 2001: 119).

In continuation, Fanon was clear that the cause of ethnic politics in Africa can be traced both to the colonial masters and African political elite. Fanon argues, colonialism, which has been shaken to its foundations by the birth of African unity, recovers its balance and tries now to break that will to unity by using all the movement's weaknesses. Colonialism will set the African peoples moving by revealing to them the experience of spiritual rivalries (Fanon, 2001: 128). The colonial masters work with the political elite to bring disunity among the Nigerian people as instability will favour the colonial interest more than stability. The recent political happenings in the country where the West and America favoured President Buhari to the candidature of Goodluck Jonathan to become the President of Nigeria, speak more about colonial interest, and the use of ethnicity to destabilize Nigeria. Both Britain and America, with collaborations from some Nigeria's politicians, were more interested to returning power to the North than on the competencies of the candidates, who were contesting for the 2015 presidential election.

Furthermore, Fanon has argued that one of the reasons why national consciousness was not entrenched in Africa is because national consciousness was seen as the end of political aspiration of any country. According to Fanon, if one really wishes his or her country to avoid regression, or to stand still, then, a rapid step must be taken to move the country from national consciousness to political and social consciousness (Fanon, 2001: 163). Inculcation of national consciousness in the masses particularly as advocated by Fanon can enhance a rebirth of patriotism amongst Nigerians and liberate the country from shackles of ethnic politics. The issue is that a nation can be said to be stable when there is a program which has been worked out by revolutionary leaders and intellectuals and taken up with full understanding and enthusiasm by the masses. Apart from proposing political education for the masses, Fanon also sees the solution to ethnic nationalism on the participation of the masses in political activities and creating strong ideologies by the political elite and the intellectuals.

8. From Identity Crisis to National Identity

The dialectics of language and desire, self and other are about the relationship of the individuals in a colonial world: how individuals adapt to the colonial situation. The colonial world tries to turn the black into white. This is why Fanon proclaims that to be white is the desire of the black (Fanon, 2008: 3). The desire to be white brings about an identity crisis into the consciousness of the black. Identity crisis occurs when one either loses track of who he or she is or does not feel happy with who he or she is and wants to change his or her life or to restructure it. The colonial world has made the black to desire to be white. But has the drive towards decolonization healed the identity crisis in the consciousness of the African and Nigerians in particular? Fanon has proposed the solution to identity crisis by maintaining that the African

should go back to himself or herself in order to experience a mutation of the consciousness, which will set him or her free from the acquired inferiority complex. In fact, coming back to oneself is the only option for the African as he or she realizes that he or she cannot be white. Also, Fanon argues that Africa has to go back to her roots, her past, to her cultural values. This going back will not be to admire the past but to see how these cultural values are relevant to Africa's quest for freedom and her desire for a new humanity. But after independence, many African countries are yet to come to terms with the fact that they are free. Many African States still want to be white. This is why President Trump had on few occasions maintained that the Africans needed to be re-colonized.

In Nigeria, this crisis of identity is evident in different aspects of the people's lives. The Nigerian elites are so desirous of becoming like the white man that they daily sacrifice the welfare of their fellow countrymen in order to achieve this dream. The Nigerian leaders are embezzling public funds in order to stash them in foreign banks or use them to acquire properties in foreign lands. The amounts of money stashed in foreign banks by Nigerian politicians are more than enough to rebuild the economy of Nigeria. Nigeria youths are daily surging out of Nigeria to foreign lands believing that life is better lived in those countries. Many Nigerian youths are languishing in foreign prisons and many have been sold to different companies and agents, in their quest to find greener pastures in those countries. Many of our intellectuals have refused to come back to Nigeria after their studies and training in foreign lands because they are afraid, they cannot survive the hard and rough condition of Nigeria. Some intellectuals, who eventually came back are so overwhelmed by the political situation that they enter into their cocoon and decide to be observers rather than contributors to national issues. Equally, our educational system and curriculum are still tailored towards the colonial ideal of making Africans to be civilised instead of solving Nigerian's immediate and pressing problems. And, of course, our hospitals are so bad that many of our elites travel outside the country for medicare instead of investing to revive our health sector. The Covid 19 pandemic has exposed more than anything else the poor condition of Nigeria's health sector. Many companies in Nigeria are still managed by expatriates and our engineers are there wasting and rusting away. At the root of the crisis of identity in Nigeria is the general belief that we cannot do it on our own or that ours is not good enough. The general notion is that we require the assistance of the white people to help in solving our problems.

The crises of identity can be overcome when there is a serious drive towards national integration. When the nationalists were fighting for independence, they had a dream of a united and prosperous nation, where they would all live as brothers and sisters. Unfortunately, ethnic nationalism was able to suffocate the initial national consciousness that drove these men and women to fight the colonial masters to a standstill. So, national integration is needed to bring about the desired unity and stability needed for the country to be prosperous and independent. Fanon has always insisted that the success of decolonization 'lies in a whole social structure having changed from the bottom up' (Fanon, 2001: 27). Today, this change of the social and political structure of Nigeria is the same as the general call for restructuring. It is the restructuring of the structure that will create the environment for national integration and national identity. Although the clamour for restructuring in Nigeria has been loud of recent, the most important thing about it, which Fanon stressed, is that it should be people oriented. The more people participate in it the more it will be successful. The restructuring should focus on the constitution of the country, cultural and human values and the aspirations of different nationalities in Nigeria. Restructuring of Nigeria will bring about national integration and national integration will bring about national identity. It is when Nigeria's identity crisis is overcome using Fanon's prescriptions as proffered above that political stability and economic prosperity can be attained.

9. Violence and Freedom

Fanon proposes dialectics of violence within the context of anti-colonial struggle. According to him, violence is a necessary ingredient of liberation without which there is no genuine freedom. Fanon shares the same view with Sartre that dialectic is the practical consciousness of an oppressed class struggling against its oppression. According to Fanon, 'the violence of the colonial regime and the counter-violence of the native balance each other and respond to each other in an extraordinary reciprocal homogeneity'. Many have criticised the role that Fanon assigned to violence in decolonization but some of them missed the point Fanon was trying to prove which is that the development of violence among the colonized people will be proportionate to the violence exercised by the threatened violence of the colonial regime. If the colonial world is not violent, then, there would be no need for violence on the part of the colonized. Thus, the two arguments that will always support the necessity of violence in the colonial world are the argument of 'self-defense' and that of 'violence as a means to an end, not as an end to itself.' Therefore, the concept of violence has to be expanded or stretched further for Fanon's dialectics of violence to be appreciated all the more. It is not just political violence but revolutionary violence geared towards the freedom of man.

Moreover, although the era of colonialism has elapsed, Africans, especially Nigerians, are being re-colonized through productive activities of external imperialists and African elites. It is a fact that the free penetration of imperialists' oligopolies into African nations and their collaboration with African governments are responsible for political, social and economic woes of Africans. The phenomena associated with imperialism which include but not limited to economic and political hegemony, oppressive state machinery, militarism, enslavement and exploitation of indigenous population and racism are intrinsic features of colonialism which Fanon frowned upon and fought against (Aghameli, 2017: 22 - 44). In Nigeria, the inherited colonial structures are evident in widespread violence as seen in violence in Niger-Delta area, the Boko Haram violence in Northern Nigeria, the herdsman violence and other violent incidences in the country. At the foundation of this violence is the violence created by the political structure that favours the elite and pushes the masses to the fringe of existence. But the issue is that although, the dialectics of violence is still relevant to Nigeria's political situation it cannot be applied as it is but should be adapted to the Nigerian political situation. The aspect of violence that is

important to Nigeria is positive violence or non-violent resistance, which has to do with aggressive participation of the masses in the political activities in the country. The point above, led the present researcher to opine that the masses should be angry with their condition in order to work towards changing it. The masses should develop the political will to change the situation. The present situation in the country is such that the masses are suffering and smiling (Isife, 2019: 91). Of course, the political elite cannot surrender their perceived political advantage without some elements of violence or resistance from the masses. Hence the masses should be sober and more concerned about their welfare as their destinies lie in their own hands. The non-violent resistance as advocated by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. involves some positive aspects of violence. So, the masses should be aware of their power to change their conditions and use it adequately. In this way, the deep lessons of Fanon's dialectics of violence and freedom will be deployed towards Nigeria's political development.

10. Conclusion

There are two important ways in which Fanon's dialectics of freedom can become a paradigm for Nigeria's political stability. First, there is a need for creating strong ideologies and education of leadership. In the first case, Fanon insists 'that the nation does not exist except in a programme, which has been worked out by revolutionary leaders and taken with full undertaking and enthusiasm' (Fanon: 2001: 163 - 64). Experience has shown that most politicians seeking political offices in Nigeria neither have political ideology to base their conviction nor do they know the implications of leadership. However, restructuring of Nigeria will help bring about rebirth in ideologies as each section of the federating units of Nigeria will articulate their vision and dreams and look for those who will represent them well. When Nigeria is restructured, then the people will decide on how many political parties they need. And each political party will have a strong ideology which will eventually bring about good leaders and strong institutions. The above implies that before a person gets the ticket to contest any post under any political party, the aspirant or candidate should have been one who is trusted to be a good leader. It also will lead to enthronement of merit over political mediocrity that has become a culture in Nigeria and many other Africa countries. So, since restructuring is going to bring about strong ideologies and good leaders, effort should be made by the elite to bring about a people orientated restructured Nigeria.

On the other hand, Fanon argues that the revolutionary power resides in the masses. They are the masses that will fight for freedom. The problem of Nigeria's democracy has been that the Nigerian masses are not always informed or educated properly on the real issues in Nigeria's politics. Thus, Fanon argues that 'to educate the masses politically is to make the totality of the nation a reality to each citizen' (Fanon, 2001: 161). The government should create opportunities for the masses to be educated. The National Orientation Agency should be empowered more to educate the people on what are their duties in the democratic settings and the need for active participation in democracy. The general apathy of the masses towards participation during elections and other political activities show that greater percentage of the masses are ignorant or uninformed about the political happenings in the country. Violence and election rigging by politicians have contributed in no small measure to political apathy of the masses. But the masses should be made to be aware that their active participation will solve these political anomalies. Greater effort should also be devoted by the government and other agencies to the teaching of civic education to students and the youths. Of course, restructuring can only come about if the masses are educated and are actively involved in political actions.

Finally, the change of paradigm spoken about also involves a change of attitude or the restructuring of the self. We can have the best system but if we do not change our attitude, it will not work. Re-orientation should involve the teaching of values that will bring positive attitudinal changes to Nigerians. The government should always celebrate role models, and not rogues, to encourage the youths to aspire high. Our educational system should emphasize high values of honesty, sincerity, sacrifice and patriotism. Education should be given a pride of place in Nigeria. Thus, unless these urgent steps are taken, political stability will continue to elude Nigeria

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