

Dual Hegemonies: A Dialectical Appraisal of Niger-Delta Politics

by

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Abstract

The revival of insurgent revolution aptly defines the resistance to the hypodermic model of exploitation in Africa. This paper examines the case of Niger-Delta sandwiched between dual hegemonies, foregrounding misappropriation of revenue accruing from oil resource in the area right from history. This is followed by formation of agitation groups with strong retrograde objective, though flawed by inter and intra community ethnic level split resulting in failure to institute a common front against the abuse. The ethnic nationalist framework is, therefore, limited to narrow conceptual definition of militancy without understanding relational meaning of the outstanding issues. It is understood that micro-oriented insurgent association is located among the alienated, deprived groups across the globe, which is consonant with the Post-Cold War politics. The paper interrogates the realist position of the hegemon, which graphically marks their departure from the idealist diplomacy serving as veritable means of subjecting the Delta to ideological manipulations.

Nothing compares to the relational value of Africa's integration to colonial capitalism than Niger-Delta's amalgamation with the northern protectorate. This was pursued for the reason of socio-economic resources that abounded in order to balance the lopsided facilities in the north. It is even more controversial considering the fact that the will of people was not sought before this merger. This marked the beginning of the devastation of the sanctity of freedom showcasing the ideological hubris of the West, which was to be inherited after independence and followed to its logical conclusion. This format is a clear index that Niger-Delta's palavers range from the realm of history stretching from the present to the future, thus providing the reason for its regularity as a staple discourse in the political and economic events at the domestic and global levels. Ironically, the merger has not yielded its intended dividends as the two blocs developed.

The south opted for independence early enough compared to the north that was comfortable with the colonial overlords. This dichotomy has continually led to conflicting relationships overtime. It must be noted that the Niger-Delta is not an apprentice in the thirst for freedom. This geography was one of the hardest-hit in the colonial period, and yet grossly mobilized in the days of nationalist struggle.

The period prior independence aptly defines the distinction between Marxist and Capitalist modes of approach to reaching a change. In search for freedom, the former Nigerian colonial state was mobilized on the basis of equality of all persons and groups, thus pursuing the Marxist approach with all available energies. The emergence of independence marked a paradigm shift in bureaucratic terms. The Marxist mode of struggle was abruptly replaced by capitalism. This invariably led to the minority and majority concept with strong ethnic distribution. For better reading, this paper shall be structured around the varied location of economic and political resources in the state considering how it has been employed to service the interests of the numerous groups, and most probably the functions of the trans-political and economic agents of the West. The central position of Niger-Delta in the production and distribution of vital export resource could be traced back to history. Basically, the huge agricultural investment in palm oil, rubber, timber etc was in this location. The case is neither different in today's economic circle as the abundance of oil resources continues to be mainstay of Nigeria's economy. Beyond simplistic evaluation, therefore, Niger-Delta is the formidable bridge that connects Nigeria to the international economic network.

The quest for even distribution of resources has been the focal point of Niger-Delta restiveness right from the colonial era. This factor is dependent on the inverse correlation so established between input contributed to national development and multiplier return. This indicates the mobilization of the regions resources to facilitate the development of the advanced nations, thus matching Alavi Hamza's extraversion or externalization of the domestic economy. This is made worse at the state level as this geography is reduced to mere victim of its own boom while the civic centers at home and abroad witness the celebration of the boom. Some call it internal colonization, but by conceptual assessment the paper prefers the term domesticated externalized economy-wasted "here and there". Niger-Delta has been a busy geo-political zone with the continuous oscillation between demand for restoration and conflict with the state. This factor is permuted on the state system that is always overcharged and overloaded with crises-cross negotiations. All this goes to explain the fact that issues bordering on this segment are not constantly resolved.

The period of independence to the end of the Cold War marks the incubation period of the restiveness of Niger-Delta. Given this time-span, the dual hegemonic powers of United States and USSR grossly supported various state powers that were subordinate to them against any measure of ethnic revolution. By the end of 20th century that marked the end of the Cold War, most external influences and interventions have been gradually reduced. That was the fruition of the dual hegemonic contest that became history with the collapse of the communist dictatorship. This led to mapping of ethnic interest in nationalist insurgent group thereby inhibiting the centralized structure of power. It is under this nationalist construction that Niger-Delta numerous political activities could be located.

The state of sociopolitical and economic suppression, directly lead to a cluster of insurgent groups. The first was the Niger-Delta People Republic formed in 1966 by Isaac Boro, who initiated the resource control concept. The many others are offshoot of the above mentioned in terms of practice and intended goals. The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) hit its climax during the leadership of Kan Saro-Wiwa. Asari Dokubo instituted the Niger-Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF), though lost its favor after regular clashes with government force coupled with periodic pacifiers. Others include Egbema National Front, National Youth Council of Ogoni People, Ethnic Minorities Rights Organization of Africa and Movement for the Emancipation of Niger-Delta. The last is most outstanding, in the present dispensation considering its resistance and unwillingness to concede to the antics of the state and MNCS. It must, however, be stressed here that the case of Niger-Delta insurgent/nationalist revival is not a function in isolation, but a response to the “collective unconscious”. The scope of this mode of nationalism is a broad one considering the quality of ethnic and cultural fragmentations in Africa’s setting. The rising profile of ethnic entrepreneurship enunciates the backdrop of Africa’s leadership that is yet circumscribed around practices of authoritarianism and vertical democracies that rotate the interest of the petit bourgeoisie class heavily propped by the compradors of the West.

With the relaxation of the hegemonic control of the superpower, the full circle of conflict in Africa was made whole with the commanding concern of ethnic nationalism. This was antithetical to the ideological policy of the two protagonists of the Cold War (Ryan 1990: XIX-XX). It is a continent-wide revolution that portrays the commonness of Africa’s socio-political problems and the simultaneous response to global phenomenon. On the part of the leaders, there is the attending resistance to the adjustment of the global era, while the people, especially those within the borders of the periphery constitute the resilient group. The Niger-Delta is a distinct case-study in this perspective. It is tautological and inherent, because the resistant ruling class is matched against the resilient periphery. Without bias, the conflicting relationship of this period is not occurring in a vacuum, but regulated by the Post-Cold War environment and exposes the periphery ethnic groups to search for security and familiarity in the new space created, but is instead forced to observe them as alienated in every shape and form.

The basic interest of this group is to close the *dividing line* between dictatorship and democracy by trespassing and encroaching on the limit set within society to ensure its domination and participation in the scheme of events. It is this factor that verifies the importance of Niger-Delta as it points out the existence of a domination imposed on the people demonstrating the people's need to break free from the limitations, restraints and controls placed on them.

By piecing the regional concerns, a linear arrangement vis-a-vis the varied developments in the Nigerian state has been organized, and this graphically demonstrates a new awakening and formation of a common front attempted at redefining the proxy dogma of colonial rule and post-colonial rule. To be more precise, there is no distinct demarcation between colonial and post-colonial rulers. The radical and psychological negotiations of the insurgent groups from the 1990s denote the "anxiety of the Post-Cold War" and failure of the independence to touch directly on the periphery or the marginalized segment of Niger-Delta. Okuyade (2008:129) asserts that "independence is a return to *status quo ante*, not a political transfiguration, but a mere metamorphosis of human variety". The emergence of insurgent nationalism in Niger-Delta marks the cardinal defining period of Nigeria's political-scape contoured with violence as the margins in this perspective are perpetually situated on the fringes with its negatively charged conscience. Frantz Fanon (1967:192) in his futuristic drive asserts that:

Poverty and endemic famine drive the native more and more to open, organized revolt. The necessity for an open and decisive breach is formed progressively and imperceptibly, and comes to be felt by the great majority of the people. Those tensions which hitherto were non-existent come into being, international events, the collapse of whole sections of colonial empires and the contradictions inherent in the colonial system strengthen and uphold the natives combatively while promoting and giving support to national consciousness.

This Frantz Fanon's construct directly emphasizes the dual mode of exploitation of Niger-Delta from within and without considering the history and environment of the terse relationship. It displays the structural colonial hegemony inherited by the dominant majority elite group so-called, lacking the plumbing mechanics for the integration of inclusive interest of the polity, thereby exhibiting the pseudo-nationalistic thrust that remains the transcript of contemporary Nigeria political order. The majority versus minority relationship is configured on the north/south dichotomy, as the former after independence has been armed with the instrument of power at the expense of the later, whose geography houses the economic resources of the state. This period is hinged on the reactionary experience of the margins to the lapses of the rulers and the trans-economic profiteers engendered by the West. By extension, the historic periphery is contesting the hyper-exploitative tendency and repudiating the victimization complex so imposed. This is the state of Niger-Delta crisis that has led to the establishment of revolutionary framework as a means of overhauling the asymmetric political and economic relations.

The crisis is an eloquent testimony of the instinctive and unconscious response to the trend of the Post-Cold War and its climax. The ethno-moral consequences of the crisis lie in the setting of a patriarchal Nigerian government contesting the manifold insurgent nationalism. Insurgency does not bear the same ideological framework as militancy or fundamentalism. Though always termed leftist by any government with vertical structure, it is a constitution of persons or group contesting the undue appropriation of constitutional laws. It is, therefore; a common variable where authoritarianism and vertical political ideals prevail, yielding violence and competition between state institution and nations. Most crises lend this concept considerable credibility based on real or perceived interests. The relationship between Nigeria's state power and insurgent nationalism could be favorably measured in linear terms with Vilfredo Pareto's *Elite Theory* and the historical contestation of Daniel Truman's *Group Theory*. The former believes that power and distribution of resources are the sole reserve of the elite class while the latter avers that the jinx of elitism could be broken by power aggregation of different persons into organized groups. This is a proposal to achieving the much needed social change as against elite hegemony.

At this juncture, ethnocentrism, the tendency to believe that one's ethnic or cultural group is centrally important, and that all other groups are measured in relation to one's own must be noted for a better planking of this paper. Basically, its extremes could be located around the period of independence from colonial rule to the end of the Cold War. Given this emphasis, the peoples of Africa collate their socio-cultural values and interest along ethnic lines, thus defining inter-ethnic deficiency and distrust. In a more organized mode, ethnocentrism showcases the mass mobilization of regional forces (economic, socio-cultural and political) against the ruling state power, and thus draws its tutelage from the end of the Cold War and in strict terms unites ethnic differences to form a common front in the uniform structure of international system-globalization. To be more precise, the colonial and post-independence periods mark the incubation period of the different ethnic groups, while the new era marks the eruption of ethnic revolution. This explains the location of insurgent groups with serious ethnic concerns. It has proved useful in Niger-Delta as a fundamental tool relevant to the pursuit of its primordial interest, and it is the aggregation of restiveness within the network of aggrieved outburst of tensions modeled after the bonding of fractional differences. Further still, it is an organized framework meant to scaffold the demands and ideals of a particular group and its arrangement. The quest for ethnocentrism drive provides elaborate understanding that socio-political cum economic relationship is structured on the desire for group with available tactics and strategies to maximize its primordial goals. This concept graphically enunciates the sizeable number and variation of primordial publics, Ekeh (1975:108), competing for or against hegemony. Most ethnic problems are tied to the politics of most African states vis-à-vis transnational institutions bearing two definite functions. It serves a vital means of hegemonic preponderance and as a tool of severing oneself from the claws of an ethnic supremacist regime.

Beyond normative factors, ethnocentrism is not just limited to issues of language and ethnic sentiments, but the pursuit of aggregate interest at the domestic and global levels. The many multinational institutions in Niger-Delta, therefore, represent the interest of their home countries concerned with oil exploration and exploitation. Relatively, the endless crisis in this delta is a clash of socio-economic appropriation of resources, and this is a paradox because the Niger-Delta is positioned in between the home government and multinational corporations with their interlocking agencies. From statistical calibration, the disintegration of the Soviet Republic is consequent upon ethnic revolution that led to the breakaway of many states. This factor precedes the many revolutions that yet continue to rage in the African continent ranging from Sudan, Congo, Zimbabwe and Nigeria's Niger-Delta. From the foregoing, ethnic crises across the globe is realizable from exploitative environment that enable the subaltern ethnic groupings to reach the centre from the margins in order to have direct participation with the civic centers of the world, thereby unveiling the fact that the crises in this discourse does not constitute limited local experience, but a wholesale response to global phenomenon. The cause assumed in this zone is relevant as most Nigerian leaders with their organized bonding of the MNCS are bereaved of ideas to man the states and simultaneously adjust itself to the maneuvers and dynamics of the "New World Order". This is a rigorous exercise considering the regular changes and the dialectical relationship Niger-Delta has maintained right from its integration into the Nigerian state.

The relationship is dialectical because the civic centered "here and there" are being developed with the resources from this delta landscape while the primordial base is left devastated. These asymmetric development traits therefore, constitute the upheaval evident as one considers this geography. This primordial society has been placed on a peripheral canvass. By this measure, this region is marginalized from dual perspectives. Dual in the sense that in the domestic background, there is a socio-political and economic exclusion; and these sets of people are also marginalized by the international environment. This is the external variation, and these two factors invariably explain the lack of exposure of this alienated ethnic group to local and extra-local participations. The question of minority problem is another crucial issue in this discourse, as it is a major determinant in the federal corpus of the Niger-Delta. Invariably, this distinction was not noticeable until the intervention of regionalism that featured a tripartite structure in the polity. The Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Ibo dominated the scene while the other ethnic groupings are relegated to subaltern specification. As long as regionalism prevailed, federalism was practiced in its ideal as derivation formula was pursued to the latter. The appropriation of regionalism witnessed a functional competition as the economy was motivated and boosted beyond the ordinary level. The local market expanded as well as export production. The implication of this effort was for the region to exploit their primordial economics for their development.

This period defined the stratified regions empowered by their economic input, and by extension the center became less powerful as against the prevailing dispensation characterized by congested allocation of power. Basically, this was obtained because resource base and power base bear consonant relationship. The emergence of oil- base economy witnessed a metamorphosis in the appropriation of the derivation formula. This is engendered by the minority factor that constitutes the basis for the unending constitutional adjustments and manipulations. In real terms, the revenue allocation formula has not assumed definite arrangement, because the product in question “does not belong to South- South” according to Umaro Dikko (Tell 2005). Simultaneously, Abubakar Umar reacted when he emphasized the parasitic stance of the north (Tell 2005).

There is no doubt that the economy ranking of Nigeria is inextricably directed by the oil economies located in Niger-Delta. The flourishing foreign policy of Nigeria after the civil war is in large proportion measured by the multiplier effect of oil. The strategic position Nigeria maintain in Africa aptly defines the prosperity that accrue from oil, but this has been contested by Asiodu (1993: 98-99) that given:

The small size and population of the oil producing areas it is not cynical to observe that even if the resentment of oil producing states continue they cannot threaten the stability nor affect its continued economic development.

However erroneous, this excerpt has been the commanding principle of resource allocation, and by this understanding, substantial part is now allocated to the North based on the factors of landscape size and population at the expense of the resource base which Lawal (2004) asserts that its oil and gas accounted for 80.6% of total federal government receipt in 2003.

The majority ethnic groups control the resources sharing. This is an aberration which the South-South has continued to contest, especially from the bureaucratic perspective. It must be noted that the centralized democracy of the Nigeria polity yielded to the demand for constituent assembly in 2005. The conference was inevitably meant to resolve the distinction so placed between the minority and majority parties. It was an assembly of two fraternities-progressives from the minority and majority groups. The relevance of the conference was to deconstruct the lapses surrounding the constitution from history to the present dispensation putting in place the necessary instrument to level the corporate greed of ruling class and the restiveness of the subaltern groups, thereby halting the unhealthy rivalries characterizing the relationship. Unfortunately, there was strong ideological variance as the primary concern of the centre ethnic groups was and is to maintain their position at the epicenter, while the majority ethnic groups were bent on creating a formidable placement, at least, to stop all forms of domination.

It is therefore, a subjective assumption to consider the assembly as a site where national integration can be appraised. This is consequent upon the motion raised by the Niger-Delta contingent concerning the discrepancies in revenue generation and revenue allocation. This motion mark the turning point of the assembly as there was counter accusation as to the ownership and distribution of oil resources. On the whole, the meeting was untimely disengaged as the northern elite questioned the audacity contesting the status quo while the progressives from Niger-Delta returned with their existential angst. Basically, these two social categories have not been able to make a definite statement about oil revenue vis-à-vis the constitution. Today there is a gap in the frame of reference in the attending issue of resources sharing as the major determinant of Nigeria's federalism. The conference ended up complicating issues instead of resolving the outstanding acrimony.

Comparatively, economic melt-down has become a persist paradigm in the structure of the Niger-Delta, considering the asymmetric relationship between its development and huge resources available. This is the major factor responsible for the constituent insurgent revival that is expected to checkmate the ugly advances of the hybrid propensity of the Nigerian government and TNCs. A thorough investigation reveals that the first batch of oil-wells located has been exhausted, and abandoned. The case is even worse as the sites bear no indication of productive energy of the nation. Ejobowah (2000: 38) renders a vivid account of oil-wells exhausted and abandoned to include the first one discovered in Olobiri. Others include Obegi, Olomoro and Jones Creek field in Niger-Delta. The fear of abandonment is a constituent factor in the analysis of rebellion in this region. Quite a number of multinational oil companies which include Shell, Chevron Texaco overseas, Mobil, Elf, Agip, occupy a looming space in the exploitation of oil resources, but have failed to respond to the socio-economic needs of the host communities. This graphically enunciates continuous development of restive groups among the young and old people alike. It is also applicable to elite and non-elite as this has become a veritable means of sorting out their pains engendered by the duo –multinational oil corporation and the state institution.

In the 70s and 80s, the host communities pursued their goals within a narrow perspective, but by the 90s, the revolutionary trend hit its climax. There was massive eruption of micro-nationalism that continues to serve as resistance to the injustices emanating from this organized hypocrisy. The watershed of multiethnic nationalism could be traced to 1998 when number of Ijaw youth matched to Kiama, the home of Isaacs Boro, who first foresaw the relevance to pursue resource control. This association marked the famous Kiama Declaration that was aimed at stalking the oil companies and the negative influences of the state. The numerous movements prior to the Kiama concept were bent on securing immediate and minimal benefits unlike the new arrangement that is poised to achieving ultimate and maximum objectives. Most of these nationalist groupings have distinct bureaucratic format outlined. It is broadly divided into two- martial legged and militant sides. The first department pursues the objective with strict adherence to the negotiation dictates of liberation and emancipation, while the militant wing performs the function of force utility.

This mode of practice has linear measurement compared to the era of nationalist movement during the colonial era. All things are but promoted by depraved attitude and the exploitative mode evidenced in the oil producing communities, thus providing the background for the manifest development of insurgency in Niger- delta. The relationship between these groups and the states security services graphically “sketches pornography of violence fascinated and fixed on gory background” (Mandani 2007). This is based on the bias between ethnic nationalist surge and civic repression.

The insurgent agitation in Niger-Delta is a speculation that operates on the ideological postulation or test the hypothesis as to whether the states is legitimate or not, plus the signification of its existence. This post-independence nationalism is a consummated institution meant to bolster the profile of the subaltern beyond their jinxed position, and better still, reactivate their relegated concern. It is the utmost interest of this arrangement laced with political and socio-economic activism to liberate itself and its people from the rulers believed to be oligarchy-dictatorial in temper, martial in form and belligerent in spirit. The topography of dictatorship and the silencing of the minority foreground the plot accelerator and the inter-subjective factor promoting insurgency in Niger-Delta community. Most of the aggrieved groups now exploit the advantage of insurgency by their cardinal concern beyond their circumscribed space in order to rupture the status quo. Insurgency, therefore serves as critical machinery of social mobilization, reconstruction or repacking of their exploited values and interest. The insurgent regime in Niger-Delta is a derivation organized around micro-nationalism with strict antagonistic drive against macro-nationalism. The former derives its support from the primordial public, while the latter is propped by civic public in a terse competition over state power. The presence of this nationalism is mainly catalyzed by the propensity to secure major appropriation in the modernization age that typifies a quest for supremacy in which Wimmer (2005: 91) asserts that:

A fight erupts over which people the states should belong to, and social closure proceeds along many ethnic lines instead of one national line. Sometimes this contest for the control of the states escalates into ethnic-nationalist civil Wars, destroying much of whatever social and political cohesion there was.

The agitation in this region thus created a contest over self determination and national identity. The primordial expression is superimposed over state framework that has been reduced to mere “term of reference.” The differential value of the counter –oppositions, therefore constitutes the dialectical tension. It must however be noted that the politics of conflict is not only related to Nigeria. Rather, it is a continent-wide phenomenon. The presence of any worthy resource product always provokes war in Africa.

This model of conflict was prominent in Liberia where huge sum resources of diamond, iron ore, timber etc. led to a civil war that was entirely based on exploitation and distribution. In Sudan, there is uncontrolled war between the State and the ethnic groups in Darfur over land resources. Sierra-lone, Congo, Angola and others are a case study of conflict over natural resources. The conflict sample in this paper has a linear configuration with the aforementioned. The struggle in this dimension has been followed to the latter by the legal arm of the ethno-nationalist movement. This is pursued via round table negotiation. The sole function of the elite in this group has constituted organized frame work that negotiates with the state apparatus. There is also the regular negotiation with the MNC technocrats. Issues mainly addressed include structuring of social infrastructure, employment degradation and rehabilitation. In most cases, the terms of resolution end in proposal which in turn leads to militant suggestion. The unfortunate deal is that the function of this group is given much appraisal from the media-hype point of view. These groups of agitators have in some cases occupied oil field thereby stopping production. The valorization of the pipe line is another pattern of resistance. This is a common factor responsible waste of oil flow, spillage and fire incidents. The Jesse inferno that led to the cremation of thousands of victims is registered in history. Hostage taking is another method of the fight-back mechanism. Over the years, this has become a regular tradition of contesting the exploitation of the MNCs. This is often resolved with the payment of ransom. The ransom fee becomes the appropriation for unreciprocated exploitation. The utility of development levy falls under this category. This is the replacement of “comey” that was imposed on marketable goods during the legitimate trade era.

The agitation is not restricted to the men folk. There are quite a number of women movements to aim at forestalling the inadequacies of the state and MNCs. Like the Aba women riot of 1929, the Ekpan Uvwie women organized a revolutionary group in august 25, 1986. It was led by Mrs. Dorcas. This group numbering 10,000 women matched the MNCs and Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) demystifying police gun- threat and teargas. Their demands were appropriation of good jobs for their husbands and children instead of menial job allocation and development of social infrastructure. The movement showcased alienation at the primordial base and shortfall in the multipliers. This cause celebrated feminist power in the face of military dictatorship regime of Buhari.

Insurgency in Niger-Delta plays a gate-keeping function that balances the relationship between the super ordinate and subordinate categories in the state system (Ikelegbe 2005). Beyond hypothetical analysis, there are regular flaws associated with this venture. In the 70s and 80s that constituted the time-lag, insurgency was not wide spread. But with the many attending freedom of global democracy that followed the post-Cold War era, the proficiency of this reductionist nationalism became doubtful. Instead of complementing the forces of emancipation, it was rather complicated. It started to bear amorphous statues so that its goal seems controversial. Primarily, there emerged intra-ethnic hostility. By this calculation, there was division in the ethnic lines so that it became difficult to form a common form against the hegemons. In most oil-producing communities there were in-house competitions in an attempt to have access to the MNC management for economic gains.

This led to betrayal at the base level as some local leaders had to contest themselves. This boosted the stance of the MNC and the government as the indigenes strategize the use of disengagement. This was common among the Ijaws, isoko, Urhobo and Iteskiri ethnic groups. This on the long run explained the unorganized pattern of revolution among the minority class. The inadequacies of the agitation are more noticeable in the terse relation across the ethnic groups. The most notorious was clash of the trio- Ijaw, Urhobo, and Iteskiri from 2000- 2005. It was the fiercest exchange of ill- will, extortion, distinct, violence, vandalization and burning of properties at inestimable value. There was massive displacement and untold waste of lives. This triangular ethnic clash was the misconception as to which ethnic group should have a better share of oil resources from the superfluous presence of MNCs. The MNCs and the government with their network of economic bureaucracy were able to work these groups against themselves, which indicates that they constitute a body forced by more political trends to function without understanding the matrix of revolution. The Niger-Delta minority groups are therefore left vulnerable to the ideological manipulation of the hegemons.

Another variant of flaws associated with contest over appropriation of resources is the ulterior motive for some youths and militia groups who reverse their intention on their host communities. Most members of this category prey on the society whose interest they claim to be protecting. Most times, when the MNC became so resistant to their compulsion, they resort to crime in their primordial setting. Precisely this region has become a terrain of crime and assault. This is boosted by the availability of arms illegally imported. It must be noted that the ideological resolution of the Cold War led to the abandonment of arms by the West which were designed for the prosecution of the global conflict. Ultimately, most of these arms especially AK47 rifle has been exported to Africa that remained prone ethnic conflict inevitably directed against the state. It is under this context this region like others in Africa, have become proliferated with arms. This factor directly subscribe to the renaming of this ethno- nationalist as mere bunch of militia association sabotaging the interest of the state as they constitute terror and fear. This explains the regular features of security patrol, and without any anticipatory doubt, Niger-Delta houses the highest number of armed security men in Nigeria.

The bias so established between concerned political activities and notable traditional chiefs constitute degree of weakness in this endeavor. The MNCs and the states cohorts empowered by their institutional diplomacy have been able to play the rulers against the elite agitators. Most times the rulers are appropriated with payoff at the expense of the community. This leads to blackmail instead of support for movement of emancipation. This partial favoritism is an index factor of the Ogoni liberation as the state and Shell Company have succeeded in breaking the fraternity between elite group and the traditional rulers. For instance, Ken Saro-Wiwa the leader of the Movement for Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) and Ethnic Minorities Right Organization of Africa (EMIROAF) and other leaders in the liberation movement such as Chief E.N Kolani, Grrick Leton and Meshack Karanwi were pitched against their local rulers.

The two parties were antagonistic as they could not have balanced objective as far as the community interest was concerned Osaghae (1995: 334) notes that clan leaders of Babbe Ken Khana and Nyo Khana coupled with other major traditional leaders were grossly opposed to the proposal of the elite. On the other side the exponent of the revolutionary movement observed the clan heads as states agents. The inability of these two primordial groups to constitute a common front in a particular setting provides a fertile ground for the preponderance of the hegemons as the oil producing region is sunk deeper into the abyss of exploitation and marginalization.

State/MNCS and the Insurgent Movements

No civic function maintains a supine position in the face of insurgent uprising. With the prevailing ethnic revolution the transverse this geography been discussed the Nigerian government and the MNCs have formed an alliance of security manpower and accompanied support of the military services of MNCs home countries. This is because the agitation is unending and underpins the process of insurgency which explores the vicissitudes of social identity and ideology that constitute important contextual sources for their sustained appeal within and beyond, serving as metaphor for change against the hegemons.

The investment of huge security measures by the states power is entirely based on the fact that the oil resources form the super-base of the super structure of the polity. This is equally followed by the MNCs whose economy is heavily boosted back home. The duo therefore instituted the *containment theory* to the latter. This is relevant to checkmating the advances of any agitation group desiring to halt production. More so, security agent file out regularly to protect pipe line vandalization and bunkering on shore. To pursue the containment policy to its logical conclusion, the Nigerian government has dealt fiercely with any resistance beyond moderate capacity. The first of its kind was the Ogoni uprising that was met with strong military attack. The military head of state General Sani Abacha overhauled this group with the state military might plus the hanging of their leaders Saro Wiwa after prosecution. The government of Chief Olusegun Obansango followed the same military stance when he ordered the razing of Odi in Bayelsa to the ground over the politics of resistance. The most recent was the case of the military assault in Gbaramatu kingdom of Delta state ordered by the president Yar Adua. These three periodic assault produced quantities of physical and human casualties as the indigenes were displaced and reduced to mere hostages in their domestic sites.

The MNCs have pursued the militarization of the Niger Delta by negotiating the support of military force of their respective countries. This is done to complement the effort of the Nigerian government. In most cases the navy of the West is employed to service the waters of the Oil Rivers. This is meant to provide an enabling environment for easy exploitation of oil resources especially in trouble areas. Many countries in the West including United States of America maintain corporate military relations with the Nigerian government. The major task of this arrangement is to run surveillance of oil waters against oil theft, bunkering and vandalization of oil facilities and possibly check disruption of oil production.

Ikelegbe (2005:18) notes that the MNCs always hide behind the shield of security agencies to perpetrate their regime of greed and insensitivity to the concern of the oil producing communities. In furtherance of this effort, Mr. Yves Guadeul French ambassador to Nigeria stated his utmost to protect its nationals and its estimated USD 4 billion oil and gas industries located in strategic areas of Niger-Delta. United Kingdom also employed her detectives to assist Nigerian security agency to checkmate outrageous rate of kidnapping of MNC official (Bisina 2003, qtd in Ikelegbe 2005:20).

The U.S has played more profound role in this perspective. The security network has continued to spread especially into the coast of West Africa mainly for the strategic defense of its oil economies. Overtime, she had organized exchange of military officers. This alliance has led to the establishment of military bases in the oil rivers of Niger-Delta and the Gulf of Guinea for the security of oil operations. Though abrogated, Africom which was located in the Gulf of Guinea by the U.S was a military structure that was to take the shape of African NATO. This military ideology is premised on the inability of local military forces to properly guard off-shore activities in the coastal lines. By this calculation, the U.S has distributed coast guard cutters to Ghana and Soa Thome. Nigeria has four which is highest of the lot. This has been followed with regular naval program Barnes (2005:4).

The enduring restiveness of Niger-Delta graphically enunciates the centralization of democracy around the super ordinate elite class, foregrounding the alienation of subordinate groups whose geography paradoxically houses the economic energy of the country. The response to the dialectal line drawn between them and the ruling class is the explosion of determinist insurgent/nationalist tremor, which is referred to as “militancy”. The application of militancy concept is a derived semantic phraseology meant to psychologically disorient the nationalist proficiency of this regional arrangement that is consonant to the post Cold War environment characterized by the ethnic revolution showcasing the lapses and depravity of African rulers. The tautological agitation is bifocal. One, it is geared toward the emancipation from the minority complex and socio- economic fixation; two, it is a reaction to her jinxed position in the global economies. It must, however be noted that the “militancy” factor of the agitation movement is a buoyant expression boosted to match the militarization of the area by the joint effort of the state and the MNCs. The military assault meted out on this region overtime aptly defines the realist ideological temperament of the Nigeria government at the domestic level. This is an aberration in this period of global institutional diplomacy that is centered on negotiation. This is even worse considering Nigeria’s idealist posture in the contest over the ownership of Bakassi Peninsula, yet located in Niger-Delta. The departure from this ideal at the domestic front calls for serious interrogation and the relational meaning of the outstanding problems of Niger-Delta sandwiched between dual hegemonic halves should be de-constructed to strike a balance in the triangular relationship.

Conclusion

Nigeria has not been able to merge her politics and economies with the prevailing global order. It must be noted that all the many restiveness are but the dynamics of change in the international system that marks the end of the Cold War. In the reality of social relations transverse the conflict of the era means emerging a participant in the “New World Order”. This is where the problem of analyzing ethnic revolution becomes paramount. Since Nigeria has not been able to transverse the psychological border of the end of Cold War conflict, she cannot assume a partaker in the new global initiative. This research organized this argument against the backdrop of the state institution cum MNCs merger to adversely exploit Niger-Delta, the economy base of the country. The case is made worse by the realist propensity of the duo’s militarization of the area, strategic intervention that is just palliative and the location of the subaltern grouping in the fringes with the instrument of indefinite constitutional arrangement entirely based on over-centralized power at the top. The relationship between constituent radical insurgent nationalism and the state security force showcases a reciprocated assault, which has gradually reduced the state army to mere counter-insurgent group. The turbulent political temper characterizing Nigeria’s political landscape aptly defines Walter Rodney’s “flag independence”. Beyond normative bias, Niger–Delta agitation for institutional reforms is a partial derivative of the total derivative of restiveness in the resources region across Africa. Going by this situation in the Post-Cold War era, it became imperative for African leaders to re-examine their priorities vis-à-vis the interest of the primordial regions in order to balance the political equation. As soon as this measure of relationship is established, the myth and memories of exploitation and ethnic discrimination will become history. This will inevitably build trust among the various groups, thereby enhancing integration and national identity.

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