

Nigeria: Agency and Diversity

We are pleased to present this special edition on Nigeria (officially, the Federal Republic of Nigeria), a nation with the largest population in Africa with about 120 million, and with a great diversity of cultures, ways of life, cities and terrain. With a total land area of 923,768 sq. km. (356,668 sq. mi.) Nigeria is the 14th largest nation in Africa. Its coastline, on the Gulf of Guinea, stretches 774 km (480 mi.). Nigeria shares its international border of 4,470 km (2513 mi.) with four neighbors: Chad, Cameroon, Benin, and Niger. Until 1989 the capital was Lagos, with a population of about 2,500,000, but the government recently moved the capital to Abuja.

In terms of history almost all the people of Africa are represented in Nigeria, hence it was in Nigeria that people migrated from southern and central Africa, intermingled with the Sudanese. And also other groups such as Shuwa-Arabs, the Tuaregs, and the Fulanis, who are concentrated in the far north, entered northern Nigeria in migratory waves across the Sahara Desert. The earliest occupants of Nigeria settled in the forest belt and in the Niger Delta region. Today there are estimated to be more than 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria. While no single group enjoys an absolute numeric majority, four major groups constitute 60% of the population: Hausa-Fulani in the north, Yoruba in the west, and Igbo in the east. Other groups include the Kanuri, Binis, Ibibio, Ijaw, Itsekiri, Efik, Nupe, Tiv, and the Jukun.

Here we will not review all the aspects of the nation, but instead, offer a sample of some of the current issues and concerns of the nation as it struggles to meet the needs of its citizenry.

Hence, Mitterand M. Okorie and Oluwaseun Bamidele in “Language and Class Resistance in Nigeria: A Foucauldian Perspective” draw from discourse theory to analyze how class resistance, through the use of subversive language(s) manifests within the Nigerian socio-political landscape to discover a nexus between the use of Nigerian Pidgin English (and slang language) among the dominated class and the circumvention of social norms. Next, we have “Morphological Processes in Anaku Igbo: Situating Universality” by Ifeoma Obuasi is a discussion of the copious examples of morphological processes available in Anaku, an Igbo language variety based on some universal morphological processes, thus, utterances were collected through oral interview and analyzed using the descriptive approach; and the findings reveal that most of the morphological processes available in other world languages also exist in this Igbo language variety. Third, we present Mohammed Akinola Akomolafe in “Yoruba Ontology: A Critique of the Conceptualization of Life After Death” is a reflection on the puzzle of life after death that explores the meaning, types and causes of death so as to contemplate the purpose of life considering metaphysical, moral and epistemic issues in the belief in life after death (or life after life) via the Yoruba philosophy of death (*iku*), life (*iye*) and life after death (*aye atun wa*).

Continuing, in “Religious-Humanistic Basis of Morality in Yoruba Traditional Thought and Drive for Development” by Adewale Oluwole Owoseni it is argued that morality in Yoruba thought is founded on the basis of the synthesis of secular and non-secular (religious) undertones of interpreting reality which culminates into a *religious-humanistic* basis of morality that impacts the course of human discernment of his/her predicament. Fifth in this exercise is Ejitoyosi Olayemi Salami in “The Complexity and Ironic Nature of *Sòókò* in Ife Praise Poetry”, a work that investigates the complexity and the ironic nature of the institution and title of *Sòókò* in the praise poetry in Ife land with data gathered through various modes of interviews with the major traditional chiefs, princes, princesses as well as traditional poets in Ile-Ife and other parts of Ife land. Next is “Text to Context: Re-interpreting Suicide in Ola Rotimi’s *Kurunmi*” by Tertsea Ikyoive which positions itself towards a critical re-interpretation of suicide in Rotimi’s *Kurunmi* and the reception of it in traditional Yoruba culture of south west Nigeria, and thus, shows that social structure determines the motivations for the acts of suicide in traditional African society, and Yoruba society in particular.

And notwithstanding, we have “National Consciousness and Multiculturalism in Ododo’s Dramaturgy” by Benedict Binebai which deploys the literary methodological mode of research to investigate national consciousness and multiculturalism in Sunnie Ododo’s dramaturgy, and holds that his dramaturgy reflects national consciousness in a multi-cultural Nigeria, and affirms him as a nationalistic playwright. And two last articles, “Cybercrime and Nigeria’s External Image: A Critical Assessment” Sulaiman L. Abdul-Rasheed, Ishowo Lateef, Muhammed A. Yinusa, and Raji Abdullateef that examines the links between cybercrime and Nigeria’s external image wherein they used a cross-sectional survey to generate data in their study to discover that cybercrime poses serious threat to the country’s external image and thus, they conclude with recommendations for combating cybercrime to address the country’s sullied international image; and finally, in a democracy day message Muhammadu Buhari, the President of Nigeria in reference to his one year administration says: the year has seen triumph, consolidation, pains and achievements; his preference is to look forward and to prepare for the challenges that lie ahead and rededicate the administration to the task of fixing Nigeria; in the north-east Boko Haram had captured 14 local governments, driven the local authorities out, and hoisted their flags; on the economic front, all oil dependent countries, Nigeria included, have been struggling since the drop in prices; the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) was given the freedom to pursue corrupt officials and the judiciary was alerted on what Nigerians expect of them in the fight against corruption (forty-three thousand ghost workers through the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information system have been identified, which represents N4.2 billion stolen every month); the government is launching a national women’s empowerment fund approved to provide N1.6 billion in micro-finance loans to women across the nation to assist in rehabilitating the economies of rural communities, particularly those impacted by the insurgency and conflict; government is committed to providing job creation opportunities for five hundred thousand teachers and one hundred thousand artisans across the nation; 5.5 million children will be provided with nutritious meals through a school feeding program to improve learning outcomes, as well as enrolment and completion rates;

Nigeria want to assure its neighbors, friends and development partners that it is firmly committed to democratic principles (hence, ready partners in combating terrorism, cybercrimes, control of communicable diseases and protection of the environment; two of the abducted Chibok girls have regained their freedom and for the others, efforts have centered around negotiations to free them safely from their mindless captors, thus, their safety is of paramount concern; and last, he appeal for people to continue supporting the government's efforts to fix the nation.

Next Awuawuer Justin discussed *Swange* dance of the Tiv people in Nigeria which has been repositioned, popularized and performed by the Benue State Council for Arts and Culture in and outside Africa to outlines the contributions of repositioned *Swange* music and dance to national and international cultural diplomacy which is seen as a soft power approach to: resolve conflicts, settle disputes, build sustainable relationships between countries, strengthen economic ties, and to respect for human rights. In unity, Alade and Adeyanju in their work emphasise the central role played by religious beliefs in shaping the political inclinations of citizens of Nigeria to argues that there is a need to identify a common religious soul i.e., a common religious space which will create a united religious ground for the determination of issues of national interest that can serve as the unifying factor to sustaining democracy in Nigeria.

Proceeding, Isaac Akuva uses the idea of John Locke's prerogative of power in conjunction with the provision for prerogative of power provided in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria as parameters to examine the practice of democracy in Nigeria from 1999 to 2007 under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo to suggest that there is a dichotomy between the principle of prerogative of power and the practice of democracy during the Obasanjo era, and thus, it is recommended that the immunity clause for the chief executives in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria need to be expunged to give room for legally accepted punitive actions on erring executives as enunciated by John Locke, and if not done, Nigeria's nascent democracy will continue to be at the mercy of tyrannical leaders.

And last, Babalola Balogun examines Segun Ogungbemi's anti-God intellectual attitude with a view to appraise the strength of its foundations, and determine how successful his anti-God humanistic picture can be in contemporary Africa.

In this assemblage, it is our hope that the content provides new food for thought and good energy for progressive plans, projects and programs that will add to the ongoing growth and development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

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