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ARTICLES

Review

African Journal of History and Culture

Review

Contributions of Ilorin scholars to Arabic and Islamic studies in Yoruba land: Focus on Shaykh Adam Abdullah Al-Iluri

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Ilorin, the haven of Arabic and Islamic scholars, is multi-lingual and multi-ethnic community popularly known to some people as "GerinAlimi" (the town of Alimi) and to many others as "Ilorin Afonja" (Ilorin of Afonja); it has contributed and still contributing in no small measure to development of Arabic and Islamic studies not only in Yorubaland but also in Nigeria and beyond. As one of the Arabic and Islamic Centres in Yorubaland, Ilorin scholars have turned out numerous scholars who have occupied enviable positions in different spheres of human endeavours in different towns and cities in Yorubaland and West Africa. The paper aims at bringing into limelight the account of Ilorin as a great centre of Arabic and Islamic scholarship in Yorubaland. It delineates the various periods of the development of Arabic and Islamic learning in Yorubaland, explains the types of schools of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the area, the methods used in teaching in the schools and focuses on Shaykh Adam Abdullah Al-Iluri who had impacted greatly on Arabic and Islam in Yorubaland. It ends with a conclusion and recommendations. In carrying out this paper, the author has relied on history books, Arabic literary works and recent researches on the major scholars of Arabic and Islam. At the end, the reader would have been convinced as regards the tremendous role Ilorin scholars and in particular Shaykh Adam Abdullah Al-Iluri has played so far in Arabic and Islamic education in Yorubaland.

Key words: Yorubaland, Arabic and Islamic Studies, Ilorin, scholars, Quaran.

INTRODUCTION

Yorubaland is situated in South Western part of Nigeria as one of the largest and most important cultural groups. It lies to the immediate west of the River Niger and south of the Quorra (that is, the western branch of the same river above the confluence). To the west lies the present Benin Republic while the Bight of Benin forms its southern boundary (Atanda, 1980:1). The term "Yoruba" applies to a linguistic group that occupies a large area which coterminous with States such as Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti and parts of Kwara States of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It has many dialects spoken by different groups in the region. The Yoruba people

were mostly animist prior to the advent of both Islam and Christianity. In fact, Islam entered Yorubaland before Christianity but it met stiff opposition from the pagans due to human nature of resisting change. When Christianity arrived, notions of a higher religion were no longer new to the people. The struggle for conversion of the Yoruba was vigorously pursued by the higher religions. As time went on, Christianity had managed to be on the same footing with Islam as regard the number of converts within a short period, despite the latter's early arrival in the area. This can be attributed to the early challenge of European and Christian forms of school education as well as the use of English as the official language, which the Yoruba Muslims in Lagos and Islamic scholars of this town were the first Nigerian Muslims to be exposed to that challenge.

Ilorin: The haven of Arabic and Islamic Scholars

Narration has it that Ilorin was founded by a man called Ojo who was originally a hunter from Ilota near the present city of Oyo between 1770 and 1800. While Oke-Sunna and Agbaji Muslim settlements co-existed with Ilorin, a place of hunting and sharpening iron implements was founded by Ojo and his group (Al-Iluri, 1990:56-61; Salman, 2008:4-7). The early settlers in the town were Yoruba – speaking people with a man called Afonja as a prominent military leader among them. Afterwards, a Fulani itinerant Muslim scholar from the North called ShaykhSalih (Alimi) had sojourned into different places in Yorubaland which served as a guide to a retinue of subsequent scholars of Arabic moving from Ilorin with their knowledge and leaving their indelible marks on the sand of time.

He was a scholar of note who had a large following even before he finally settled in Ilorin. On his arrival, he met a large number of Muslims at OkeSunna whom he taught the half of TafsirJalalayn. Many more scholars came from different parts of Nigeria such as Hausaland, Bornoland and Nupeland to settle in Ilorin. He initiated the unfolding events which turned the city of Ilorin to a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic community of saints, preachers and scholars who arrived in the town and within a short period, his descendants established an Islamic State in Ilorin and its environs. Today, the town is predominantly Yoruba but in politics and administration, it approximates to the northern (Islamic) tradition. Ilorin, to some people, is known as "GerinAlimi"(that is, the town of Alimi) and to many others as "Ilorin Afonja" (that is, Ilorin of Afonja).

Development of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Yorubaland

Various scholars at one time and at another have classified Arabic and Islamic learning in Nigeria. For instance, While Shaykh Adam Abdullah spoke of the periods of Borno, Wangara, Maghili, Fulani and Colonialism, Oseni (2002:6) has pointed out the following classification:

'Asrul-Istihlal (TheEraof Commencement, 1000-1300 C.E)
'Asrul-Istirshad (The Era of Seeking for Instruction, 1300-1804)
'Asrul-Istiqrar (The Era of Consolidation, 1804-1903)
'Asrul-Ist'mar (The Era of Colonialism, 1903-1960)
'Asrul-Istiqlal (The Era of Independence, 1960-1999
'Asrul-Izdihar (The Era of Fluorescence, 1999 to date.

The activities of Arabic and Islamic scholars of Yoruba land and their literary output fall within five eras named above. They are as follows:

Pre-Jihad Era: This is the period before the enthronement of Abdul-Salam, a son of ShaykhSalihibn Ahmad Junta, popularly known as 'Alim' a learned man, around 1830. It is believed that ShaykhAlimi composed a Y-rhymed poem which consists of 21 lines and apart from this, not much was done intellectually in Arabic and Islamic scholarship. The fact remains that the basic knowledge was sought for the purpose of worship and sufi activities. The first Islamic centre in Yorubaland emerged from OkeSunna.

The Jihad Era: This corresponds with the Era of Consolidation earlier mentioned. Many battles were fiercely fought by Ilorin to spread Islam and a force to be reckoned with after the fall of Old Oyo Empire. But the period marked the influx of scholars from different parts of north to the city. The hero figure of this period was the first Emir of Ilorin, Abdus-Salam son of ShaykhAlimi. In the name of Islam, Ilorin fought fiercely to widen its emirate despite being the heir of the Old Oyo Empire. There were internal problems in Ilorin and the Emir Abdus-Salam eliminated both Afonja and Solagberu. He sought the assistance of Sokoto and got the full support of the Caliphate to enable him face the Yoruba groups who intended to re-establish old Oyo hegemony (Danmale, 1981:1-13; Abubakre, 2004:24; and Jamiu, 2004:15).

Colonial Era: The military prowess of Ilorin went down with the British conquest but its intellectual might remained. With the British putting a stop to Ilorin's military expansion, which the latter convincingly regarded as Jihad after a combined force of Yoruba troops had temporarily halted them at the battle of Osogbo in 1843. It was observed that Islam spread in Yorubaland during peace time more than when Ilorin and Nupe were at war. The town was the nearest Islamic Centre to Yorubaland, and young men sojourned Ilorin to quench their thirst for

knowledge of Arabic and Islam. Some scholars of Ilorin origin moved out to teach others while some remained at home to teach those who preferred to come to Ilorin from Ibadan, Iseyin, New Oyo, Lagos, Abeokuta, Ekiti, Iwo, Epe, Ijebu etc. ShaykhAbubakarIbn al-Qasim (d.1882), a native of Ibadan and popularly known as *Alaga* who was trained in Ilorin and later returned to Ibadan after a brief sojourn at Iseyin. He established his Arabic school in 1876 at OkeAremo in Ibadan where he trained the first generation of productive scholars and serious Arabic authors. He was succeeded on his demise in 1882 by one of his pupils, HarunMatanmi (d.1935), a native of Osogbo who became the chief Imam of Ibadan in 1922 (Jamiu, 2004:25).

Post-Independence Era: With the attainment of political independence in 1960, the seeds of weakening Arabic and Islamic Studies which were sown by the British Colonialists were being uprooted by Islamic intellectual jihadists of Ilorin in different places. Their efforts in this regard during the latter part of the colonial era were being seriously intensified. Thus, we found Shaykh Adam Abdullah al-Iluri establishing an Arabic and Islamic Training Centre first at Abeokuta in 1952 and then transferring it to Agege, Lagos in 1955. In the same vein, we found ShaykhKhidrSalahudeenApaokagi establishing *Ma'had at-Ta'lim al-'Arabi al-Islami*at Owo in Ondo State in 1955 after he had taught in the town for 10 years. There were many others, including learned Mallams who used the old method of teaching and preaching in different cities, towns and villages within Yorubaland.

Era of Fluorescence: Many factors have attributed to the fluorescence of Arabic and Islamic scholarship in Yorubaland and Nigeria in general. These include the proliferation of standard Arabic schools in Yorubaland and the renewed zeal of Muslims to be committed to Islam and Arabic studies. The realization that one can attain any height with one's Arabic and Islamic education as long as one is committed, the availability of role models in the field such as ShaykhKamaludeen al-Adab, Shaykh Adam al-Ilori, ShaykhMurtadaAbdus-Salam, ShaykhAgbarigidoma, ShaykhAbubakar Gumi, ShaykhTahirUthmanBauchi, Shaykh Sharif Ibrahim Salih al-Hasan, ShaykhAbubakar al-Miskin, ShaykhKhidrSalahud-Din Apaokagi, ShaykhAbdur-Rahim Amin and ShaykhYahyaMurtala.

As a result, Arabic became a medium of diplomatic correspondence used byseveral Yoruba rulers and Islamic communities, through the assistance of some scholars, in their communication with Ilorin and other places. Trading activities of Ilorin with some Yoruba cities and towns brought a large number of its traders and scholars to these towns. Lagos became an important place for Arab migrants and traders who were instrumental to importation of Arabic printed books.

In the new dispensation, much literature in Arabic and Islamic Studieshad been produced in the field of Arabic

language and Arabic literature as well as creative writing in Arabic of which Ilorin is the main centre in Nigeria. In Islamic writing, Ilorin is among the most vibrant centres (Jamiu, 2004:55-56). All thesehave assisted in no small measure in the production of high quality of Arabic and Islamic scholarship whose foundation had been laid by the old scholars of Ilorin and the exponents of modern Arabic and Islamic Studies most of whom were Ilorin scholars based in Yorubaland and elsewhere.

Types of schools of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Yorubaland

There were two types of schools in Yorubaland from the very beginning namely: Qur'anic Schools (*MakarantaAlo*) and Advanced Schools (MakarantaIlmi). The former was for learning how to recite the Qur'an and for the memorization of some portions of the Qur'an. It used to take a child several years to master the reading of the Qur'an. This was due to difficult method of learning. In fact, the pupils had to copy out each portion they were reading on a wooden slate (*alo* or *wala*),using the black edible ink (*tada*) obtained locally and sold at a cheap rate up till now.

On the completion of the recitation of the Qur'an, an elaborate feast was organized for the pupil for achieving so much. It is called *walimatkhatmil-Qur'an*. It was a day of feeding and the celebrant would recite the Qur'an in the public at conspicuous centres, his teacher's home and his own house. It is interesting to note that in Ilorin, the feast of completion of the learning of how to recite the Qur'an is often merged with wedding banquet for which the word*walimat* is more often aptly used.

The second stage of acquisition of Islamic knowledge is *Makaranta 'Ilmi* whereby the student begins to acquire more knowledge. He first learns the rudiments of Islamic theology, jurisprudence, hadith text, Islamic history, Qur'anic exegesis, Arabic grammar, Arabic literature and a host of others. Later in life, he may choose to dig deep into one or two of the subjects and specialize (Fafunwa, 1982: 62).

With the availability of modern Arabic schools, the system has changed drastically. First, the learning of how to recite the Qur'an has transformed. Instead of using wooden slates, pupils now use printed books like *Al-Qa'idat al-Baghdadiyyah* and *Yassarna al-Qur'an*, though the former is far more popular in Yorubaland. Instead of spending up to ten years in learning how to recite the Qur'an, the exercise now takes less than one year. On its completion, *walimat* is still performed as in the old system.

After the completion of the recitation of the Qur'an, the pupils proceed to the*Ibtida'iyyah*(Primary) school which lasts about three years. Subjects taught are Qur'anic texts, Hadith, Jurisprudence, Islamic monotheism, History, Ethics, Arabic Grammar, Literature, Comprehension,

Composition, Translation, General knowledge and English.

The third stage is the *I'dadiyyah* (intermediate or junior secondary) school which has a three-year duration. The subjects mentioned in the preceding paragraph are studied in addition to basic logic, geography, social studies, arithmetic, rhetoric and science, all in Arabic.

The fourth stage is the *Thanawiyyah* or *Tawjihiyyah* (Senior Secondary) school which has the same duration as the above third stage with more intensive study of the subjects named above.

METHODS OF TEACHING IN THE SCHOOLS

In the old system of education (which still strives in some quarters) rote method was used both in Qur'anic and 'Ilmi Schools. The method was slow, strenuous and individual oriented. A pupil needed to be extra-intelligent to be able to move fast. In teaching the advanced students, the teacher would teach a few lines at a time so that the students would be able to comprehend and digest the contents properly before moving on (Fafunwa, 1982:62).

On the other hand, modern Arabic Schools brought about a revolution so much that a student would be able to learn within a week what he would not have been able to cover over a period of four months. The present writer had the privilege of learning under the system.

At the tertiary level, the method is that of lecturing, giving guidance to the students to learn more through the use of libraries, discussions, seminars, television, radio and observations outside the school.

Classification of Ilorin scholars of Arabic and Islamic Studies

The *'Ulama'* of Ilorin have been classified into four groups. These are itinerant preachers, Islamic teachers, ascetics, who devote all their time to worship and Sufism and spiritual healers who solve people's spiritual, psycho-logical, political, social and economic problems by means of special prayers, herbs and astrology.

They can be broadly classified into two groups: those who occupied political office and others who operated on private initiative. The first group comprised Imams and Judges (*alkalai*) while the second comprised teachers or preachers. Apart from those early Ilorin scholars who versed in Islamic law, there were many other Shari'ah judges before the Alkali courts were changed to Native Courts; prominent among them were *Alkali* Mahmud Belgore, *Alkali* SaliuFodie, *Alikali*Sa'aduOkubiyi and *Alikali* Ile GaladimaGegele (Salman, 2008:32-33).

Apart from those who were political officers, there were independent numerous scholars who were neither Imams nor office holders but versed in various disciplines of learning. Shaykh Adam Abdullah gave a long list of Ilorin

scholars from 1800-1980 and based his classification according to the place of settlement in the town and treated them in groups based on age or period.

Effort shall be made to look into a brief biographical account of Shaykh Adam 'Abdullah Al-Iluri and his contributions to Arabic and Islamic education.

Shaykh Adam Abdullah Al-Ilori

Shaykh Adam was born in 1917 at Wasa, a town in the northern part ofRepublic of Benin but came to Ilorin with parents in 1929. Though, his mother was a princess of Wasa. He was brought up by his father who was fond of taking him to eminent scholars to seek their blessing for him. He studied under many scholars but mainly from Shaykh Adam Namaji. He was very inquisitive and eager to learn from his tender age.

Shaykh Adam attained his status in scholarship mostly through self-effort by reading and writing. He related the influence of some scholars who happened to be his role model. He is quoted to have said: "I love history like my father and was influenced a great deal by eminent scholars of the town. Others that influenced me (in academic activities) include ShaykhWaziriBida, Adam Namaji and as-Sayuti in literary works, IbnKhaldun and al-Ghazali in research activities".

The contribution of Shaykh Adam to Arabic and Islamic learning in Nigeria at large and in Yorubaland in particular cannot be over-emphasized. He achieved wonderful success in this regard through the establishment and management of an Arabic Training Centre popularly called *Markaz* at Agege, Lagos. The school has offshoots in different parts of Yorubaland and West African coun-tries such as Benin Republic, Togo, Ghana and Ivory Coast. On 5th May, 2002, the*Markaz* marked its golden jubilee where Prof. Shuaib Oba Abdur-Raheem, formerly Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin was honoured in recognition of his excellence in public service.

Al-Iluri was the first scholar in sub-saharan Africa to be recognized by President Husni Mubarak of Egypt, acting on the recommendation of *al-Azhar*University, with an award of the first category in erudition in sciences and arts in 1989. Another activity of Shaykh Adam Al-Iluri which is not less in importance is preaching which motivated not only Yoruba Muslims but also Muslims throughout the federation as well as non-Muslims. He used to organize *Tafsir*sessions in *Markaz* where topical issues on different aspects of Islam were discussed with thunderous ovations from the audience.

The production of literary works in Arabic on virtually all branches of Arabic and Islamic Studies has made the people of southwestern Nigeria to be inward-looking for erudition in Arabic learning in contrast to the erstwhile tendency to consider their northern neighbours as the sole authorities. These literary products of well over seventy-seven books   published   by   respectable

publishers around the world in addition to over eleven poems have received deserved academic attention. We shall quickly look at one of his verse works.

Arabic rhetoric

Rhetoric is the bye product of a literary culture being held and applied with great tenacity. One reason for the interest of Yoruba *'Ulama'* in rhetoric would seem to be related to the understanding of the Qur'an itself. It is pertinent to mention that the first work on rhetoric in Yorubaland is attributed to Shaykh Ahmad b. AbiBakr popularly called Omolkokoro who was requested by a friend, Shaykh Abu Bakr b. 'Abdullah (d.1909) who was a prominent scholar and preacher in Lagos, to write an introduction into Arabic rhetoric at the beginning of the twentieth century.

This short treatise, *Iltiqat al-Mutun min khamsatfunun* contains five chapters that rhetoric mainly based on *al-Qazwini'sTalkhis al-Miftah* is explained in three chapters while syntax and morphology occupy the remaining two chapters. Omolkokoro, in his introduction, refers to the value of *'ilm al-Balaghah* as the best of the sciences, the most subtle and the most important with respect to the secrets conveyed by it.

Similarly, Shaykh Adam al-Iluri purposely wrote on rhetoric in verse to facilitate easy learning of the subject. It is in this sense that efforts shall be made to look at some lines in his work for this paper.

Shaykh Adam al-Iluri's Verses on Arabic Rhetoric: Text, Translation and commentary

أسرار البلاغة وأساس الفصاحة

قال أدم اليرباوى   *** المرتجى العفو عن المساوى
الحمد لله الذى قد زادنى   *** علم الفنون فوق من أرشدنى
ثم صلاة الله بالدوام   *** على النبي سيد الأنا م
أصولها ثلاثة فعيها   *** قراننا حديثنا بحويها
ثم كلام العرب العرباء   *** أشعارهم أمثالهم للراء
إن شئت أن تكون فى البلغاء   *** فأسلك مسالك ذوى الأداء
ولا تفارق مصحف القران   *** لا زمه للحفظ وللتبيان
أما حديث سيد الأنام   *** فى المقام الثان فى نظام
نهج بلاغة الشريف الراض   *** أشعار أهل البدو للتقاضى
مقامة الحريرى قاموس صغير   *** بالشرح تحت الكل حفظها يسير

الفصاحة

خلوص حرف القول من تنافر   *** ومن غرابة و خلف البادر
فصاحة وفى الكلام إن عرى   *** عن ضعف تأليف وتعقيد ترى
مثاله يضرب زيد عمرا   *** والسن السلطان شاعت يدرى
وعن تنافر الذى قد يثقل   *** على اللسان ذاك ليس يقبل
كقبر حرب بمكان قفر   *** وليس قرب قبر حرب قبرى

أسرار الفصاحة والبلاغة

وفى مجارى كلمات العرب   *** سر خفي فاحتفل للأدب
من ذلك التقديم والتأخير   *** وهكذا التأنيث والتذكير
وفاعل بلفظ مفعول أتى   *** كعكسه على الصحيح يا فتى
إقامة المصدر ثم الإسم   *** مقام مفعول وفاعل نمى
ويؤمر الواحد كالإثنين   *** والجمع للإثنين دون مين

Translation

The secrets of rhetoric and foundation of eloquence
The destitute Adam, a native of Yoruba (who is) hoping for Allah's pardon for his shortcomings, says:

Praise be to Allah who had increased me in knowledge of sciences more than he who guides me.
May the perpetual blessings of Allah be upon the Prophet, the leader of mankind.
Pay attention to (rhetoric) in its three origins that comprise the Qur'an and the prophetic sayings.
Then, the speech of the Arabs, their poems and proverbs for those who observe.
Follow the paths of the accomplished ones if you were to be reckoned with the rhetoricians.
Do never abandon (the reading of) Qur'an, always read it for memorization and exposition.
The prophetic tradition occupies the second position in the arrangement.
The method adopted by Sharif ar-Radi in rhetoric and the poems of the Bedouins (are cited) for judgment.
A short dictionary is Maqamatul-Hariri with footnotes and its memorization is simple.

Eloquence

The letters that form a sentence must be free from cluster of consonants, strangeness of the collocation lexemes and difference from the established rules.
A sentence is eloquent when it is free from the contrary of the established grammatical rules and awkward manner of arranging it.

The following are its examples: Zayd flogs 'Amr and the king's tongues were spread in order to know.
It will never admit the cluster of consonants that heavies on the tongue.Like Harb's grave at a place (called) Qafr, and there is no grave near Harb's grave.

The secrets of eloquence and rhetoric

To the literati, there are conspicuous secrets in the arrangement of Arabic words.

Among them are forwarding and delaying (words) as well as awarding feminine (signs) to masculine and vice versa.

O youth! Active subject appears correctly in form of direct object as its opposite. The verbal noun and the noun perform the role of active subject and direct object.It commands one like two persons and employs plural for two persons without distortion.

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE VERSES

Asrarul-BalaghahwaAsasul-Fasahah is one of the early

literary products of Shaykh Adam al-Iluri which was written in 1942. It consists of 60 lines that are divided into the preamble of 18 lines; the main theme is sub-divided into two sections that comprise 37 lines and concluding part in 5 lines. The work begins with the author's name that praises Allah and invokes His blessings on the prophet Muhammad as contained in (vv.1-3).

The opening part of this verse work follows the popular '*Uqudul-Juman*of as-Suyuti as Shaykh 'Abdul-Wahab al-Ghamawi, one of the prominent students of Shaykh Adam al-Iluri, gives this assertion in his commentary to the work (Al-Ghamawi, 1987:5). It is one of the text-books used by Nigerian '*ulama*' for rhetoric. As-Suyuti (d.911 A.H) was an Egyptian Arabic scholar mostly revered in the fields of Arabic language especially, Qur'anic exegesis and philology (Nicholson, 1979:456). As-Suyuti's work opens thus:

قال الفقير عابد الرحما ن *** الحمد لله على البيان
The destitute Abdur-Rahman says: praise be to Allah on (His) elucidation (n.d:3).

The same mode is adopted by Shaykh al-Iluri in the opening line of the verse work.This is not to suggest that the latter follows the former in the subject matters.

The author in (vv.4-10) explains some guidelines which a student of rhetoric should strictly adhere to in order to attain the mastery of the subject. These include constant reading of the Qur'an with its memorization, prophetic traditions, texts written by Arabs and non-Arabs as well as the study of *Maqamatul-Hariri* and a host of others.

The first section of the main theme (vv. 11-15) explains that before a sentence could be eloquent, it must be free from the following defects such as cluster of consonants, strangeness of word in usage and contrary to grammatical rules. The second (vv.16-20) points at the secrets of Arabic rhetoric which include forwarding that is popularly known as *'Umdah* that comprises verb, subject, abstract noun and relative pronouns while delaying is called *Fadlah* which includes objects, specifying and situational indicator that follow the former in arrangement.

It is pertinent to note that some nouns at times are used as masculine and at another as feminine like *Sabil* (path)and *Taghut* (idol) (Q2:196). Direct object may be used instead of active subject (*fa'il*) as in *Hijabanmasturan* (an invisible veil) instead of *Satiran* (Q17:45). Similarly, a verbal noun may be employed instead of a passive participle as in *La'asimal-yawm min amrllah* (this day nothing can save from the command of God) instead of *la ma'suman* (Q11:43). One person is commanded like two while the message is directed to one. For instance, *alqiya fi jahanamkullakafarin 'anidin*(throw into Hell every contumacious rejecter of God Q50:24). In the same vein, plural noun is employed for two persons as in *Intatubailallahfaqadsaghatqulubukuma* (if you two turn in repentance to Him, your hearts are indeed so inclined)

instead of *qalbakuma* (Q66:4).

His literary products have received copious citations and frequent consultations as high grade research materials from scholars of religions, history, sociology, anthropology, language, literature, linguistics and a host of others not only in Nigeria but also in Britain, Germany, United States of America, Africa and the Middle East. Products of his Arabic Centre, who later acquired Western education elsewhere, are found as lecturers in almost all Nigerian universities and colleges of education where Arabic and Islamic Studies are taught. He died on Sunday 3th May, 1992 (Jamiu, 2004:64).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been observed how Ilorin developed from a small community formed towards the end of the eighteenth century and how scholars and soldiers from different communities came to settle in it. Beginning with the Oke-Sunnah and Agbaji Muslim Communities, the town gradually became the haven of Arabic and Islamic scholars from Hausaland, Borno and Nupeland. Sub-sequently, numerous Sufi leaders, Arabic and Islamic scholars of diverse origins were raised from   Ilorin. Some of the scholars stayed at home and taught people while others moved out and spread Arabic and Islamic culture to many places as Shaykh Adam Abdullah Al-Iluri did.

Arising from the above, the following recommendations are made in order to further enhance Arabic and Islamic Studies not only in Yorubaland but also in Nigeria:

Having observed the great strides made in Yorubaland and other places by the introduction of modern Arabic schools, there is a great need for the proprietors of private Arabic and Islamic institutions to work together, have uniform curricula, examination and certification.

Proprietors of modern Arabic schools should know that English has come to stay as the official language in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. They should, therefore, ensure that English is taught in their schools.Proprietors Of private Arabic and Islamic institutions should strive relentlessly to improve on their methodology, imbibe information technology which is now indispensable and ensure that they move with the times reasonably and decisively.

In spite of the long history of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Yorubaland, Arabic, which is the language of Islam, is not taught in most government secondary schools. The ugly situation should be corrected forthwith. Arabic should be made available in all secondary schools in Yorubaland.

There is a dire need for co-operation between the League ofImams and Alfas, and proprietors of Arabic

and Islamic institutions in order to promote Arabic and Islamic education maximally.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Review

Fifty years after: Rethinking security/national security discourse and practice to reinvent its future

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Fifty years after independence, the discourse and practice of security/national security in Nigeria needs re-examination. Security is a contested terrain amongst nation at different stages of development. At the moment, the contest is over the referent-state or people. Have Nigerians ever face national security threat of the scale in countries of the North that threatened the existence of the state in the last fifty years? Have not we faced national security threats of the scale not peculiar with countries of the North that has continuously threatened the existence of the state in the last fifty years? More Nigerians are threatened by government policies than by neighbouring armies. What were the objectives, priorities and methods of national security in discourse and practice? Have we not been discussing and practicing security and national security wrongly thus endangering the very basis of security-the people? What do we mean when we talk about security and national security? Or when we make policies to protect and advance national security? This paper surveys the discourse and practice of national security in Nigeria using papers presented at the Historical Society of Nigeria congress on "Historicizing National Security, Order and Rule of Law".It examined the understanding of national security arguing that the ambiguity evident in the term sanctioned and legitimised similar disposition in its use by policy makers. It called for the people of Nigeria to be the referent object of security rather than the interest of the elite subsumed for the state.

Keywords: Security, national security, state, human beings, scholars.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, Nigeria celebrated fifty years of self governance and if Nigeria is to last another fifty years, there is the need to review the national understanding of security and national security. The changes evident in the world necessitate this re-examination. Over twenty years ago, the cold war ended producing a dominant United States, the 9-11 attacks and the war against terror. These developments compounded Nigeria's governance problem including the received understanding of security and within it, national security. Security became a growth industry especially since the 1980s as peoplemade reference to security and in particular national security The period recorded major post colonial state crisis evident in the virulence of military rule, governance decay, economic downturn and the interventions of the Bank and the Fund. The consequent social crisis elevated security

discourse onto the national agenda. In fact, it was politically correct to talk security among the political class, bureaucrats, academics, security establishment and lay people. However, what do they mean when they talk and do security? At what point in history did security become burning national issue National security represents a convergence of different current. To effectively tackle the term we must first agree on what is security and what constitutes national in security. The definition is divisive among scholars and policy makers and this is all the more evident when set, in the latter case, in a military regime where the defence-security option was preferred or in the civil regime where the power-security option prevailed. Indeed, the defence-security and power-security perspective was indistinguishable in a military regime. In this context what comes to mind is its International Relation and state-centric context, but above all its alien application in the Nigerian context. Its hegemonic appli-cation excludes the necessary role of local knowledge and capability and, played into the hands of the military institution that dominated government.n Once we agree on what is security and this is unlikely, we will proceed to examining its ideological connotation and application in everyday policy. What is security/national security? Of the different groups who left their imprint on the discourse of security/national security, policy makers especially in a military regime and academics top the list.

The paper examines this view using selected articles presented in the 53rd Congress of the HSN conference on the theme and drawing attention to a scene of orche-strated confusion evident by this that profited the domi-nant tradition. The work is divided into introduction, con-ceptualization of security and national security, situating the discourse in historical context,examining the papers within the discourse, practice of security and national security under militarily dominated mentality, reaffirming the need to embrace human security whose neglect created the security condition bringing about the concep-tual and policy sophistry and the conclusion.

A critique of security and national security

A contentious issue in the attempt to broaden and deepen security studies is the question of whether thestate or human being should be the referent. Since security studies are sub-field in international relation; the state is the preeminent referent in the relation between countries (Buzan, 1991). This view fits the pattern of relations in the developed world. In the developing world and in particular in sub- Saharan Africa, this view has come under intense scrutiny especially after the cold War (UNDP, 1994). This is largely the result of the mess governments made of governance and its consequences on human beings.

Thus the argument that people should be the referent is borne of this realisation. The realisation is that the state is the major source of insecurity to people in sub- Saharan Africa. Unlike in the developed world that guarantees some level of material comfort for its people thus paving the way to pursuing other forms of security, poor governance in sub-Saharan Africa threaten peoples' security. This explains governments focus on the survival of the state or regimes to the detriment of people. Poor governance within countries threatens more lives than soldiers from neighbouringcountries.This explainswhy the focus on the state should give way to people. Nigeria is not an exception. Security in Nigeria should not be limited to what military regimes bequeathed. It should be re-conceptualised and refocused on the people to address their deprivation (Booth, 2007). The welfare of the people is as important as the survival of the state. In the last fifty years of statehood and in particular, the last thirty years, the neglect of the welfare of Nigerians is the single most important threat to the state.

Some of the definitions of security provided are culture-specific, value laden and development bound. Jozsef Balazs sees security as determined by the internal and external security of the various social systems, by the extent, in general, to which system identity depends on external circumstances. For him, social security is internal security. The essential function is to ensure the political and economic power of a given ruling class, or the survival of the social system and an adequate degree of public security (Buzan, 1991:16). Ian (1981:102) located security in relative freedom from war, coupled with a relatively high expectation that defeat will not be a consequence of any war that should occur. In Lippmann's conception, a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war (Wolfers, 1962: 150). Wolfers categorises security as objective and subjective. Security, in any objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked. Martin (1983: 12) defines security as assurance of future well being and Mroz (1980: 105) situated security in the relative freedom from harmful threats. To Waever (1989), security is a speech act. It is the utterance itself that is the act. Thus a state representative moves a particular case into a specific area "claiming a special right to use the means necessary to block this development".

Most, if not all of these definitions, pointed to IR influence and development level of the definers. For instance, Balazs situated security in the "international context and determined basically by the internal and external security of the various social systems, by the extent, in general, to which system identity depends on external circumstances". The availabilityof social security provides the type of material protection that is lacking in Nigeria. Unlike the developed world where threat is more or less from external sources, the threat in Nigeria is from

within and emanates from the people. The welfare of the ruling class in Nigeria has been the priority of security. Bellamy (1981) detailed war, values, future and freedom as security issues. War is a dominant theme in the evolution of International Studies and within it is the sub field of security and was a common theme in the affairs of nations in the last century. War is not part of the consideration in Nigerian because there has never been any significant threat to the survival of the country from outside. Most threats come from within. On values, future and freedom, there is a correlation between material comfort and consciousness of abstract issues such as values, freedom and plan to secure the future. These definitions are culture and development specific to Europe and North America.

Waever's definition of security as a speech act came to acquire prominencefor the power elite not only in Nigeria but in most sub Saharan African countries. Military rule and global economic crisis created condition that made the application of security in its most diverse phases feasible. The military's position of securing the territorial integrity of Nigeria came into conflict with its assumption of governance. In this case as the representative of the state, it held the wisdom in designating an issue security thus "claiming a special right to use the means necessary to block this development". Thus military regime and the political class it cloned elevated the wishes of Nigerians to have a better life, expressed in the protests and demonstrations over its poor governance, as threat to security.

Thus it is necessary to arrive at a definition of security that is local, interested, contextual, and historically specific. Security is peoples' relative feeling of being secure from economic, political, social, cultural and psychological fear. Insecurity is peoples' relative feeling of the presence of economic, political, social, cultural and psychological fear. Economic insecurity such as the lack of jobs and access opportunity in all fields spawned other forms of insecurity. It is the absence of these that create conditions of political, cultural and psychological exclusion detrimental to state security. Essentially therefore while values, institutions and survival of the state could constitute referents of security of developed societies having attained the necessary material comfort for their people, the lack of the latter for Nigerians is the major threat to security. Thus in order to achieve this, it is necessary to raise the material level of the people to attain security.

It is within this premise that the question of national security comes into centre stage. The definition contains two words--national and security. National security is a common word in discourse that cut across all strata of society just as the meaning and usage also differs. When does a threat constitute national security? Who elevates the threat to national level? Hartland-Thunberg defined national security as the ability of a nation to pursue successfully its national interest, as it sees them, any

place in the world (Buzan, 1991: 17). Louw thinks it includes traditional defence policy and the non-military actions of a state to ensure its total capacity to survive as a political entity in order to exert influence and to carry out its internal and international objectives. For Luciani, it is the ability to withstand aggression from abroad. The NDC sees it as the preservation of a way of life acceptable to the people and compatible with the needs and legitimate aspirations of others (Buzan, 1991). Trager and Simonie (1973) describe national security as that part of government policy having as its objective the creation of national international political conditions favourable to the protection or extension of vital national values against existing and potential adversaries. To Ullman (1983), a threat to national security is an action or sequence of events that threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state, or threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, non-governmental entities within the state.

The definitions stresses pursuit of national interest anywhere in the world, of internal and international objectives, withstanding aggression from abroad, preservation of life, freedom and protection of values; other seek to preserve vital national values against existing and potential adversaries, prevent the degrading of quality of life of inhabitants and against narrowing the range of policy choices available to government and private institutions within a state. Embedded in them are ideological issues specific to the places where these views emanate and may not necessarily apply to the Nigerian environment. The basis for attaining these objectives has been put in place. The precondition in question is the preservation of way of life acceptable to the people. Fifty years after independence the existing pattern of living is unacceptable to most Nigeriansand not worth preserving hence the expression of discontent. National security is invoked to preserve the way of life of the dominant minority who view the expression of discontent as detrimental to their hold on power. The inclusion of 'national' sums the urgency and patriotism of the appeal and appropriation of resources.

Public officials and the academia have used national security to describe manifestation of disagreement by the people with policies of government. Thecrisis in Niger Delta and Central Nigeria, both resource rich areas, elicits response in national security language. This is because the non- military conception of national security differs from that of the military that has two roles to play. One, as a member of the national defence establishment, issues of security is regarded as their area of specific competence. Definition outside this technical competence is unacceptable intrusion. Two, the military's usurpation of power left its impression of security on others. Indeed the latter milieu colours the academia's independent appreciation of security and what is national in security.

Situating discourse and practice of security/national security in historical context

We can situate the pull of insecurity in the country and thus the discourse on security. From the 1960s to 1970s, we had relative security because there were fewer persons, commensurate infrastructure, opportunities and a thriving agriculture base, reliant on healthy regional competition which prevented rural-urban migration. Militaryintervention and oil economy change the trend of relative security to rising insecurity.

The population grew as work place culture engendered mass migration from the rural into the insufficient urban economy. The crisis reached zenith with civil rule profligacy and oil price collapse of the 1980s. Insecurity moved from relative to absolute term in human and infrastructural areas. The intervention of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) established insecurity as a perpetual development issue in Nigeria. This spawn chicanery and charlatans of all type including what BBC described as "useful idiots"-- intellectuals who upturned reality in their attempt to burnish the different dictatorships. It is within this condition that the conceptual confusion about security and what constitute national security emerged.

Every decade in Nigeria from the 1980s onward represented decay in the living conditions of Nigerians. The enactment of the National Economic Stabilization Act (Olukoshi, 1991) announced the birth of reforms. The essence of the Act was to reduce government's expenditure and capital imports using import restrictions, monetary controls, and financial policies.This measure was applied selectively to party officials and elite on the one hand and Nigerians on the other. This manifest dual standard was a reflection of the crisis of governance compounded by the inordinate ambition of members of the ruling party to return to power. The 1983 election was a replay of 1964-65 elections as soldiers used the excuse to return to power. For the ruling elite, security or national security was the interest of the party andnot the welfare and safety of Nigerians.

The military governmentdefined security in line with the war against indiscipline. Soldiers were role out into the street to enforce the regime's regulation against the discredited politicians and what they considered immorality of Nigerians. They clamp down on the press, labour and professional unions and the international communities. The campaign against corruption and moral laxitytook precedence over declining economic wellbeing of Nigerians. Increasingly, the regime became alienated from Nigerians and from section of the armed forces. It was removed from power on 27th August, 1985.

The new regime unveiled economic and political programme of action with a populist bend. It coincided with changes that would significantly alter the theory and practice of governance worldwide. The international dimension of change was the introduction of perestroika and glasnost by Mikhail Gorbachev. In Nigeria, the country committed itself to adopting home-grown measure of economic reform even as the government proceeded through the backdoor to inviting the IMF. According to Mkandawire and Olukoshi (1995), the introduction of structural adjustment programme affected Nigerians in ways that all previous economic reform did not. The immediate impact of the SAP was as unsettling for the state as for the various social forces in society and whose ultimate aim was to fundamentally alter the structural basis of Nigerian economy.

It has been argued that economic and political reforms go simultaneously. Diamond (2004) was of the view that in so far as the market reform programmes of the IMF and WB help to streamline the over-extended post-colonial African state and encourage the emergence of a genuinely productive domestic bourgeoisie able to cope with the discipline of the market, they are bound to be beneficial to Africa's democratic prospects. In Nigeria, the application produced disastrous result as its unleashed social forces of the dimension never experienced before. Indeed as it became evident everywhere in Africa, the initial success of the implementation of the SAP could only have occurred in an authoritarian political space. The state in Nigeria became increasingly authoritarian as the implementation of the programme unfolded. According to Olukoshi (1993), the formal adoption of adjustment witnessed the most widespread and passionate contestation of the adjustment programme by various social groups adversely affected. It was a period of unprecedented hardship for many Nigerians at a time when most had not been able to devise mechanisms for coping with the adverse effects of the market reforms which the government was attempting to push through. The main immediate avenue available to most groups to defend their interests was by exerting pressure on the state, often in the form of spontaneous and violent protests.

This is the pressure that was interpreted as security or national security threat. It was treated in relation to the survival of the regime relying on the expertise of the military. The regime was not only confronted with power security threat but also defence security threat. It therefore invoked the speech act view of security in designating every act of protest against the SAP as threat to national security and often used it to silence its critics. Indeed it was on record that the head of the regime described the 1989 SAP demonstrations as the civilian equivalent of a military coup d'état. The regime treated the symptom rather than the disease that bred insecurity. It was at war with itself and with Nigerians and thus upped its perception of insecurity. It justified its intervention on the division created by the political logjam that permeated all facets of society including the armed forces.

Perhaps it was the post SAP debasement of being

human and the post cold war paradigm shift that necessitated the re-evaluation of past focus on security. The emerging security paradigm focused on human being (UNDP, 1994) rather than the state. Human security means, 'first, safety from such chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life-whether in homes, in jobs or in communities. Ensuring human security requires seven-pronged approach addressing economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and political security (Kerr, 2010:122). Thus military spending means loss of opportunity to rescue disappearing social services and disintegrating infrastructures (Ake, 2000:145). The human cost of military expenditure is not only high but it also produces the insecurity with which the regime is forced to justify its measure. The level of poverty in Nigeria is so high that the struggle for social existence is waged on a level of physical immediacy so absorbing and debilitating that it is hostile to the condition of security.

Examining discourse of security and national security using selected papers from the 53rd HSN Congress

According to Onoja (2010), with an environment dominated by security challenges created by military regime type, it was not surprising that the state centric view of security became the prevalent one. If any regime type shapes the behaviours of Nigerians, the military, by virtue of their dominance of politics, policies and society, did. This domination was all encompassing. The short bout of civilian regimes did little to extricate itself from this pervasive milieu. With the return of retired military men as members of the executive and legislature in 1999, the opportunity to begin a process of demilitarization of the polity receded further.

Of the generation that were born from the 1970s down to the end of the 1990s, the most familiar system of government for them was the military (Survey, 2010). Militaries often function as societies within societies by having their own military communities, economies, education, medicine, language (Ojo, 1999) and other aspects of a functioning civilian society. Socialisation is the process by which individuals learn the culture of their society (Haralambos, 1983:4-5). Apart from the family, peer group, educational system, work setting, the military institution was one of the unofficial agencies of socialization in Nigeria. The military's brand of socialization entrenched as Nigeria was transformed into one big garrison comparable, perhaps, only to the colonial period. The colonial regime was, for the subjects, an arbitrary power, as it could not engender any legitimacy even though it made rules and laws profusely and propagated its values (Ake, 1996:3). This scenario permeated the

military establishment as it attempted to utilise the same instrument to confer legitimacy on its rule. What was different was that the institution did enjoy some form of legitimacy from some section of the political class and the citizens once it successfully established itself in power.

We noted that the obsession with insecurity under the military increased with new round of military rule, pressure from outside and within and the governments' wrong diagnosis and hence solution to deteriorating human condition. Discourses on security thus differ in say the regime of Babangida and Abacha while sharing the similarity of regime survival. In the former, it was induced by the SAP demonstrations. It was insufficient palliative that triggered the Jos crisis after the appointment of a 'non indigene' as coordinator of the poverty alleviation programme. Deteriorating standard of living awakens consciousness of self and environment producing exclusion strategies. Thus, for Babangida, insecurity was largely the failure of his economic and political programme. Crisis became rife in hot spots such as the south west, central Nigeria and the Niger Delta.

It is this environment that produces the intellectual legitimisation of discourse on security and national security. This is because the discourse remained vague as to the definition of the terms. Indeed should intellectual be vague in their use of terms? Should they be overwhelmed by the prevalent view sanctioned by the regime type? Should the definition of security and national security not conform to changing reality? Should it be based on the realist conception of the term? Should the Nigerian reality not inform the definitions? How has Nigerian intellectual discussed security?

One forum where this came to light was the 53rd congress of the Historical Society of Nigeria held in Gombe in 2008. The theme was "historicising national security, order and the rule of law". Most of the papers presented at the conference attempted to address issues from the security and national security perspective without putting into context what these terms meant. Does it connote power security or regime survival as regimes in Nigeria would rather have it? Does it connote defence security as the military conceives national security and thus their pre- eminent role in it? Is it the state centred perspective hence focusing on external dimension of the threat? Does it draw attention to the human angle thus internal threat?

Submissions include 'Media and National Security/ Insecurity in Nigeria', 'Youth, Rule of Law, Order and National Security in the Niger-Delta Region Since 1966', 'Oil as a National Question in Nigeria; 'Militancy' or 'Criminality': Implications for National Security since the End of Military Dictatorship in 1999', 'New Approaches to National Threats and Security', 'The Economy and National Security in Nigeria (1995-2005): The Impact of Food Insecurity', 'National Question and National Security in Nigeria', 'Security Consciousness and Awareness in

Support of National Security: The Nigerian Situation', 'Historical Perceptions of Nigeria's National Security 1600-2008', 'Is Religion a Threat or Strength to National Security', 'National Security and Sustainable Development: The Challenges from the Niger Delta Region', 'A Historical Analysis of Oil Base Conflicts and the Threat to Nigeria's National Security', 'Islam, Democracy and the Sharia Question in Nigeria: Implication to National Security', 'The Character of the Nigerian State and the Contradiction of National Security', 'Politics, the State and National Security in Nigeria', 'Ethno-Religious Crises and Threats to National Security in Historical Perspective', 'Drug Trafficking and Challenges to National Security' and 'Ethnic Militias and Conflicts: Its Implications for the National Security of the Nigerian State since 1999'.

Against past practiceof security, these perspectives ought to come out with concise conceptualisation of security and national security. What comes to mind in the absence of clear clarification is its ambiguousness and in part its attempt at 'seeing like a state' (Scott, 1998). It is evident that most of the paper appreciated the deteriorating human condition as threatening to security but overall it has not been able to say whose national security it threatened. For instance, the paper on 'national questions and national security in Nigeria' opined that:

Security of a state or nation cannot therefore exist without due provision of adequate national security. Aggressive and repressive statesare major source of human insecurity and a greater cause of humansuffering. Thus, national security is concerned about governmental institutions that seek to ensure the physical protection and safety of citizens, their equalaccess to the law and protection from abuse. There are two main sets of government systems and institutions concerned with national security, the traditional instruments of national security, namely: the criminal justice system (police, justice and correctional services/prisons), the military and the intelligence community and the most important, been the nature of governance, its institutions and the rules, norms and valueswhich underpin it as well as, the efficacy thereof (HSN, 2008).

In stressing the institutions of the state, the perspective burrowed into the realist paradigm which sought to strengthened instruments of repression against external attacks. However, in the Nigerian case internal threats engendered by deprivation of all kinds became the focus of repression. While giving pre-eminence to what it termed traditional instruments of national security, it underscored the nature of governance as another important component of national security. The paper's conception of 'nature of governance' is vague as reference to institutions, rules, norms and values could be interpreted differently.

The paper 'media and national security/insecurity in Nigeria' did not lose sight of the self preservation angle embedded in the usage of national security in Nigeria. Excerpt:

National security is of utmost importance to every country and no responsible government can sit about and watch the security of its nation being trifled with... This is because it affects not only the satisfaction of the needs of the inhabitants, but also and perhaps more importantly, the fundamental issue of the nation's survival as a viable entity... From the dawn of colonialismto date, the history of Nigeria on media and national security most especially during military government regimes has been one of serious contention because the media are constantly being accused of undermining national security...The media in Nigeria, as well as in most African states, tend to pose as threats to the selfish interest of those in power that have substituted their individual security for national security and consider any challenge to their tenacious grip on power as a threat to national security... Since nationalsecurity should occupy the highest priority, it is "non-negotiable", and does not permit "undue compromise" by any individual or group...(HSN, 2008)

However, the paper did not define what it meant by national security other than examining some of the travails of media houses in the hand of the government. It advices media houses to "come to equity with clean hands by adhering to their codes and ethics, preserving the nation at all cost and to operate as patriotic institutions and join hand with government to protect national security for the benefit of all the citizens of the nation"(HSN,2008). The paper did not say who should define the national security that the media houses would join hands in advancing and protecting.

The lack of clear focus on what constitutes security and national security was revealed by the paper 'Ethnic Militias and Conflicts: Its Implications for the National Security of the Nigerian State since 1999'. The paper contends that "these militias groups in the light of their ethnic/religious linings…generated conflicts in the polity… and the "measurement of the implications is basically viewed from the various segments of the society that guarantees security, in essence, national security"; that the "activities of militia group have greatly altered the security base and have affected negatively, the national security of the Nigerian State since the return of democratic governance in 1999… "(HSN,2008). In what seemed like an answer to the attempt by the previous paper to protect the Nigerian state, the paper noted 'the character of the Nigerian state and the contradictions of national security' and sought to situate the rising insecurity in Nigeria to "peripheral nature of the Nigerian state, the implication of primitive accumulation of wealth and votes and the attendant agitation…" This it blames on the "retrenchment of state from the management of public services" when Nigeria embraced neo-liberal orthodoxy (HSN, 2008). In suggesting ways of "boosting

national security in Nigeria", the article remained did not say what constitute national security even though it could be deduced that the reference to the lack of social services provisioning by the state was what eroded national security and by implication defines this.

Nor did 'politics, the state and national security in Nigeria' do a better job of fleshing the national security dilemma. It began by defining politics, state and security and connecting the first two with the latter in arriving at the "process, functions and public expectations of government in Nigeria" (HSN, 2008). Except for the latter indication, the implication of the argument remained ambiguous to the extent that what constitute national security was interpreted by the dominant power to mean regime survival and enhancement. The state remained the primary focus of this viewpoint. Military regime in Nigeria was no disinterested observer in areas it considered its primary field. The definition of security and national security, bereft of its people centeredness, did not take into cognizance the local, interested, contextual and historical connotation of the terms. Thus most of the papers merely included security or national security without fully conceptualizing them while in most cases the direction of their argument were either contained in the title, part of the content or lost in articulation. This is the case with 'national security and sustainable development: the challenges from the Niger Delta Region'. It left the issue of national security and attempted to draw out the importance of oil, environmental degradation and its effect on the people thus engendering militancy and threatening national security. It was unlike 'a historical analysis of oil base conflicts and the threat to Nigeria's national security' that question"historical context of a statist conception of national security bereft of ecological and socio-economic considerations…" thus producing conflict. It considered this as "narrow statist cum military perspective to the security question and demonstrates how the persistence of oil based conflicts contradicts this model" (HSN, 2008).

It is this state centric security (Buzan, 1991) that benefits the Nigerian environment oppressively shaped by the military'spre-eminence in governance that needs to be reviewed in discourses by intellectual in support of the human security model (Booth, 2007).

Practising security and national security

The military promoted security milieu left its mark on Nigerians (Survey, 2010) including the intellectuals. For the military, what emerged can be equated to what Buzan (1991:272-273) called the defence dilemma. This is the contradiction between military defence and national security. Armed forces are justified principally by their necessity for national security, and it is therefore politically expedient to assume that military might is positively correlated with national security. As the Nigerian military

discovered, this was not always the case since their definition of national security with time developed into the symbolic ambiguity type. In their case, defence and security began to work against each other. Their focus on defence or regime survival compromised other security objectives including the welfare of the people. In this case, the defence measure adopted by the government was inappropriate and irrelevant to the security need of the country. The government was oblivious of the armament versus development debate in national security. In this case, more serious economic, political and ecological security issues are not dealt with because too many resources are put into dealing with less serious military threats (Buzan, 1991:273). In Nigeria, even the so called resources voted for the military did not reach them as the rot within the system subsequently revealed. It was a ploy to prevent the emergence of armed forces that would threaten the regime in power.

Thus military government in Nigeria was fascinated by the speech act and political/ regime security. The crises in the economy (Onoh, 1983; Caccia, 1983; Bangura et al, 1992) peakedin the late 1980s with the introduction of the structural adjustment programme. The growth of discontent among the populace provided the enabling environment for the development of security scare. The SAP platforms provided for deregulation, subsidy removal, retrenchment, currency devaluation and the scheme of privatization and commercialisation. The consequences were protest, demonstration, opposition, growth of civil society, armed robbery, drug trafficking, prostitution and incessant plots in the military. This is where the military's defence expertise as guardian of 'national security' came to prominence. Being the dominant regime type in the period, the preferred defence oriented security took centre stage. The military was at war with Nigerians and with itself.

In the first instance, the military's solution to the problem of discontents was to create the outfit known as joint military-police patrol with the military in the lead. All states in Nigeria had this outfit and have, even with the return of civilian rule, remained a prominent feature of security against law breakers. The existence of the outfit was a vote of no confidence in the marginalised police force. It would be recalled that when the military overthrew the civilian government in 1983, it proceeded to de-emphasising the prominence of the police especially the mobile police or anti- riot squad. Thepolice profile declined in crime control and restoration of public order with every military regime.

Secondly, individual and group prefer soldiers in dispute resolution. Individuals with relation in the services or who can afford to hire soldiers deployed them into settling disputes at home, school and in pubs. Nigerians embraced marshal culture includingcamouflage, tainted car windows, use of siren and in everyday language. The military's lack of civility was experienced in the streets,

public places and on the screen of television. The military profession was the most preferred occupation for young men and women. For the latter, marrying military men was the surest way of becoming first ladies.

Military incursion into African political life is a major challenge in democratic transition which worsened the problem generated by authoritarianism. The military has impacted on society in its anti-social and anti-political value (Chole and Ibrahim, 1995; Ojo, 1999:193-215). The military has been trained to believe that power could be wielded and conserved on the basis of the force that resides within the military institution itself, and even those elements that have had access to higher education have remained at the mental level of 'barrack boys'. We have seen the traits repeatedly demonstrated in the executive dominated by ex-military men and the legislature and in the relations between civilians socialised in this culture for the better part of their life. The militarisation of politics in the spate of assassination, murder and violence in the 2007general elections was evidence of this. Retired military men have remained committed, impervious or even insensitive to the erosion of civil relations, democratic norms and the banalisation of the culture of violence out of corporate self-interest and greed.

Thirdly, with the growing conflict in the society, the rating of soldiers in containing conflict increases in the eye of Nigerians. The pattern of deployment of services into conflict areas leaves this impression on Nigerians. The first to be deployed is the regular police whose performance rating plummeted with every bout of military rule. When they failed, as they were usually programmed to fail, the mobile police were deployed. They, unlike the regular police, garnered some respect from the public because of their notoriety in the 1989 SAP riot and on campuses in Nigerianuniversities. When the mobile police failed, soldiers were deployed to finish the job. Their tactics is to shot to kill and for Nigerian, this brings order into the conflict. The very ploy of staged deployment indicated that by the time the soldiers arrived the scene, the belligerents were tired and ready for truce.

The manipulation of intelligence for political and individual gains which was heightened by the centralization of power and the ambiguities in the Nigerian constitution made the deployment of police and soldiers the responsibility of the presidency. The state governors as chief security officers do not control any security outfit to deploy. Thus from the start, the process was bound to fail because of interest and bureaucracy in The presidency, police and military headquarters in Abuja to activate the command process(Akowe,2010:4). By the time orders came, one side had gained advantage over the other while the state chief security officer watch (Constitution, 1999: section 214 subsection 3 and 4). The scenario compound post conflict reconciliation and facilitate a vicious cycle of revenge.

Fourthly, the pursuit of narrow security objective by the military unleashed a Frankenstein monster. The Directorate of Military Intelligence was notorious in orchestrating and persecutingenemies of the regimes whether real or imagined (Hutchful, 1998:613). It was common in the regime of General Abacha. The spectre ofillegal retirements of officers caught in the web of intrigue became a significant 'national security' problem to the government. To curtail incidence of disloyalty and to maintain his grip on power, General Babangida politicised the services by creating slush funds, extra ministerial bodies, task forces and external missions to keep them quiet. Indeed General Babangida became obsessed with his personal safety and survival (Omoruyi, 1999:171-172). He distrusted the army that he created the National Guard. He was confronted by three rival generations of officers with their political and military solution to the problem created by the annulment. They included General Sani Abacha, Lt. General Joshua Dogonyaro and representing the 'boys' was Brigadier General David Mark (Omoruyi, 1999: 205). If General Babangida was coy in handling restive men in the service, his successor General Abacha improvised a novel way of dealing with element likely to pose threat to him. The Directorate of Military Intelligence and other outfits under his government fabricated coups, alleged coups and bomb explosions to flush out enemies from the service. Those who were lucky were sent to prisons or to their villages and those who were not so lucky were taken out by the regime's hit men.

The regimes preoccupation with its own survival neglected the greater security threat posed by the over eighty percent of Nigerians whose economic fortune declined as the incompetence of the government grew. For the regime, security also included the surreptitious increase of the emolument of members of the armed forces through numerous welfare programmes. This was what the regime described as security. The process enveloped the nation in corruption of a scale unique only to the military government of the period. Fifthly, retirement created a battalion strength of not-too-tired officers. In seeking to apply a slightly modified version of the accomodationist strategies (Ake, 2000:52) when the preventive strategies failed and when the clamour for democracy became intense, the Nigerian military, the midwife of democracy, succeeded in transferring power to its counterpart in retirements who were evidently vocal (Hutchful,1998:612) and informed participants in the process. The struggle for democracy in Nigeria is largely a struggle against the military. But it was a struggle that the military, using its control of state, economic resources and manipulation of the transition programme (Momoh and Adejumobi, 1999; Okpeh, 2005; Onuoha and Fadakinte, 2002; Sagay, 2002; Jinadu and Oyovbaire, 1993; Oyovbaire and Olagunju, 1996; Omoruyi et al., 1994) converted to its advantage in order to safeguard its corporate interests by transferring power to retired military men.

The speed with which the military divested itself of formal political power and subsequently reinvented itself is a product of long hold on power, understanding of the Nigerian dynamics and internal and external developments. Internally the military had run into credibility problem when its numerous transition programmes failed to deliver an orderly transfer of power. The annulled election of 1993 was the climax (Omoruyi, 1999). Externally, the end of the cold war left democracy as the only option. Thus external interest and forces which had hitherto collaborated with the various status quo forces in the country was now very active in search of a virile democratic alternative (Olowu et al., 1995: ix).

The success of the military in reinventing itself and force of its socialization on Nigerians has set in motion the continuation of its domineering premise on security. The leading contenders for the presidency in 1999 were all former military officers. They all believed that the problem of insecurity of lives and property was in equipping and unleashing troops on the streets. Even the leading civilian contender among them who was a product of military socialization shares this view.

The post 2007 scenario did not break with this tradition as the military played prominent role in the affair of the government of late President Yar'adua. President Jonathan was quoted as praising the restrained and professional manner the military handled the crisis that engulfed the country following the vacuum created by President Yar'adua's health problem. The impression did not leave anyone in doubt about the hovering threat of the military in governance. For instance, the reform and provision of equipment to the police and other security outfits (Oluwasegun, 2008) were the hall mark of the regime's solution to insecurity while it retained the order of deployment of services to conflict area preferring soldiers as the joker in the pack. In following the line of the previous regime, the present administration is blivious of the view that the nature and character of the state in any country provides the socio-political environment of the police and how this colour their basic mentality, occupational culture and performance. In that order, members of the public get the police they deserve (Souryal, 1977:8). The order by late President Yar'adua that maximum force be used by soldiers in quelling the Boko Haram sect was indicative of this process. The deployment of troops to Maiduguri in the wake of the sect's activity represents the continuation of the policy.

Conclusion: Reconceptualising Discourse and Practice towards Human Security

It is discourse and practice like this that legitimises the dominant tradition on security. It is important to conceive security and what is national in security in human being. The advancement of human welfare as centrepiece of enduring security was sacrificed to advancing those that benefitted the governing class. Human centred security is wholesome and focuses on economic wellbeing through creating opportunities and infrastructures to support individual and group self actualisation. It supports the creation of sustainable political, social, educational, health and psychological environment for people. Unlike defence inclined security that focus on the national military establishment with priority on the armed forces, the human centred security focus on people and sees the former as complimenting the latter in its effort to secure the welfare of the people.

The re-socialization of the leaderships, citizens and institutions from defence to human oriented security should be the task of nongovernmental and civil society organisations. This is expressly contained in Chapter II of the 1999 constitution. Section 14 subsection 2 (b) of the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy declared "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government" (Constitution, 1999). Sections 15, 16, 17 and 18 are explicit on the obligation of the state to Nigerian people. A state that accomplishes most of this provisionneed not fear for its security as citizens will guarantee this. The military dominated regime in Nigeria failed to guarantee these rights hence it expended energy in protecting itself against Nigerians.The removal of the ambiguities in the constitution is one step to democratising persons and institutions. The constitution of the country is riddled with contradictions. The constitution of Nigeria has the imprimatur of the military. Nigeria requires a federal constitution with decentralised powers across all levels including a reduced presidential powerand enhance security role for governors.

By focusing on human needs through expanding the economy to absolve growing population, expanding infrastructures to enable people fulfil their creative and productive capacity to complement government effort and returning to the era of short, medium and long term development plans, the government would not need to rely on force as it will enjoy the support of the citizens. This environment will support the pursuit of foreign investment. Thus the task before intellectuals, people and government of Nigeria is to free security and national security from its state centricand hence the centrality of the military tohuman being and being human.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Review

A shift from peasant to intellectual-led political opposition in Tigray during the imperial regime (up to 1974)

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This paper examines how the educated people of Tigray took over the illiterate ones to fight against the imperial government. Local songs, poems and sayings used against Emperor Haileslasie are discussed. Following the liberation of Ethiopia from the Italian occupation in 1941, Emperor Haileslasie introduced a number of reforms, many of which were rejected by the people of Ethiopia. The imperial government used different measures including force to implement its policies. This created resentment in the people over whom repressive actions were undertaken. What happened in Tigray in 1942/43 is a good example. The Qedamay (First) Woyane Rebellion of 1942/43 broke out due to high taxation, maladministration, corruption, political feud etc. Although the rebellion failed because British Royal Arms intervened, the people did not remain submissive to the regime. A number of Tegaru University students from different Awrajas of Tigray joined Hailslasie I University at different times. The university served as an academic and political school where they agreed on how to save their communities from miserable lives. They formed an organization called Tigrean University Students Association (TUSA) that served them as an umbrella and binding pot. Members and supporters of this association were ready to pay any sacrifices for the betterment of their people. They made the society fight against the feudal regime and did everything to solve the problem of their people. With time, TUSA supporters increased. The association was renamed MAGEBT, then TNO and finally TPLF. Many Tegaru University students paid with their golden lives, time and properties in their struggle against the feudal regime. Finally, they successfully toppled the imperial regime. However, their struggle continued after the end of the imperial regime. Due to the absence of well organized civil government, another oppressive government, the Derg, assumed power.

Key words: First Woyane, TUSA, MAGEBT, TNO, university students, political opposition.

INTRODUCTION

The post-liberation political situation in Tigray

Due to the political ideology of the imperial regime, many parts of Ethiopia were not given the right to self governance or self administration. The centralization policy of Emperor Haileslasie did not allow this to happen. For this

reason, many on-Tigrean government officials came to Tigray Province. As many non-Tigrean government officials were assigned to administer many parts of Tigray, the people of the province developed hatred attitude towards their governors. The people of Tigray expressed their anger towards the imperial regime through the use of different sayings.

The following was one of the popular ones: "UmY kù¼ùlÖ ¹ê ÷YNµ ì TG‰Y YÞÖ" which literally means "Oh it is hardly possible to administer Tigray from Shoa". Their anger did not get a timely response from the officials. They lacked a patronage for their hardships and urgent requests. As time went by, the people of the province began to realize that their readiness to pay any form of sacrifice was the most important option. As a result, one informant, *Memhir* Mamo Teklehaimanot, expressed the determination of Tegaru as "GF›þ MIêR zY<XL HZbþ", meaning "people who are not submissive to an oppressive rule."[1]

It is obvious that the nature of relationship between the people of Tigray and the imperial regime under Emperor Haileslasie since the outbreak of Qadamy (First) Woyane Rebellion of 1942/43 was full of distrust. It is stated that although the Qedamay Weyane failed, sources uncover, it became a symbol of constant desire for the post Qedamay Weyane armed struggle against the imperial regime. In the long run, the uprising was far from unsuccessful. The Qedamay Weyane rebellion was not totally quelled. Rather, its challenge to the imperial regime continued in a different fashion and under different leadership in which the intellectuals replaced the leading role of the nobles and bandits. The coercive measures undertook against the people of Enderta Awraja both during and after the most formidable revolt of 1943, particularly the British Royal Air Force bombardment of Meqelle on behalf of the Emperor remained unforgettable in the minds of Tegaru (Atsbha, 2012).[2]

Due to this reason, many people of Tigray sang "wR¼þ m{T ÷NB ttRxþú ›YnY XMbR LbY ì ¦¶ú", meaning "As time went by, my eye slept but not my heart." As this song sung by sheep and cattle herders in the rural area, a considerable number of government officials realized that what the herders sang was the feeling of the masses. Thus, they began to supervise the daily songs of sheep or cattle herders. Because, it was considered as a short mechanism of assessing what the mass population felt. To this end, government officials were ordered to investigate what the herders sang every day: "Xr¾ ²Ê MN zfn?" which literally means "what herders sing today?"[3]

According to oral and written sources, the people of Tigray gave due attention to the contribution of education to the development of a certain country or society. This can be seen from one of their popular saying, "ዘይተወፈረ አይጥሕንን ዘይተምሃረ አየድሕንን". This is to mean, "Uneducated person is nominal as what unsharpened stone mill is not

functional." However, their academic demand was not met until the end of the Derg Regime.

According to Doctor Solomon Enquai's interview which was made with *Woyeen Magazine* on May 2010, "unlike the last generation, this generation is lucky enough." As to him, during the imperial period, there were only few primary and secondary schools with no college and university in Tigray. Following the return of Emperor Haileslasie from exile, most of the peoples of Ethiopia had not sympathetic attitude towards the imperial regime.[4]

The people of Tigray were not exceptional and this was not without reasons. Since the reign of Emperor Menilik II up to the imperial rule of Emperor Haileslasie, there was firm belief among Shoan rulers of Tigray, that is "ንትግራይ ንምግዛእ አጥሚኻ እዩ::", meaning "It is impossible to administer Tigray unless the province is kept hungry."[5] One of informant, *Memhir* Mamo Teklehaimanot shares this idea. He states it as follows: "KTgZX XNt÷YNµ HZbþ TG‰Y x_‚á ¼Z", meaning "If you want to govern the people of Tigray keep the hungry." The following proverb shows how the people of Tigray was denied due respect among its feudal rulers: "XGzþ¨BÿR zfN sþÃMéW TGÊ Ã-GÆL", meaning "The God feeds the people of Tigray as He [God] wants a person to sing for him." There was another way how the identity of the people of Tigray was wounded. It is enough to see the following saying, "TGÊ sþ-GB g#¥y s!RbW êYêy", meaning " Tigraway has no constant behavior: he sings and cries when he eats too much and feels hungry respectively."[6]

As mentioned above, immediately after the liberation of Ethiopia from the Italian occupation in 1941, there were about thirty nine (39) schools in Tigray Province. However, what happened in Tigray some months after the liberation of the country highly dissatisfied the people of the province. Because, through the order of Akaleworq Habtewold, the then Ministry of Education, all but three of the schools in Tigray were closed. The schools in Meqele, Adigrat and Adwa were believed to have been enough for no less than three million people of Tigray and another school was left from closure in Axum for religious education purpose.

The government's measure was not accepted by the people of Tigray without opposition and serious questions why such action was undertaken against a people who paid a number of sacrifice fighting against the Italian aggressors in the absence of the emperor. The government's response to their question was proved to be illogical for the fact that the people of the province were told that such measure was the result of their failure to pay enough amounts of taxes that would help the government to open many schools in the province. It was not due to their failure to pay high rate of taxes that their right to get adequate education was deprived. Because, other parts of Ethiopia, including Asmara and Addis Ababa, had many primary and secondary schools were

opened, without paying special taxes.[7]

The complaints of the people of Tigray were not only confined to an opposition in the province but also extended to the extent of sending delegates to Addis Ababa to present their appeal to the emperor to reconsider their question. For instance, delegates of the people of Maichew went to Addis Ababa and asked the emperor "እንታይ ጌርና ቤት ትምህርትና ተዓፀዩ? ደቅና ክድንቁሩ!", meaning "What wrong we did that our school is closed? Oh our children to be ignorant!" The emperor's response was "እሞ እቲ ናይ አክሱም ዓይኹትም ነዐም ከፈቱሎም ", which literally means "Open their school at the expense of the school at Axum."

What is impressive here to note is that the delegates sent from Maichew were not simple enough to be deceived by the decision of the emperor because, they were aware of the impact of such decision on the unity of the people of Tigray. For this reason, they replied "ንሕና ዝዓፀኸምዎ ቤት ትምህርቲ ከፈቱልና ክንብል ኢና ዝመፃእና አምበር ምስ አክሱም ምስ አሕዋትና ክንፃላእ አይኮንናን መፂእና ስለዚ ይትረፈና።" This literally means "We came here to request you to reopen our closed school but not at the expense of our friends, Axum, with whom we did not like to quarrel. So, we withdrew our question." [8]

Campus life and politics in Haileslasie I University

Even though they were few in number, Aregawi Berhe revealed that Tegaru secondary schools students of Nigiste Saba, Agazi and *Atse* Yohannis managed to complete their secondary level education with better courage. After they completed their secondary school education, some Tegaru students joined Haileslasie I University (HIU) where the political atmosphere, to some extent, was conducive to students articulating their grievances and coming together to form associations but not without cost. It was part and parcel of the campus life of many Tegaru students to participate actively in a political movement calling for change both at national and provincial level. For this reason, Tegaru university students played a pivotal role in the uncompromised struggle against the old regime under Emperor Haileslasie. HIU served as a meeting spot for politically minded Tegaru teachers and students from all *awrajas* of Tigray to meet together and to discuss on issues concerning the province as a whole. Some informants shared this idea.[9]

As can be understood both from oral and written sources, Tegaru higher institution students discussed the miserable life and the oppressive system that the majority of their community from which they came had to endure on the one hand and the luxury life style the ruling class were enjoying at the expense of the poor on the other hand.[10]

Land degradation, recurring famines, massive un-

employment, political alienation, cultural domination and various aspects of social problems of the people of Tigray and their solutions were some of the major issues which were the major points of discussion among Tegaru university students. They managed to compare the level of the problems in Tigray with those in other corners of Ethiopia and they firmly believed that the situation in Tigray was by far the worst.[11]

John Young, in his article entitled "The Tigray People's Liberation Front" shares the above discussed idea. He expressed extent to which Tigrigna speaking university students in general and Tegaru in particular were political conscious. His article reads:

While Oromos and others more recently incorporated into the Ethiopian empire suffered the greatest oppression under the imperial regime, it was the Tigrinya speakers of Eritrea and Tigray were the most ethnically conscious: Tigrayans, who inhabited the heartland of the historic Ethiopian state, were especially resentful of their sub-ordination to an Ahmara-dominated state, and Tigrayan students increasingly embraced the view that the best approach would be to engage in a national liberation struggle. Their deliberations led to the formation of the Tigray National Organization (TNO) which served as a link between militants in the university and their supporters in the towns, who were largely high school students and teachers, until the TPLF took form (Young, 1998).[12]

The imperial government left Tigray culturally dominated, economically poor and politically instable. The people's rights to speak and write using their mother tongue language to assemble and oppose were banned. Land in the province remained an income-generating asset of very few nobles and the masses were landless peasants. Any tendency of opposition against the old regime was met with military action and heavily taxing the people as a means to intimidate them not to once again oppose the imperial government. It was during this moment that intellectuals and students played a pivotal historical role in shaping the form of struggle the people must follow in order to achieve their freedom. The former put the corner stone of armed struggle among the people of Tigray. They raised many burning issues that had popular acceptance among the people of the province (Hiwehat, 1989).[13]

Many Tegaru University students were playing a vital rule in the pan-Ethiopian student movement against the feudal regime. What is necessary to note here, according to Aregawi Berhe, who was among the most activist Tegaru students and produced very rich account on the issue under discussion, is that the Tegaru university students were not aiming at restoring Tegaru's hegemony, as what "Some naïve politicians had presented it." Instead, they were patrons of the struggle against the

imperial regime. In other words, Tegaru students of Haileslasie I University were comrades in struggle with revolutionary students including Wallillegn Meknonen, who was a Wolo-Amhara, fighting against the old regime.[14]

Arkebe Equbay, interviewed by Weyeen Magazine in Feb 2009, evinces; ኣብ መወዳእታ 1950ታትን መጀመርታ 1960ታትን ፈሊሙ ኣብ ኢትዮጵያ ሓዳሽ ናይ ለዉጢ ጭርሓ ፣ ናይ እምብላይነት መዝሙር ዝሓዘ ኣየር ብሰፊሑ ምንፋስ ጀሚሩ ኔሩ ብፍላይ ነቲ ናይ ለዉጢ ድልየት ዓቃሚ ኩሉ ዘመዉሕ ዝነበሩ ተምሃሮ ዩኒቨርሲቲ እየም፡፡ መሬት ንሓራሲኡ፣ መሰልን መዓርነት ብሄር ብሄርሰባት ይከበር፣ ወዘተ ዝብሉ ጭርሓታት ኃሊሆም ወ ኢኦም፡፡ ተምሃራይ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ብግልጺ ኣብ አደባባያት ምጭራሕን ምዝራብን ቀፀለ፡፡ ካብዚ ሓሊፋዉን ሓደ ሓደ ሕቡኣት ዉዳበታት ተፈጢሮም፡፡ 15

Since the late 1950s and early 1960s E.C., there was slogan advocating change and songs calling rebellion were dispatched in Ethiopia particularly by the university students. Several slogans including land to the tiller, respect the right of nations and nationalities and the like were commonly used. University students began to speak and read slogans openly in stages. In addition to this, few clandestine cells emerged.

In the late 1960s, when the pan-Ethiopian student movement was growing in scope, Tegaru students of HIU were very influential in every aspects of the University Students Union of Addis Ababa (USUAA). Gidey Gebre Wahd, Sibhatu Wubneh, Amare Tesfu, Tesfay Teklu, Mitiku Ashebir, Abebe Tesema, Atsbha Hailemariam, Gebrekidan Desta, Rezene Kidane, Tilahun Gizaw and Melese Tekle were some among the earlier prominent activists Tegaru University students. [16]

After their political consciousness became very strong, the need to have frequent meeting among the students themselves and between them and other section of the society highly increased. Particularly, during the vacation period, university and secondary school students as well as high school teachers had got good opportunities to meet together so as to discuss the oppressive nature of the feudal regime under Emperor Haileslasie and the reach on an agreement on how to end it. For instance, Tesfay Tekle, Rezene Kidane and Mituku Ashebir were some among the activist university students who highly shaped the student movement in Meqele Town. Tesfahunegn Asayehegn, Gebremedhin Kassa and Endiyaw Abera were some examples of high school teacher in Atse Yohannis Secondary School who strongly cooperated with the aforementioned university students in agitating mass based opposition in Tigray against the imperial regime. [17]

According to archival sources, the aforementioned students and teachers opposed the political and cultural domination of the imperial government over the people of Tigray. On 23 August 1969, these participants of the student strike in the town were reported to have moved from bar to bar, night club to night club and they were

calling every bar and night club owners to use Tigrigna but not Amharic music. It is also stated that instead of Amharic music, they frequently encouraged the use of English music mainly "Long Live for youth".

Even though the activities of the students in Meqele Town were a great challenge to the then government, the latter undertook half-hearted measures up on the former. As can be seen from some archival materials, the reason why no strong action was taken up on the university students in Meqele was stated as follows: "እነዚህ ሰዎች ለልማቱ ስራ ይጠቅማሉ ተብሰው መጥተው በዚህ ዓይነት ሁኔታ ተከስ መ ቢቀጡ ከጥቅሙ ጉዳቱ ያመዝንልና ከክሱ ነፃ ሆነ ው ወደ ትምህርት ቤታቸው እነዳ ሰ ..." [18], which literally means "The accusation and punishment of those people [university students], who are expected to share their contribution to the development program, due to their involvement in political activities has more disadvantages than its merits. Hence, it is better to return them to their study [university]."

The Establishment of Tigrean University Students' Association (TUSA)

As the pan-Ethiopian student movement became very strong, many student leaders were arrested among whom Brhane Mesqel Reda, Melese Tekel and Wallillegn Mekonen were cases in point and even these arrested were released due to frequent student demonstration in demand of getting release the arrested ones (Mulugéta, 2010).[19]

After the death of Tilahun Gizaw, Sibhatu Wubneh and other, the hostility between Tegaru students and the government was intensified. It is stated that the cooperation and unity among Tegaru university students was further consolidated after the death of Tilahun Gizaw and the massacre of others. Tegaru students from different campuses (Sidist Kilo, Arat Kilo, etc) arranged frequent meetings and agreed on the need to establish an association of their own, under which they would create a united common front so as to struggle against the feudal rule. As a result, the Tigrean University Students Association (TUSA) came into being in the late 1970s (Mulugéta, 2010, p. 47).[20]

In August 1971, the involvement of Tegaru university students in Meqele was very active. Even though the situation in the town was very difficult for their political activities due to the close supervision of the security forces, they wasted no time to agitate mass based opposition against the feudal rule. Most of the time, their movement was without the knowledge of the state authorities in the town. For the sake of security, they prepared pamphlets written in Amharic and Tigrigna languages and posted them in every bar and commercial shops during the night time.

Their pamphlets had strong toned message including a picture of weapons painted using red ink. Most of the

pamphlets post in such places were found and taken by the security forces that used such materials to tarnish the image of the university students among the government authorities in the town and the local community as well. They also used it to show the nature of the activities on which the university students were engaged in.[21]

Having such materials as evidences, the security forces began to chase the Tegaru university students in the town and the former tried to closely supervise the day-to-day activities of the latter. Not only the security forces used this pretext as a means to intimidate the university students but also they attempted to create anxiety among the parents of these students that parents had to take the responsibility of stopping the illegal activities of their children unless the consequence would be very severe. In other words, after they clearly knew the daily activities of the university students, the security forces began to exploit the situation in various ways for their own ends. On one hand, they assert that they had enough evidence on what the university students were doing during the day and night times in the town. On this ground, the students had to give up their illegal political activities unless they would be subjected to severe punishment. [22]

On the other hand, the security forces managed to develop a sort of distrust among the university students and the local community. They began to tarnish the image of the university students on the mind of the society. This was mostly in order to deprive the university students' popular acceptance for their revolutionary ideas among the society. Because, the relationship between the Tegaru university students and the local community was considered as a threat for the imperial government. To this end, what the security forces recommended the local community to do was to cautiously supervise the day-to day activities of the university students and to contribute their own share in suppressing the illegal political activities of the students instead of sharing their revolutionary ideas and becoming their patrons and ardent supporters. [23]

However, such attempts of the security forces ended in vain. Because despite the several intimidations, the university students continued posting various pamphlets on the wall of different bars and shops. As a result, the security forces believed that frustrating the students and their parents proved inadequate measure of stopping the students' illegal political activities. They rather decided to use forceful action to suppress the students' political activities in the town. The university students were cautious enough to develop good friendship with the secondary school students in the town. They preferred to arrange different political meetings under the pretext of several reasons such as academic or developmental issues. [24]

Due to what was happening on 22 August 1971, some top officials of the police force including lieutenant Colonel Desalegn Tekle Micael and *Moto Haleqa* Zelalem

Wasihun managed to meet and discuss with some university students. Zer'u Gesese (later Agazi), who was by then second year university student and later one of the most influential founders of the Tigrean People Liberation Front /TPLF/, was consulted by the afore-mentioned personalities. What is interesting here to point out is that he never denied the university students' activities including posting pamphlets in the town. How-ever, he was cautious for his nature of communication with these personalities.

As the police officials asked him to express his idea about the nature of the university students' involvement in the political opposition in Meqele against the imperial regime, his response to them was that the pamphlets, which were posted on the walls of bars and shops, were prepared by the university students. As to him, these pamphlets had no political content. Instead, the most important message of these materials was that the university and secondary school students want to develop common understanding regarding how to improve the teaching learning environment. This is to show that Zer'u Gesese tried his best to deceive the police forces that what the university students had written and posted in different places had apolitical message or nature. [25]

During the establishment of TUSA, Brhane Iyasu, Aregawi Berhe, Equbazgi Beyene, Asfeha Hagos (Alemayehu), *Wizerit* Gidey Gebre Egziabher, Zer'u Gessesse, Alemayehu Wolde Aregai, Gebre Medhine Gebrekristos and others participated (Mulugéta, 2010, p. 49).[26] TUSA pledged to function both in Addis Ababa and Tigray when the university was closed for the vacations. TUSA was a popular association in which many Tegaru university students, including all the founding members of the Tigrean Nations Organization (TNO), actively involved in the association's activities not only during the vacation times but also during the academic years. As members of the university community, members of TUSA were active participants at all levels of the pan-Ethiopian student movement. They managed to take a leading role in many cases of the ESM. For instance, Melese Tekle (who was later killed by the Derg) and Amha Tsehaye (today's Abay) were TUSA members who led the editorial branch of USUAA. The leadership of the Political Science Students' Association of HIU was put under Aregawi Berhe for a year (1972-1973). Brhane Iyasu, before he joined the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary party (EPRP) and killed by the Derg, was a TUSA activist (Aregawi Berhe 2008, p. 59).[27]

In Addis Ababa, the main objective of TUSA was selecting some hot issues, arranging discussions and consulting some influential Tegaru, who were capable enough to back up the association. The members of TUSA managed to meet some parliamentarian, business-men and professional Tegaru whose moral and material support was vital in order to mitigate the dismal situation in Tigray. *Ato* Gesesew Ayele (Sihul), *Ato* Asfaw Wolde

Aregai, *Ato* Alemseged Gebre Egziabher, *Weizero* Tsehaytu Gebreslasie, *Qegnazmach* Teklit Mekonen, *Ato* Zenawi Tekola and others were among the members of the imperial parliament representing Tigray and contributed their immense share in terms of finance and advice. A considerable number of Tegaru intellectuals and professionals such as *Ato* Bekele Brhane, Doctor Asefa Abrha, Doctor Itbarek Gebre Egziabher, *Ato* Tsehaye Hailu, *Ato* Hagos Atsbha, *Ato* Kidane Asayehegn, *Ato* Aynalem Aregahegn and Doctor Tesfay Berhe, too, helped and encouraged TUSA in its struggle against the feudal regime (Mulugéta, 2010, p.59).[28]

TUSA played a pivotal role in shaping the political consciousness of secondary school students and government officials in and out of Tigray. Various cultural shows and sport matches were arranged which in turn helped many concerned Tegaru to meet together and to discuss their problems and the ways to address them. Under such meetings, the extent to which the people of Tigray was oppressed and exploited by their government appointed administrators was evinced in clear language. The organization of TUSA became strong and broadened since the 1972 and it encompassed political, economical, social and cultural issue (Hassiet, 2012).[29]

TUSA had two most important clandestine occasional papers: *Etek* (Be Armed) and *Dimtsi Bihere Tigray* (Voice of the Tigrean Nation) in which various political articles were produced and distributed among readers free of charge. The main contents of these occasional papers were agitation in nature and served as bridge linking Tegaru who were engaged in various walks of life and different corners of the country (Tsegu, p. 22).[30]

Different sources reveal, besides to its function in the capital, the major activities of TUSA were carried out in the eight *awrajas* of Tigray: Adwa, Aksum, Shire, Kilte Awla'elo, Enderta, Temben, Agame and Raya-Azebo. The members of TUSA performed their tasks when the university was closed for vacations (Aregawi, 2004, pp. 577).[31]

According to oral and written sources, the major focus of TUSA's activities in Tigray were abolishing illiteracy, reconstructing deteriorated old schools and health centers, delivering supplementary education for secondary school students who scored lower result or those who failed to pass exams, developing good cooperation with *awraja* municipal officers so as to initiate people to clean towns and to participate in aforestation and reforestation programs.

Besides, it involved in sharing revolutionary ideas of the *Struggle Newspaper* among people with whom they had contact, cautiously approaching some popular and prominent elders of each locality with whom they discussed the major problems of Tigray and their respective solution and raising the political consciousness of the secondary school students. Equally important, the association conducted research on some burning issues related to

land tenure system, taxation system, the relationship between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the state in Tigray. It also identifies some other problems and suggested their possible solutions that could be achieved through determined struggle against the oppressive regime. Since 1970, members of TUSA began to go to Tigray during the vacations (Mulugéta, 2010, p. 50; Selemawit 2007).[32]

Educational (supplementary education) and developmental (forestation and cleaning) activities were carried out with legal permits and the co-operation of the governor of Tigray, *Leul Ras* Mengesha Seyum.

However, the association's political awareness creation program was performed without the knowledge of the provincial government authorities. TUSA effectively used every opportunity that would help it to disseminate its revolutionary ideas so as to raise the level of political consciousness of the people of Tigray as a whole. Leaflets, songs and informal discussions, which were carefully arranged, were used for the sake of disseminating revolutionary ideas among the masses.

The extent to which TUSA was careful for its discussion with the illiterate population of Tigray was that it made no mention of Marxist ideology but to the young educated revolutionaries. Its activities were most successful for the fact that in those days everyone seemed motivated to exchange revolutionary ideas advocating change. According to Aregawi, "The call for armed struggle to get rid of the oppressive feudal regime was entertained more often than it was mention."[33]

However, TUSA did not perform its tasks without several impediments. Rather, there were various challenges that members of TUSA had to encounter. They were ordered to present periodic report to the police regarding the situation in their respective *awrajas*. Municipalities and secondary school personnel were warned not to cooperate with the members of TUSA instead to impose hurdles preventing TUSA from achieving its political missions. Those members of TUSA who managed to continue performing their activities despite of the deliberately imposed obstacles were under a state of close supervision of the security forces. Their parents were frequently summoned to police stations and ordered to stop the illegal activities of their sons unless the consequence of failing to do so would be severe at all (Mulugéta, 2010, p. 53).[34]

As stated before, the period 1972 was a crucial time in the Ethiopian Student Movement history. It was the time when there was horrible famine in Tigray and Wollo Provinces where many thousands of people lost their lives and their livestock as well. Students who were arrested following the death of Tilahun Gizaw were not released. It was also the time when six university students including Wallillegn Mekonen and Marta Mebrahtu were killed for their attempt to hijack Ethiopian aircraft.[35]

Security officials in Meqele Town were assigned to

closely supervise the day-to-day activities of the member of TUSA. On 22 September 1972, Lieutenant Colonel Dessalegn Tekle Michael and Commandar of hundred Zelalem Wasihun met and asked one of the TUSA members, Zer'u Gessesse, who was a second year university student, about the illegal action of posting different political pamphlets. Zer'u replied that such pamphlets were posted by them, the members of TUSA, and he argued that the pamphlets had no political agenda. Rather, as to him, they were prepared and posted in the school compound of *Atse* Yohannis Secondary School to mobilize the students of the respective school to participate in the developmental activities of their school. [36]

After this time, Tegaru university students began to meet frequently and decided to organize their association in a way that could pave the way to armed struggle. In 1973, as usual, Tegaru from different campuses of HIU held meeting and elected Seyum, who became member of TUSA immediately after its establishment, as the chief of the association. It was the time when many university students were arrested. "Land to the Tiller," "Respect democratic rights," "Education to sons of the poor" were common slogans of the time. The police used force to desperate student gatherings. Hailay Hadgu, in his book *TSene'at,* stated that Seyum Mesfine was recording the dismal in Arat Kilo, Sidist Kilo, Piazza and Churchill Street using camera. Since the situation in the university was uncertain, Seyum and other members of TUSA decided to leave Addis Ababa and to continue the struggle against the oppressive rule. Seyum Mesfine, Zer'u Gesese, Aregawi Berhe, Fantahun Zer'atsion and others met together to devise programs on how to run the association. [37]

In the mid 1973, the government called university students to continue their university education. TUSA members left Tigray and returned to Addis Ababa, where they wasted no time to arrange meetings and to present papers dealing with land tenure, taxation in Tigray, the deliberate oppression of the people of the province and their migration to different direction of the country. Almost all papers presented called for the need for encouraging the people of Tigray to be alarmed for struggle against the oppressive rule, which denied them their right to speak and write using their mother tongue language, Tigrigna, and violated their right to self-administration within the multi-national Ethiopia. [38]

Tegaru members of TUSA agreed to struggle against the old regime supporting the case of peasants, workers and government employees. The types and nature of songs that would be used by the people of Tigray to express their grievance on the feudal rule was discussed in detail. The need to have well-established political party to lead the people of Tigray's struggle was pronounced (Haila, 2010). [39]

During the vacation of 1973, members of TUSA were given their assignments to perform in Tigray. Initially, they faced no/little challenge from the state authorities in the province. This is because, their hidden agenda was not explicitly known. This helped members of TUSA to disseminate their anti-feudal revolutionary ideas secretly but successfully. They taught the people how to overthrow the oppressive rule through armed struggle. [40]

In different *awrajas* of Tigray, different papers dealing with liberation movements and the role of unity to solve different social and political problems were presented. Invoking songs were sang by some very famous singers at local beer houses, marriage ceremonies, *Ashenda* (local ceremony held on mid August each year) and other occasions as to provoke the masses against the feudal regime. Songs revealing the oppressive nature of the old regime and the court corruption in Tigray were sung during various occasions (Mulugéta, 2010, p. 53). [41] Particularly, during the 13th month of Ethiopian calendar, *pagumie,* people sprang holy water and spent five to six days holding religious ceremonies chanting:

ትግራይ የ ጎራዴህ ጫፍ ስለት
እንደ አባቶችህ በደም ይቀለም
ትግራይ ክራትና ክብሬ
ዘንድሮስ ቁርጥ ነ ውአገሬ።። (Haila, 2010). [42]

People of Tigray, shade the tip of your sword
With blood as your forefathers
Tigray, and source of my proud and dignity
My country, today is must [to fight against the regime]

In the mean time, several writings were dispatched in Tigray by the TUSA members. What is interesting here to note is that the extent to which the arrangement of sport matches in Tigray were effectively exploited by the TUSA members for their political ends. According to Mulugeta et al. the authors of *Galahti Segi* and *Tsene'at* respectively, sport matches were arranged in different *awrajas* of the province, where people got good opportunity to meet each other, to discuss about the dismal situation in Tigray and to exchange or distribute pamphlets among each other (Mulugéta, 2010, p. 53). [43]

After the end of the vacation of 1973, members of TUSA returned to Addis Ababa. However, due to very tense clash between the students and government security forces, the university was closed down. By that time, TUSA members wasted no time to call meeting to reach on a common agreement on how to continue their struggle against the feudal regime (Haila, 2010). [44] The members of TUSA established a politically conscious group called Mahber Gesgesti Bihere Tigray (*MAGEBT*) at the beginning of 1974. *MAGEBT* means the Association of Progressives from the Tigray Nation and it was named Tigrean National Organization (TNO) for the sake of convenience. TNO was the mother organization of Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). [45]

Since the mid 1974, many Tegaru out of the campus of Addis Ababa University were invited to be patrons of the planned armed struggle of the people of Tigray. They were made to contribute their share in the struggle. The creation of common understanding about the dismal condition in Tigray province was given due attention. TUSA firmly believed that public based organization was uncompromising precondition for the sake of materializing the objective of the struggle against the feudal rule of Emperor Haileslasie. Discussing about the challenges of the people of Tigray in particular and the people of Ethiopian in general became a burning issue of that time (Hassiet 2012, p. 40).[46]

In the mean time, other clandestine political groups began to appear in Tigray. "ማሕበር ፖለቲካ ተጋሩ" (Political Association of Tigreans (PAT)) was good case in point.

This political group had strong urban network. It was under the leadership of Yohannis Teklehaimanot and Gebrekidan and later it was renamed as Tigray Liberation Front (TLF). TLF involved in a purely political mobilization of Tegaru against the old regime and it advocated the independence of Tigray (Aregawi, 2004, pp. 578-79).[47] Hassiet Fiseha states, this group believed that "ትግራይ ንብሕታ ሃገር እያ…" meaning "Tigray by itself is an independent country." Due to its secessionist objective, he claims, TLF lost popular support among the politically conscious Tegaru (Hassiet 2012, p. 41)[48]

TNO came into being following the meeting held on 14 September, 1974. It was an association of progressive Tegaru intellectuals and students. It played a vital role in politicizing many Tegaru in the main towns. It called for political and economic change. It also made a decisive contribution to the popular uprising which was to topple Emperor Haileslasie from his power in Febuary 1974 (Jenney, 1989).[49]

Those members of TUSA who participated during the formation of TNO were seven in number. These include Zer'u Gessesse (Agazi), Fantahun Zer'atshion (Gidey), Mulugeta Hagos (Asfeha), Embaye Mesfine (Seyum), Alemseged Mengesha (Hailu), Amha Tsehaye (Abay) and Aregawi Berhe (Berihu) (Aregawi, 2004, pp. 578-79).[50] Zer'u, Fentahun, Mulugeta and Embaye, Alemseged, and Aregawi were the students of Law, Mechanical Engineering, Natural Science, Social Science and Political Science respectively. Abay was also a student of History and editor of *Tagel* (Hassiet 2012, p. 45).[51]

The founders of TNO met at a café in piazza, in the center of Addis Ababa. Even though he did not attend the meeting for security purpose, Gesesew Ayele (Sihul), who was a parliamentarian for two terms and highly respected representative of Tegaru at the time, was member of the founding comrades (Aregawi, 2004, pp. 578-79).[52]

It is necessary to note here that the aforementioned Tegaru were not the only conscious and committed

during the formation of *MAGEBT.* Rather many Tegaru university students played a prominent role. If so, why did the number of founding fathers of *MAGEBT* remain seven? This is a key question that needs to be answered here. The reason why the founders were kept numerically few was for security purpose. Unless the founding members kept small in number, their objective of meeting together would reach the ears of the then government officials and this would lead to costly loss (Hassiet 2012, p. 45).[53]

According to an interview made at February 2009 by a *Weyeen Magazine* with *Ato* Arkebe Equbay, who was one of the Tegaru university students during the early 1970s, the movement of young intellectuals was influenced by several factors. First, the armed struggle that was already begun in Eritrea had great impact on the political consciousness of the university students of Ethiopia in general and Tigray in particular.

Second, the liberation struggle of Vietnam, Kuba and other countries provided the Ethiopian intellectuals and students with a good lesson that armed struggle was a mandatory to topple a feudal and oppressive regime. The educated men of Ethiopia managed to acquire an impressive experience of liberation struggles of different countries through reading many books and articles. As they read more about the issue mentioned above, their need to a change in government increased. Next, their age level had its own impact on the nature of students' movement during the imperial regime. It is clear that most of the university students were between 18 and 21 years old. Their maturity highly shaped their reactionary movements.[54]

There was political radicalism among the young educated generation dedicated to fight against imperialism and feudalism; system that were believed to have kept Ethiopia in the most backward stage of development. The educated classes were revolutionaries demanding the end of Ethiopian backwardness through revolution. They were busy reading different books which helped them to be familiar with the experiences of the Bolshevik of Russia, Maoism of China, Hoche Minh of Vietnam and Che Guevara of internationalism. The revolutionary students were ready to pay any sacrifice to topple the old regime in Ethiopia, which was considered, by them, as the "prison house of nationalities (Aregawi, 2004, p. 581)."[55]

According to Aregawi, several factors contributed for the development and intensification of Ethno-nationalist sentiment among the young educated class. The power monopoly of the dominant Shoan Amhara feudal class was among the prime factors leading to ethnic resistance. The influence of peasant rebellions in Tigray (Woyane Rebellion of 1942-43, Gojjam (1967); Bale (1963-68) and the armed struggle in Eritrea (1960s-1970s) served as a historical precedents to challenge the existing oppressive state of affairs. Equally important, the harsh punitive

(retaliate) measures undertook by the government as a means to suppress such sentiments were not forgotten by those who were victims of those measures (Aregawi, 2004, p. 581-82).[56] For instance, the bombardment of innocent people of Tigray in Meqelle during the 1942/43 by the British Royal Aircraft was not erased from the mind of Tegaru.[57]

The central government, as stated before, forbade the people of Tigray to speak Tigrigna and to use it in schools, law courts and other institutions since the 1940s. The people were forced to live far below subsistence due to higher degree of land degradation. What was horrible is that not only government authorities neglected the plight of the people of Tigray but also levied different forms and amounts of taxes that was beyond the capacity of peasants to pay it. As a result, very large number of peasants left their villages with or without their families and migrated to distant areas in search of job. It was not uncommon to see desperate families seeking shelter in churches and mosques and begging for food in the streets (Brhanu, 2011).[58]

This situation became a fertile ground to the persistent call of the young educated class for radical change to be popularly accepted among the masses. Cultural domination, heavily taxation and the state's reluctance to give timely solution to serious problems were sources of complaints among the people of Tigray. As quoted in Aregawi's article, it is stated that, "The most painful cut of all was the banning of the Tigrai language in a region where, as late as the mid 1970s, only 12.3% of the males claimed to speak Amharigna and only 7.7% could read it (Aregawi, 2004, p. 583)."[59]

After several meetings were arranged by the TUSA members at the beginning of 1974, Tegaru university students agreed to go to Tigray and to alarm the people of Tigray for armed struggle against the feudal regime. This commitment was not performed without any obstacle. Financial problem was the most acute. After their agreement to go to their respective *awrajas,* some members of the association faced financial constraint to cover their travel expense. But, they wasted no time to solve the problem, at least for a while. Seyum Mesfine and Fantahun Zeratsion, representatives of Tegaru students of Arat Kilo, and Sidist Kilo respectively solved the problem by covering the travel expense of those who had no money for such purpose from the money that was collected from the members of TUSA. In the mean time, Seyum Mesfine and some of his friends stayed in Addis Ababa for some times for the sake of developing programs and directions of their struggle against the Ethiopian Government (Haila, 2010)..[60] The number of Tegaru university students who actively participated in inciting revolution among the people of their respective *awrajas* in the 1970s was believed to be large in size (Mulugéta, 2010, p. 50-1).[61]

The above mentioned and other Tegaru university students were so eager to prompt the outbreak of popular revolution supported by the people of Tigray against the old regime. They managed to win the support of considerable number of government employees and the masses as a whole to whom the objectives of the former were told and accepted with no tendency to hesitate. For the sake of disseminating their revolutionary ideas against the feudal regime, the Tegaru university students arranged theaters, prepared songs and poems that could show the oppressive nature of the old regime (Haila, 2010)..[62]

As stated before, Seyum and some other Tegaru university students waited in Addis Ababa for some times while many of their friends already went to Tigray. After they had finished devising directions of the struggle against the regime, they followed the footsteps of their friends and marched to Tigray, their beloved province for which they paid a lot of sacrifice for the betterment of their community. When they arrived at Meqele, Seyum managed to meet Agazi and Rezene with whom he discussed the direction of the struggle after which he went to Adigrat. In Adigrat, Seyum met some Tegaru university students including Brhane Iyasu and Tewelde Gebreegziabher and used to work with them for some times. He also visited his friends working in different parts of Tigray including in Adwa, Temben, Shire and Maichew. For instance, he consulted Solomon Tesfay, Aregawi Berhe, Alemseged Mengesha and Abay Tsehaye in Maichew, Adwa, Temben and Aksum respectively. He also met Fantahun Zeritsion and Mulu Hagos in Shire (Aregawi, 2004, p. 583).[63]

The Tegaru university students were mostly active in towns and in rural areas to some extent. In the rural areas, during different occasions, while farming and celebrating religious holydays or attending weeding ceremonies, people of Tigray frequently sang songs alarming the masses for an alarmed struggle against the repressive system to the end. Among the uneducated people of Tigray, ideas were expressed orally and well expressed through song more than through other means. The following were two of the most popular songs that clearly reflected the anger of the people.

ትግራይ ክንዳይ መኣልቲ ክፅበየኪ
አብ ባልጃይ ጊደረ ነ ክማከስለኪ [64]
Tigray, how long should I linger?
Let me get it [the gun] for you
ገበዝ ትግራይ! ገበዝ ትግራይ
ዘበንካ ይ ፀሚ ብዐራይ

Brave of Tigray! Brave of Tigray
Now is your time to mount the ox [weapon]. (Aregawi, 2004, p. 583)

The people of Tigray evinced their hardships in different ways. For instance, the absence of effective and

responsible administrator in the province was expressed using the following impressive song: "ሰኣን ኣያ ሰኣን ኣያ ለምለም ትግራይ ኣማዕደዮ ሩአያ፦"which literally means "In the absence of good governor (father), I saw Tigray from a distance (Hassiet 2012, p. 41)." [66]

TUSA successfully mobilized the people of Tigray in particular and the peoples of Ethiopia in general. It won the support of masses population. The people of Tigray were ready to pay any form of sacrifice for the sake of liberating themselves from the oppressive rule of the imperial government. Their readiness for armed struggle against the old regime was expressed using the following song:

ትግራይ ዓደይ
ኣይትብከሊ... ኣይትንብዕየ
ሓገር ምንሽር በቲ ደቃል ሰንደወለየ፦[67]
Tigray, my homeland
Do not cry, stop weeping
Equip me with small minishir (weapon)

TUSA began to consolidate its power and increase the number of its supporters. It created conducive environment for armed struggle. The members of this association were closely observing the situation in the country. As stated above, some influential Tegaru including Gidey Gebre Egziabher, Seyum Mesfin, Aregawi Berhe, Equbazgi Beyene and others took the leadership of the association. In the mean time, the people of Tigray were ready for armed struggle against the oppressive imperial rule. They were waiting an appropriate time and condition. They frequently pronounced several songs including:

ትግራይ እዛ ጉራደኻ አስትዮ ደምየ ከም ወለድኻ![68]
Tigray, add your sword into blood as your forefathers
ገበዝ ትግራይ ከፈአም እንታይ ኸይኑ? ዝሓልየሉ ስኢኑ፦[69]
Brave Tigray is disappointed why?
Due to the absence of responsible body

The movement of Tegaru educated men under TUSA (later *MAGEBT* and then TPLF) was not only confined to liberate the people of Tigray from oppressive old regime under the leadership of Emperor Haileslasie and his companion. Rather their struggle had long run goal: ensuring economic, social, political and cultural freedom of the people of Tigray in particular and the people of Ethiopia in general even after the fall of the old regime. After the coming of Derg to power, the struggle in Tigray was highly intensified. A change in government did not bring anything good for the people of Tigray but by far brutal and blood thirsty government.

In the mean time, the people of the province hand no chance than continuing to pay their golden life, time and property for the sake of restoring bright future for their off springs. Thanks to educated Tegaru, MAGEBT distributed different leaflets exposing the brutal nature of the Derg regime at an alarming rate. Some of the leaflets were entitled with "ንወሃቢ ፀዓዶ ይከልእዎ mN=Æ!" to mean "Unfair advantage" and "ትኳን ዉፃእ ቀነጪ እዮ፦" which literally means "One parasite leaves out and another dangerous parasite flees in."[70]

Conclusion

During the Italian occupation of Ethiopia between 1935 and 1941, the people of Tigray paid costly sacrifice to liberate their country. However, the fight of Emperor Haileslasie to Britain highly wounded their moral. For this reason, his centralization policy of the early 1940s lacked acceptance among the people of the province. They believed that they were culturally alienated and politically suppressed. Three years after the expulsion of the Italians from the county, First Woyane Rebellion broke out in Tigray that put the emperor's stay in power under question. Even though he managed to suppress it using the British Royal Airplanes, the people of the province did not remain submissive to the imperial regime.

Nevertheless, until the 1960s, the form of opposition in the province had no overt nature. It was in the 1960s that Tegaru intellectuals began to play a pivotal role in agitating mass-based political opposition in the respective province. Especially those who joined Haileslasie I University from different *awrajas* of Tigray established very strong unity and became major actors of that time. Under their umbrella association, TUSA, they effectively exploited every opportunity to dispatch revolutionary ideas among their society. They prepared several political pamphlets and dispatched them among several secondary and elementary school students.

They met secondary school students in two ways. First, some Tegaru university students went to their respective *awraja* during the vacation time. Second, some other visited their *awrajas* for one year national service purpose. During both occasions, they were not free to perform their political activities. However, despite the very tight supervision by several security forces, they did their best to alarm the mass for armed struggle. Not only they took lion's share for the downfall of the imperial regime in 1974 but also they laid ground for the bitter but successful guerrilla fighting against the Derg Regime.

Even though the political movement of Tegaru University students during the imperial regime attracted the attention of some scholars, no adequate literature is produced on it. Because, some written sources provides us with very simple highlights with no sufficient explanation and discussion. Some authors also used very limited sources to deal with the issue under discussion. However, this paper tries its best to address such lacuna. It attempts to provide readers with deep analysis and explanation about the shift from peasant to intellectuals-led political movement against the imperial regime.

Equally important, this paper is produced based on rich historical sources. Many primary and primary sources are used to conduct this research.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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