Normative and Ethical Imperatives of Change in Nigeria’s Democratic Consolidation

The real challenge is whether this putative new order has the motive force to galvanise the necessary popular support for this more ethically grounded democratic dispensation in Nigeria’s public life.

By Ademola Araoye
The 2015 national legislative and presidential elections in Nigeria last March were a historic watershed in many respects. The elections exposed the elitism and conspiratorial underpinnings of the subsisting political settlement in the country to serious questioning. Yet, the prebendal political settlement based on patronage among a faction of the social, administrative, business-cum-entrepreneurial elite, working in connivance with the political class, has long provided the glue holding together the clashing and divergent elite interests across the amalgamated multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-national geo-political space.

The political settlement was negotiated around power-sharing and the structure of the rentier state. These were secured through the alternation of political power between the predominantly Muslim north and predominantly Christian south and the relative neglect of minorities by the larger triad of ethno-regional forces as an informal strategy to mitigate the country’s polarisation. In a perverse manner therefore, the agreed informal and formal political bargains among the elite implicated in this settlement moved Nigeria closer to overcoming, but not quite, the Lucien Pye classic multi-dimensional crises of the post-colonial state. This is the crisis of identity, integration, participation, distribution and of critical salience, of penetration.

In essence, the common understandings forged between the rapacious prebendal elites offered the chance of freezing, at least in the short-term, the fundamental challenges to the legitimacy of the construction of the Nigerian state space and its internal dynamics and workings. But the terms of the settlement were not founded on any distillation or rationalisation of the popular praxis and were accordingly elitist as they were not designed to advance the interests of the Nigerian state and its people.

Given the contrived nature of the political system, crisis had always characterised any general election in Nigeria, and there had been no general election since independence in 1960 that did not end in serious disputations, crisis, violence and even bloodshed. Today, it appears that Nigeria is not capable of conducting free and fair elections that do not end in chaos and violence. As Frantz Fanon observed in the trials and tribulations of national consciousness, instead of being the coordinated crystallisation of the people’s innermost aspirations, instead of being the most tangible, popular mobilisation, national consciousness in the post-colonial context is nothing but a crude, empty, fragile, shell. The Nigerian experience has so far validated this acute observation.

In concretising these Fanonian directives, building and sustaining a well-governed state requires responsible leaders accountable to the people. It requires leadership characterised by a level of statesmanship and it needs a social contract formed by a committed government. The political settlement emerging from the Nigerian empty shell was thus anti-people. It violated established principles behind the good governance concept that the obligation of governors and governments is to perform their functions so as to promote values of efficiency and responsiveness to civil society or the people they are answerable to. By doing so the government is expected to limit corruption or ensure non-corruptibility, equitable distribution of goods, and transparency in the allocation of state resources.

But as Joy Alemazung notes, this is problematic where the system is deficient in the right kind of democratic constitution and political arrangements necessary to safeguard constitutionalism, as well as lacking a good leadership acting in the interest of the people and not for the leaders. She further argues that even though good governance and democracy are far from being synonymous, they are necessary for any successful political system aiming to establish and promote economic and socio-political development in Africa. Finally she cites Anthony Giddens’ definition of power in a general sense as the capability to intervene in a given set of events to alter them. Giddens terms this the transformative capacity. In democratic governance, the leader or the government exercise the power they receive from the people to govern for the people. This power is granted to the governor based on trust that the state will represent and fight for their common interest.

The entrenched Nigerian dispensation practically foreclosed the possibility of an inclusive social contract of all for all on the terms of governance of the Nigerian state until, hopefully, the last 2015 elections. The prevailing political settlement merely temporarily put in abeyance the critical dilemmas, including the security dilemma, that are pervasive in most culturally heterogeneously constructed post-colonial political spaces.

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To sustain this political arrangement, the establishment routinely undertook strategic cleansing of its own ranks and of opposition forces through assassinations that became a part of the political culture that was institutionalised under the Sani Abacha dictatorship. This cleansing extended into the Olusegun Obasanjo PDP administration with the political assassination of major political elites, including the Attorney General, Bola Ige, and other prominent citizens such as Harry Marshal, reaching its routinised crescendo. The orchestrated political killings under the Obasanjo administration remain unresolved.

The deficiencies in the political arrangement, the absolute lack of transformative capacity of the elite, set the course for the emergence of a Nigerian expression of a Weberian...
state where the state was merely a set of instruments of domination. The regimes, applying the underhand rules, principles, norms and modes of interaction that governed the interaction among contesting and contending social groups and the state organs that emerged delegitimised this normative Nigerian state. These paradoxes drove the last elections.

The opposition All Peoples Congress (APC) reflects a realignment of political forces and is stronger than any of its predecessors that ever challenged the established Nigerian political settlement and status quo. The outcome of the elections constituted the first democratically sanctioned major assault on this contrived Weberian national order and also saw the emergence of the first political organisation of a national character to overtly repudiate the integrity of the fundamentals of the formal and informal unethical internal operating principles of the Nigerian state. Credible attempts to institute profound change in the governance paradigm and to reconfigure the national ethical plane in the past had been violently quashed and frustrated, with dire consequences for the evolutionary path of the Nigerian state and society.

From the March 2015 elections emerged clearly defined national normative and ethical imperatives against historic impediments that have militated against the Nigerian sense of nationhood: ethno-regional and religious affinities. It may be surmised that a clear power transition from their crime has led to independence on 1 October, 1960.

Described by Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka as the “most expensive, most prodigal, wasteful, senseless, I mean really insensitive in terms of what people live on in this country” and “the real naira-dollar extravaganza spent on just subverting, shall we say, the natural choices of people,”6 the March 2015 elections presented many haunting paradoxes. These paradoxes were in perceptions of diametrically opposed symbolic representations, and in actuality, of the incumbent president, Goodluck Jonathan, and his challenger Muhammadu Buhari. The former, as the public face of the post-Abacha national trauma new republic, is in reality signposted by the Olusegun Obasanjo administration, Goodluck Jonathan was caricatured as personifying the entrenched decadent status quo founded on a discredited political settlement. The latter, a former military dictator, was cast as a born again opposition democrat who was popularly perceived as leading the vanguard of an emergent new hopeful and sanitised Nigerian democratic dispensation.

The line was drawn in the sand. Observers suggested that the historic antagonists of the Nigerian state and society were said to be bold, bogus, gaudy, vainglorious, pretentious and shameless. They had no scruples whatsoever. They were bandits blatant in their debasement. They were rapacious, predatory and plundering. They were ferocious, voracious and furious. They were marauding, murderous and mendacious. They were deceitful, deceptive and duplicitous. They didn't give a damn about Nigerians or Nigeria as a country as long as they were able to loot without let or hindrance. They coveted and chased power by all and any means necessary to be able to impede the long arm of the law and protect their plunder.7

Therefore, at a more defining level, the elements of these paradoxes included sharp moral dichotomies and tensions that cascaded from the unambiguous clarity of the ethical and normative gulf that was implicit in the ethic-driven populist change mantra of the opposition and the defence of the status quo by the extant administration.

These sharp ethical differentiations notwithstanding, the counter poise to these imperatives was the convenient horse trading and the calculated, and some would say strategic, defections from the core caucus of the status quo forces. Such defections carried with them threats of undermining not only the very fundamentals of the change of revolutionary proportions envisaged, but also compromised the very vessel of a change that was most unwanted by the beneficiaries and guardians of the troubling Nigerian status quo. Popular definitions and perceptions of the normative and ethical obligations demanded, as well as the task of national rejuvenation, were associated with already established and acknowledged populist moral

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benchmarks to be attained for national redemption. These paradoxes and the challenges integral to them have remained at the heart of a dampened and sluggish momentum for the anticipated change so far generated by the process.

Scott Sonenshein, in investigations focused on the corporate world, provides an interesting conceptual framework to explore the challenges of the normative and ethical imperatives of change in Nigeria’s democratic consolidation. In the context of strategic change, he described the emergence of three ethical issues and builds a theory to explain how this emergence unfolds. He found that some employees reframe the meaning of strategic issues as involving ethical implications because of trigger points, ambiguity, and the use of an available employee welfare frame. Sonenshein argues that employees take the meaning of strategic issues and reinterpret them as either leading to harmful consequences or the violation of a right. In summing up the relevant literature on this issue, he highlights the fact that main primary literatures addressing how ethical issues arise converge in primarily treating ethical issues as objective properties, that is, as existing in the environment independent of individuals’ meaning constructions, and also as something individuals respond to rather than create.6

Sonnenshein’s framework helps to understand the framing of the normative and ethical challenges of the status quo in Nigeria, especially in the run up to the presidential elections. The trigger points or issues in this instance were abundant and undoubtedly impacted on the welfare of Nigerians with their harmful consequences. The change mantra had ceased to be philosophical. It had acquired an existential salience for the very concept of the Nigerian state. The change wasn’t about displacing the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), or even getting victory at the polls, but about managing the difficult choices called for in the normative exigencies facing the nation, and in accepting the ethical realignments for greater good. That is change.

But that exactly expressed the problem of a nearly compromised vessel for change in an APC as status quo forces entrenched in its ranks bared their fangs almost immediately after the inauguration of a new democratically elected President Muhammadu Buhari.

Bisi Akande, former chairman who for the most part directed the navigation of the APC through the many minefields laid by the PDP during a difficult registration process, noted that the ultimate aim of forces behind what he described as a rebellion within the APC was to make nonsense of the full-scale war against corruption promised by the Buhari-led administration. He explained that most of the northern elite, the Nigerian oil subsidy barons and other business cartels who never liked Buhari’s anti-corruption political stance were quickly backing the rebellion against the APC with strong support. “While other position seekers are waiting in the wings until Buhari’s ministers are announced, a large section of the South-West sees the rebellion as a conspiracy of the North against the Yoruba,” he added.

Akande alleged that the destabilisation plot against the APC actually began shortly after the party won the presidential poll, with some members of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) extraction in the merger party holding a secret meeting in Abuja on how to hijack the party. He observed that many of those calling themselves businessmen in Nigeria act like leeches, sucking the nation’s blood through various state governments and particularly through the PDP-led Federal Government. While all these schisms were going on in the APC, those who were jittery of Buhari’s constant threat of an anti-corruption battle began to encourage and finance rebellions against the APC’s democratic positions, which led to the emergence of Senator Saraki as the candidate of the PDP tendencies inside and outside APC.

This driving template for the much awaited change was forged in the crucible of a damning historicity of the Nigeria state process that was predicated on the seemingly intractable permanence of a harmful anomie characterising its society.

In this expansive and dense den of all pervading quackery, resting on entrenched systemic illogic, false and omniscient self-serving political hegemons and bestriding impostor social oracles multiplied. These produced retrogressive projections of crude affirmations of sub-national quotas, bogue communal and massively deformed individual spirituality thriving in hues of vacuous national salvations peddled by ubiquitous morally moronic Tartuffes as well as ascendant fresh brother Jeroboams still wearing their talismans and large golden crosses, engrossed in patented commercialised political religiosity. These are retailed in the dilapidated cathedrals of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), in second hand markets stalls with the tantalising glitz of unbridled and naked sensuousness and collapsed brothels of synagogues of false vendors of Pentecostal abracadabra.

To this mix is added the utter devastation of communities and individual fortunes in the senselessness of the bloody campaign of Boko Haram that had long rejected the status quo in imitative preference of a resurgent global millennial madness expressed in the form of an Islamic caliphate. These were to be fulfilled through a horrific killing machinery of externally inspired and locally grown Islamic fundamentalism. These constituted the dominant foundation blocks of the
rejected status quo.

The old political settlement was deconstructed through many prisms. A people-fashioned template, a mental strategic blueprint for integral and holistic emancipation in the imagination of the desperate lumpen masses stuck in the very pit of national dispossession, was constantly pitched in confrontation with the systematically orchestrated suffocating systemic odour and the moral and ethical turpitude that defined the Nigerian state and its society.

Many in diasporic bewilderment waxed mythological and biblical about the horrendous ledger of the status quo. It was exuded in these constituencies of faith healers that any party with the name People’s Democratic Party was doomed forever in the history of Nigeria. Repeatedly, it was affirmed that the PDP will never win elections at the centre, never, ever again in the history of Nigeria. Its members were challenged to write down a biblical memorial. “These are the words of the Lord to the remnants of the PDP as contained in Exodus 17: 14: ‘Then the Lord said to Moses, ’Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven.’”

Others, more secular and practical, with their feet rooted in terra firma, observed the consequences of corruption in bringing the Nigerian state to its knees. In this connection, Kolawole Olaniran noted that the near bankruptcy of the Nigerian state could be traced to a sector of the economy: institutionalised corruption. He said that Nigeria was broke and the fact that several of its 36 states had not been able to pay their workers’ salaries was hardly surprising given that for many years the country had fallen victim to systematic stealing by career politicians and soldiers dabbling in politics. Previously considered a matter of “little brown envelopes” he noted that corruption had metamorphosed into a “profitable business” for politicians (and their families and friends, the so-called go-betweens or ‘looting pipes’), corporations and financial institutions and centres.

Waxing moral on the debilitating state of the economy, Olaniran asserted
that stealing was odious, illegal and immoral but that stolen funds didn’t stink, as corrupt officials continued to empty the public treasuries for personal gains – to amass luxury cars, buy extravagant homes, and enjoy exotic vacations – to the amazement and anger of millions of Nigerians. Images of government officials lining their pockets with the treasure of the poor are stark and raw. The abundance of wealth of the ruling class stood in stark contrast to the poverty of the majority of Nigerians. Finally, he proposed that allowing corrupt officials to benefit from their crime has a degenerative effect on the institutions of governance, human rights and the rule of law.

Meanwhile, an elite constituency of the damned in Nigerian public life was further defined by Remi Oyeyemi. He asserts that this group, who also camouflage as friends of the President, are willing to use President Buhari as a sacrificial lamb for their end goal. And that is exactly what they want, to pave the way for their own diabolical plans. He described them as possessing a lot of resources they stole from under the nose of Olusegun Obasanjo-Onyejekwe. Some present and past governors belong to this group. They are generous to a fault and are ardent believers in Babangidaism – a philosophy that everyone has a price and can be bought! They will spend any amount of naira, pounds sterling, dollars and euros to win and spend any amount of naira, pounds, sterling, dollars and euros to win and achieve their objective. They are crass opportunists. He concludes that the leading lights of this group have international criminal records and are pariahs in some Western countries.

This debilitating public perception of the status quo was corroborated by the unending blight of scandals that engulfed the pivotal economic institutions. By 2011 speculation was rife that that the proceeds of an alleged bribe by Nigerian big oil players may have helped to finance a twenty million dollar Vienna home whose purchase was traced to the country’s Minister for Petroleum Resources. By late 2014, the central bank found that between January 2012 and July 2013 NNPC lifted 594 million barrels of crude oil valued at $65 billion, and out of that amount NNPC only repatriated $15 billion, representing 24 percent of the value. That meant the NNPC was yet to account for, and repatriate to the Federation Account, an amount in excess of $49.804 billion or 76 percent of the value of oil lifted in the same period.

While this played out, key allies of the President in the administration were drowning in all manner of allegations of scandalous transactions. In April, 2014, Minister of Aviation, Stella Oduah, was invited by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to shed light on the purchase of two BMW bulletproof cars by the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority at a controversial sum of N255m. In October, 2014, the House of Representatives urged the President to review the continued engagement of the Minister of Aviation for having contravened the Appropriation Act, forging the internal rules of procedures of the Senate in order to produce a PDP-aligned Senate President. This was interpreted as a sharp move by reactionary elements with a view to undercutting the profound change agenda that threatened the discredited political settlement which had been repudiated at the polls.

The details of the remuneration of a Nigerian Senator is detailed below;

- Basic Salary monthly (BS) = \$2,484,245.50
- Hardship Allowance (50% of B.S) = N1,242,122.70
- Constituency Allowance (200% of B.S) = N4,968,509.00
- Newspapers Allowance (50% of B.S) = N1,242,122.70
- Wardrobe Allowance (25% of B.S) = N621,061.37
- Recess Allowance (10% of B.S) = N248,424.55
- Accommodation (200% of B.S) = N4,968,509.00
- Utilities (30% of B.S) = N828,081.83
- Domestic Staff (70% of B.S) = N1,863,184.12
- Entertainment (30% of B.S) = N828,081.83
- Personal Assistants (25% of B.S) = N621,061.12
- Vehicle Maintenance Allowance (75% of B.S) = N1,863,184.12
- Leave Allowance (10% of B.S) = N248,424.55
- Severance Gratuity (300% of B.S) = N7,452,736.50
- Car Allowance (400% of B.S) = N9,936,982.00
- TOTAL MONTHLY SALARY = N29,479,749.00 ($181,974.00)
- TOTAL YEARLY SALARY = N29,479,749.00 x 12 = N353,756,988.00 (US$ 2,183,685.00)
- EXCHANGE RATE: $1 = N162

In comparative terms, a Nigerian senator earns more in salary than President Barack Obama of the United States and David Cameron of the UK. An Indian lawmaker must work for at least 49 years to earn the annual salary of a Nigerian senator. In the United States, while the minimum wage is $1,257 (N191, 667), a US lawmaker earns $15,080 (N2.3m) per month. In the United Kingdom, a lawmaker earns $8,686 (N1.3m) monthly while
the gross national minimum wage is $1,883 (N283, 333) per month. Also, Nigerian lawmakers earn higher than their counterparts in Sweden. With a monthly pay of $7,707 (N1,2m), a lawmaker in Sweden will need to work for over 12 years to equal what a Nigerian senator earns per annum. The president of the United States takes home an annual salary of $400,000 (N64,156,0m), including a $50,000 expense allowance making the president the highest paid public servant in the US. The $400,000 includes everything and $350,000 out of it is taxable.

In terms of lawmakers’ salaries as a ratio of GDP per capita, the gap is even much wider. While the salary of a Nigerian lawmaker is 116 times the country’s GDP per person, that of a British member of parliament is just 2.7 times. The average salary of a Nigerian worker based on the national minimum wage is N18,000.00. So, the yearly salary is N18,000.00 x 12 = N216,000.00 ($1,333.00). The proportion of the yearly Salary of Nigerian Senator = $2,183,685.00 to the Nigerian worker is $2,183,685.00/$1,333.00 = 1,638. It will take an average Nigerian worker 1,638 years to earn the yearly salary of a Nigerian Senator. Surveying the depressing situation, the Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka, who has acquired the toga of a national conscience, decried the Nigerian legislature as a “nest of thieves”.

Given the threat to the pecuniary dimensions of the political settlement, the fight back by the PDP elements ensconced in the Buhari APC change machinery, through the subversion of party primacy and superiority, is consistent with the history of the turbulence that has been associated with previously attempts at radical change in Nigeria or, in the words of the laureate and national sage, to reconstruct and address some really fundamental issues of society, the danger of a lurking sinister force, a very sinister force in control and a sinister cabal for that matter, that could derail the change process.

This apprehension has remained a permanent feature of the emerging political process. The 1966 coup of the three radical colonels, controversial though it remains on its true intents, was quashed and directly led to the civil war. In 1976, national hero General Murtala Ramat Mohammed was assassinated in broad daylight for his daring vision of a progressive Nigeria. Again in 1985, status quo elements, led by articulator of northern hegemony and self-proclaimed military president, General Ibrahim Babaginda, removed equally northern aligned reformists Generals Muhammadu Buhari and Tunde Idiagbon from office to pave the way to national depravity that culminated in the rise of the rampaging maximum ruler General Sani Abacha. Sani Abacha is also reputed to be an irrepresible thief of all time. In

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...the course of meetings between the Nigerian team and authorities in about four other jurisdictions as well as the team from the foreign legal firm, it was discovered that a lot of underhand dealings must have taken place in the recovery of the Abacha’s loot. This was largely responsible for the under-declaration of what has been recovered so far by three successive governments and worse still what is still trapped in offshore accounts, which, in the most current estimation, based on the last meeting with the engaged foreign team, stands at US$210 billion!!!

In the prevailing political settlement of which the three PDP administrations were legatees, national monuments are still named after Sani Abacha, the judicial murderer and assassin of Ken SaroWiwa and many other prominent national resistance figures, among whom were Alfred Rewane and Kudirat Abiola, wife of the Moshood Abiola who is generally regarded as the only Nigerian president to have emerged through transparently conducted elections on 12 June, 1993 with a truly nationally acclaimed mandate. Sani Abacha’s family and Major Al Mustapha, leader of Abacha’s North Korea trained killer goons, like many other odious characters in the public domain, were rehabilitated by President Goodluck Jonathan, consistent with the internal workings of the old settlement.

These political conveniences were all in consonance with the protocols of Nigeria’s national debauchery deriving from its nebulous political settlement. Therefore, the stakes in the change calculus are high and the management of the process of dismantling these normative and ethical complexities import potentially determinant consequences for the evolution and overall trajectory of the Nigerian state and society. This is more so against the troubling implications of the recrudescence slide to primordial allegiances that were manifestly clear in the last elections. All the northern states voted as in the past in the direction of northerner Muhammadu Buhari. The ethno-regional votes in the South East and the South South geo-political regions were monolithic in favour home boy incumbent Goodluck Jonathan.

The real arrowhead for change would then be interpreted to be the South West political zone, easily recognised as the regional constituency with the most cosmopolitan and sophisticated political sensibilities that had not ventured to partake in governance at the federal centre throughout Nigeria’s political evolution until the March 2015 elections. The robust internal discourse on the elections in this region was reflected in the outcome of the elections both at the legislative and presidential levels where the change train had only an edge over the incumbent president. In fact the incumbent President Jonathan won in Ekiti state in that political zone. On the basis of this, some have argued that the outcome of the elections merely reflected a realignment
of the old horses behind the Nigerian political settlement among the ethnic constituencies of Nigeria; and that not much should be read into the outcome of the 2015 elections in projecting the long term character of the Nigerian state. This perspective is indeed also well founded.

These paralysing imperatives seemingly resonated across the board as the legitimate platform for change for the anticipated new political seasons in Nigeria’s much abused post-Abacha democratic dispensation. Nigeria’s elections and the expected democratic consolidation, after twelve years of unabashed political chicanery, transcended the Schumpetarian notions of mere procedural democracy and a mild expectation of the entrenchment of democratic tenets and values. In the process focused Schumpetarian demarcations, democracy is only a method and of no intrinsic value with its sole function to select leaders. In any case, according to Schumpeter, these leaders impose their views and are not controlled by voters.12 That was indeed the hallmark of the post-Abacha PDP Schumpetarian democratic dispensation of Olusegun Obasanjo, Umaru: Yar'adua and Goodluck Jonathan.

Against this background, democratic consolidation in Nigeria in the context of the evolved understandings among the people, classically delineated the concept as the actual transition of power from a morally bankrupt and discredited ruling party and its two administrations, in this specific instance the Olusegun Obasanjo led scandal suffused administration and its strategic cloning in the successor Umar Yar’adua and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan regimes of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), to another, an opposition political force, the All Peoples Congress (APC) and its Muhammadu Buhari presidential candidate at the other polar end of a normative and ethical-moral gulf. Indeed the main conundrum in the national tragedy was the theatrical somersault of Olusegun Obasanjo, a hyper-hypocritical oddity in the universe and ranks of a progressive Nigeria, was the clearest indication that the bottom had fallen off the pedestal on which Nigeria’s historic decadence was perched. The bastions of national decay were giving way as its founding lights were opportunistically defeciting from the sinking boat.

The election then was at once at a profound level the contest of an already popularly delegitimised status quo power versus oppositional forces repudiating the extant ethical and moral construction of the Nigerian state and society. Given the criticality of normative and ethical dimensions of the change sought, both in state and society as well as in the corporate world, the salience of this dimension of the struggle for power and implications for power transition fundamentals that impel the appalling state of the horrendous existential expressions and conditions of daily life. It is the attempt to employ smart strategies to ring-fence and protect the frigilated state and society against an expansive and destructive ethical and normative environment all too capable of implooding Nigeria as an existential reality of all times.

Meanwhile a final Fanonian injunction cautions that by exploding the former (colonial) reality, the struggle uncovers unknown facts, brings to light new meanings and underlines contradictions which were camouflaged by this reality. Going by this masterful prognostication, the exposure of the unsavoury reality of Nigeria’s discredited political settlement and its protocols as well as regime can only be consolidated through a historic struggle unleashed by the people under the guide of a truly nationalist leadership that is directed by a coordinated crystallisation of the people’s innermost aspirations. For Fanon, without waging this struggle, there may be nothing left but a carnival parade and a lot of hot air. Hopefully, Nigeria can escape this damning prophetic reference at the cusp of its potential emancipation by the ballot.

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