

Central European University
Department of Political Science

Power-sharing
The Element of Continuity in Nigerian Politics

By
Nkwachukwu Orji

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisor
Nenad Dimitrijevic
Central European University - Budapest

PhD Committee
Raufu Mustapha, University of Oxford - UK
Cyril Obi, Nordic African Institute - Uppsala

Budapest
2008

I hereby declare that this work contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions. This thesis contains no materials previously written and/or published by another person, unless otherwise noted.

Abstract

This dissertation analyzes elements of continuity in Nigerian politics, focusing on the issues and forces underlying the conception, interpretation, procedures and practices of power-sharing. It challenges the “discontinuity perspective” adopted by most of the literature on Nigerian politics, which emphasizes conflicts and instability without adequately considering the stable, continuous and conflict management aspects of Nigerian politics. Intuitively, it seems justified to characterize Nigerian politics as discontinuous considering the seemingly high incidence of institutional changes; however this is only a partial point of view. This study therefore argues that there is a deeper structure of political continuity that exists alongside institutional changes in Nigeria, which requires investigation, interpretation and explication. It suggests that this element of continuity can be found in the practice of power-sharing. The study presents explanations for the adoption, implementation and continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria. The research undertaken was based on process tracing method, involving a re-description of history based on review of published and unpublished literature, government documents, and media reports as well as interpretation of other available data.

In framing the theoretical background of this study, I presented an understanding of power-sharing that draws from the three models of power-sharing – the consociational, incentivist, and tri-polar models. When applied to Nigeria, they reveal the existence of three dimensions of power-sharing in the country – the territorial, economic, and political. Five ethno-regional elite groups are identified as the major actors in the struggles for the distribution of territorial, economic and political powers. In the course of their interactions, these groups devised three specific arrangements – creation of states, revenue allocation system, and office distribution system, as the frameworks for the implementation of power-sharing. These arrangements are

guided by principles such as population equivalence, federal character, zoning, fiscal centralization, and equality of states.

The explanations for the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria are based on the power-centered perspective of the path dependence framework. They are guided by two analytical premises drawn from observed empirical processes of power-sharing in Nigeria. The first premise underlines the convergence of interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing since the 1970s. The convergence of interests is a function of the soul-searching that followed the end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970. The civil war was largely attributable to the zero-sum political competition between the dominant elite groups in the 1950s and 1960s. Consequently, the post-war era witnessed an elite consensus in favor of accommodation, equity, and stability in resource distribution and political governance. This consensus is informed by the relatively balanced elite power relations and the social position and preferences of the elites that made the post-war constitutions. The elite support for power-sharing is based on widely shared perception of the arrangement as the framework through which the various elite groups could realize their interests within non-violent distributive politics. The second explanation for the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria is based on the premise that power-sharing in itself provides the context for the pacification of the marginal groups in the course of elite struggles for power. This presents power-sharing as a tolerable modality of mediating elite competition, since it reflects the interests of both the dominant and marginal elite groups. The data drawn from political developments in Nigeria since 1970 largely support the above premises. Nigerian politics in the pre-1970 era contrast sharply with the post-1970 period, due to the adversarial elite behavior that dominated the former era compared to the relatively coalescent elite behavior that exists in the latter period. Thus, the observed continuity in Nigerian politics applies to the post-1970 period.

Acknowledgments

In writing this dissertation I am indebted to many. First, I wish to thank my supervisor, Nenad Dimitrijevic for his invaluable guidance, criticisms and suggestions. His enthusiastic encouragement and support provided the necessary stimulus that helped me complete this dissertation. I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to my external supervisor, Cyril Obi who facilitated my visit to the Nordic African Institute, Uppsala. I owe him many thanks for sparing time from his busy schedule to read through my dissertation and for our numerous discussions, his instructive commentaries and constructive criticisms that helped me to fine-tune my work. My profound gratitude to Carol Harrington for the assistance and guidance I received from her. I wish to thank Zsolt Enyedi and Dorothy Bohle for the useful advice they gave me during the early stages of my research.

I am grateful to the Central European University for awarding me a Doctoral Fellowship to undertake my studies, a Doctoral Research Grant to fund my field research in Nigeria, and a Doctoral Research Support Grant to conduct research in Sweden. The Nordic African Institute Uppsala accepted me as a guest researcher and gave me access to its facilities, for this I am very grateful. I benefited greatly from the comments of my colleagues during the departmental seminars and the Annual Doctoral Conferences, for which I want to thank them all. Eva Lafferthon, Kriszta Zsukotynszky, Robert Sata, Noemi Kakucs and Csendi Hopp were very helpful as program coordinators and I wish to express my appreciation to them.

I acknowledge my debt to Serihy Pukas, Chris Willott and Alex Fischer, who read different versions of this dissertation and helped to better shape many of my ideas. I owe many thanks to Thanh and Merlinda Dickerson for the great love they showed me throughout my stay in Budapest. I wish to appreciate my friends who I learned a great deal from during my years in Budapest. I am grateful to my colleagues at Ebonyi State University Abakaliki, who nicely filled the gaps caused by my long absence in the department. Finally, words are not enough to thank Ihuoma, my wife and long time companion, who endured long lonely days while I was away. It is to her and our young son, Dabi that I dedicate this work.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	10
CHAPTER ONE. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	19
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	19
1.1 UNDERSTANDING POWER-SHARING.....	19
I. The consociational model.....	20
II. The incentivist model	25
III. The tri-polar model.....	29
1.2 THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES OF POWER-SHARING IN NIGERIA.....	31
1.3 EXPLAINING THE CONTINUITY OF POWER-SHARING IN NIGERIA.....	32
I. Convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing	37
II. Power-sharing as a pacification strategy	41
1.4 METHODOLOGY.....	43
I. Sources of data	44
II. Data analysis and presentation	45
CHAPTER TWO. THE ROOT OF POWER-SHARING	47
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	47
2.1 COLONIALISM AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN NIGERIA.....	48
I. Pre-colonial ethnic diversity summarized	48
II. Interpreting ethnic diversity I: the social distance thesis	49
III. Interpreting ethnic diversity II: the social proximity thesis.....	50
IV. Lessons from the above interpretations	51
2.2 COLONIAL LEGACY I: AMBIGUOUS STATE BUILDING PROJECT	54
2.3 COLONIAL LEGACY II: ELITE BEHAVIOR.....	65
2.4 CONCLUSION	182
CHAPTER THREE. CREATION OF STATES: THE TERRITORIAL ASPECT OF POWER-SHARING	84
3.0 INTRODUCTION.....	84
3.1 CREATION OF STATES IN A FEDERAL CONTEXT	85
3.2 THE CHALLENGE OF TERRITORIAL RESTRUCTURING: RECURRENT QUEST FOR NEW STATES.....	89
I. The struggles for new states by the minority groups, 1954-1967	90
II. The struggles for new states by the dominant groups, 1976 - 1996	96
3.3 WHY CREATION OF STATES HAS BECOME A FEATURE OF NIGERIAN POLITICS	100
3.4 CONCLUSION.....	107
CHAPTER FOUR. REVENUE ALLOCATION: THE FISCAL ASPECT OF POWER-SHARING	109
4.0 INTRODUCTION.....	109
4.1 NIGERIA'S REVENUE ALLOCATION SYSTEM.....	111
I. Allocation of expenditure responsibilities.....	111
II. Allocation of revenue mobilization powers.....	115
III. Intergovernmental revenue redistribution	121
4.2 CONTINUOUS TRENDS IN NIGERIA'S REVENUE ALLOCATION SYSTEM	126
I. Vertical revenue sharing	127
II. Horizontal revenue sharing.....	132
4.3 EXPLAINING CONTINUITY IN NIGERIA'S REVENUE ALLOCATION SYSTEM	137
I. The political ascendancy of the federal government over the state governments	137
II. Convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of fiscal equity	144
III. Fiscal concessions to the Niger Delta.....	154
4.4 CONCLUSION.....	159
CHAPTER FIVE. POWER-SHARING IN DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICES	161
5.0 INTRODUCTION.....	161
5.1 METHODS OF OFFICE DISTRIBUTION IN NIGERIA	162
I. The federal character principle.....	163

II.	The principle of zoning	167
5.2	EXPLAINING THE CONTINUITY OF THE OFFICE DISTRIBUTION METHODS.....	171
I.	The North and the continuity of the federal character principle	171
II.	The South and the continuity of the zoning	175
5.3	CONCLUSION	180
	CHAPTER SIX. THE DYNAMICS OF THE PARTY SYSTEM IN THE CONTEXT OF POWER-SHARING.	181
6.0	INTRODUCTION.....	181
6.1	POLITICAL PARTY REFORM IN NIGERIA: A BACKGROUND	182
6.2	CONSTRAINING ETHNIC PARTIES: THE POLITICAL PARTY REFORM PACKAGE.....	185
I.	Regulation of political parties	187
II.	Reforms in the electoral system	187
III.	The “top-down” approach to party formation	188
6.3	FROM ETHNIC TO NATIONAL PARTIES: NIGERIAN PARTIES SINCE 1979.....	190
I.	The structure of party leadership and membership.....	190
II.	Ideology and strategy of the parties	194
III.	Party finance.....	198
6.4	CONCLUSION	200
	CONCLUSIONS.....	202
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	209

List of Figures, Tables, and Boxes

FIGURE 1.1. The Models of Power-Sharing.....	30
TABLE 3.1. The Structure of Nigerian Federation before 1963.....	889
TABLE 3.2. Ethnic Composition of Nigerian Regions, 1963	90
TABLE 3.3. States Controlled by Ethno-regional Elite Groups in 1967, 1976, 2008.....	102
TABLE 3.4. Breakdown of Revenue Allocation to States, June 1999 - July 2004.....	105
TABLE 4.1. Distribution of Expenditure Responsibilities among Federal, State and Local Governments	114
TABLE 4.2. Taxes Collectible by the three Tiers of Government.....	117
TABLE 4.3. Revenue Raised by Levels of Governments, 1970–97	120
TABLE 4.4. Horizontal Revenue Sharing Formula	123
TABLE 4.5. Vertical Distribution Formula for VAT, 1994-2001	126
TABLE 4.6. Vertical Allocation of the Federation Account (1980-To Date).....	132
TABLE 4.7. Horizontal Revenue Allocation Formula Criteria	135
TABLE 4.8. Structure of Federal Government Revenue, 1970-2001	146
TABLE 4.9. Shares of Proceeds from Oil Revenue	158
TABLE 5.1. Ethno-regional Composition of Nigerian Cabinets_1960-2004	166
TABLE 5.2. Ethno-regional Imbalance in Education	172
TABLE 5.3. Admission into Nigerian Universities by Region, 2000/2001 Session.....	172
TABLE 5.4. Composition of Federal Civil Service by Regions as at 2000.....	174
TABLE 5.5. Results of the 1959 General Elections	176
TABLE 5.6. Number of Heads of State/Government by region and Length of Time in Office (Oct. 1960-May 2007).....	179
TABLE 6.1. Ethnic Distribution of Leaders of the First Republic Parties	182
TABLE 6.2. Ethnic Distribution of The Leaders of the Second Republic Parties	191
TABLE 6.3. Ethnic Distribution of Leadership and Membership of Third Republic Parties.....	192
TABLE 6.4. Ethnic Distribution of the Leaders of the Fourth Republic Parties	193
BOX 4.1. Highlights of the Supreme Court Ruling on Revenue Allocation	125

Abbreviations

AC - Action Congress
ACF - Arewa Consultative Forum
AD - Alliance for Democracy
AG - Action Group
AMOS - Association of Minority Oil States
ANPP - All Nigerian People's Party
APP - All Peoples Party
ASOPCON - Association of Oil Producing Communities of Nigeria
BDPP - Benin-Delta People's Party
CA - Constituent Assembly
CDC - Constitution Drafting Committee
FEC - Federal Executive Council
INC - Ijaw National Congress
INEC - Independent National Electoral Commission
IPP - Ibadan Peoples Party
JVC - Joint Venture Cash Calls
KPP - Kano People's Party
MASSOB - Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra
MBF - Middle Belt Forum
MOSOP - Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
NA - Native Authority
NCNC - National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons
NDDB - Niger Delta Development Board
NDDC - Niger Delta Development Commission
NEPU - Northern Elements Progressive Union
NPN - National Party of Nigeria
NPP - Nigerian People's Party
NRC - National Republican Convention
OMPADEC - Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission
OPC - Oodua People's Congress
PDP - People's Democratic Party
PRP - Peoples Redemption Party

SDP - Social Democratic Party
SEC - State Executive Council
SMC - Supreme Military Council
SSF - Southern Solidarity Forum
UMBC - United Middle Belt Congress
UNIP - United National Independence Party
UPN - United People's Party
VAT - Value-Added Tax
YCE - Yoruba Council of Elders

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a deeply divided society with several lines of social divisions and bases of group identification. These lines of division reflect on the number of ethnic and regional groups that make up the country. It was commonly assumed that Nigeria is segmented into about 250 ethnic groups until one Nigerian social anthropologist revealed that there are 374 ethnic groups in Nigeria (Otite 1990:44-57,175-183). The population of these ethnic groups varies considerably; the three largest groups constitute more than half of Nigeria's entire population while the eight largest groups are almost a two-third (Nnoli 1995:27). This population disparity coupled with the differences in the political influence of the ethnic groups broadly divides the groups into two – the majority and minority ethnic groups. The majority ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulani (28% of the population), the Yoruba (18% of the population) and Igbo (16% of the population)¹. All the other ethnic groups fit into the minority category, with varying degrees of political status, depending on their numerical size and political influence.

A major feature of ethnicity in Nigeria is that each ethnic group live in an identifiable geographical region/zone. For instance, the three largest ethnic groups are concentrated in the South-east, South-west, and North-west zones respectively, while the smaller groups reside mainly in the South-south, North-central and North-east zones. The result of the geographical concentration of ethnic groups in Nigeria is that it permits the overlapping of ethnic cleavages and other bases of group identification such as region and religion. For example, the Hausa-Fulani and other communities residing in Northern Nigeria are mainly Muslims while the Igbo and other groups in the South are predominantly Christians². Ordinarily, the complex

¹ These figures are based on rough estimates derived from various reports on Nigeria's population. There is no official tabulation of the size of ethnic groups in Nigeria.

² The Yoruba of the South-west combines Christian and Islamic faiths, while minority ethnic groups in the North-central (also known as Middle Belt) are mainly Christians.

cleavages in Nigeria do not pose a problem. However, it is the tendency of the elite to manipulate the multifaceted identities (ethnic, regional, minority-majority, and religious divisions) during political competition that has given rise to conflicts and instability in Nigeria (Nnoli 1978, Ake 1985, Ekekwe 1986, and Jega 2000). I will return to this point in chapters one and two.

The issue of political instability has become a common thread that runs through most analyses of Nigerian politics. In fact, many observers perceive the political history of Nigeria as a history of political instability and discontinuity (see amongst others, Ejiogu 2001, Salawu 2001, Maier 2000, Reno 1999, Osaghae 1998, Diamond, Kirk-Greene and Oyediran 1997, Herbst 1996, Olugbade 1992, Anyanwu 1982, and Dudley 1973). It seems justified to characterize Nigerian politics as unstable considering the seemingly clear evidence of political discontinuities in the country. For instance, in four decades of its independence, Nigeria has written six federal constitutions³, moved from Westminster-style parliamentarism to American-type presidentialism, witnessed the emergence and replacement of twelve regimes, oscillated between democratic pluralism and military authoritarianism⁴, and experienced several bloody inter-group conflicts (Suberu and Diamond 2002). All these events provide analysts with reasonable empirical insights to justify the discontinuity perspective of Nigerian politics.

However, there is a deeper structure of continuity in Nigerian politics which challenges the discontinuity perspective, and this can be found in the practice of power-sharing. In the context of this study, continuity denotes the absence of structural change. A political system,

³ The Constitutions were written in 1960, 1963, 1979, 1989, 1995, and 1999. An attempt to rewrite the 1999 Constitution was rejected by the National Assembly in May 2006.

⁴ Nigeria has been ruled by eight military dictators and four civilian leaders between 1 October 1960 and 29 May 2007.

institution, principle or arrangement is seen as continual if it has been able to avoid changes in its basic structural set up, by neutralizing the dysfunctional processes that can interrupt its existence over time (Ake 1967:100-101, Hurwitz 1973:457). One of the ways a political arrangement can neutralize pressures for change is by allowing reform and adaptation. Some people might find the relationship between reform and continuity problematic, especially since reform can be seen as a sign discontinuity. However, it is widely accepted that continuity does not preclude reforms (Dowding and Kimber 1983:236). Although reforms are vital to the continuity of political arrangements, they must not alter the elements with which any political arrangement can be identified. Thus, in the context of this study, continuity denotes uninterrupted operation or existence of power-sharing, while discontinuity represents the suspension or abolition of the basic structural features of power-sharing.

Considering the foregoing, this dissertation analyzes the element of continuity in Nigerian politics, focusing on the conception, implementation, and continuity of power-sharing. The study shows that the basis for the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria lie in a path dependent process reinforced by the convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing as well as the use of power-sharing as a measure to pacify the marginal elite groups. This research covers the period 1970-2007; however reference will be made to the pre-1970 period, especially since the historical context within which power-sharing was conceived dates back to the colonial times.

To clarify the argument of this dissertation, it is imperative to specify what I mean by power-sharing⁵. Power-sharing refers to the act of providing “every significant identity group or segment in a society representation and decision-making abilities on common issues and a

⁵ The forms, structure and processes of power-sharing will be discussed in chapter one.

degree of autonomy over issues of importance to the group” (Sisk 1996:5). Conceived in this sense, power-sharing can be used as an adjective to qualify the nature of political arrangements, institutions, and policies⁶ (Rothchild and Roeder 2005:20). In Nigeria, power-sharing is implemented through arrangements such as federal character, equity-based revenue allocation system, and states creation.

There are three reasons why this study makes the claim of continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria. First, Nigeria’s constitution-making experiences since the 1970s have taken keen interest in developing and maintaining structures and processes of power-sharing (Ukiwo 2003:132, see also Jinadu 2007:26-28). As a result, all the post-civil war constitutions in Nigeria (1979, 1989, and 1999 Constitutions) were embedded with power-sharing clauses. These clauses include the ones that provide for proportional distribution of political and bureaucratic offices (the federal character principle)⁷, the application of the proportionality principle in the composition of the executive committees of political parties⁸, the granting of territorial autonomy to groups (in the form of federalism and creation of states)⁹, and the application of geographical distribution requirements for the election of the president and state governors¹⁰. The continual inclusion of these clauses in the Nigerian Constitutions indicates the continuity of power-sharing.

The second reason for the claim of continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria is that besides the inclusion of power-sharing clauses in the constitution, there are also actual and consistent practice of power-sharing in office distribution, revenue allocation, and formation of federal

⁶ For instance, one can speak of power-sharing arrangements, power-sharing institutions, or power-sharing policies.

⁷ See *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999*. Lagos: Federal Government Press, sections 14(3), 147(3), 171(1-5), 217(3), Third Schedule Part I -23(a-b), 31(a-b).

⁸ *Ibid*, section 223(2)

⁹ *Ibid*, sections 2(2-3), 8(1)

¹⁰ *Ibid*, section 134(1&2), 179(2)

units under both military and civilian regimes. Phillips (1991:107) alludes to this point, noting that “even though successive military governments have tinkered at will with the Constitution, they have generally been more tolerant of the RAS [Revenue Allocation System] provisions of the Constitution, perhaps because of the extreme sensitivity of revenue allocation issues in Nigeria”. Regarding the territorial organization of Nigeria, Lincoln (1999:17) remarked “if the last 50 years of Nigerian politics have been constant in anything, it is the very public and overwhelming conviction that Nigeria is and can be only federal”. These comments point to the view that while changes may have occurred in some aspects of Nigeria’s political life, there are crucial areas where fundamental changes have not been allowed.

The third reason for the claim of continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria relates to the historical nature of the support for power-sharing in the country. In the course of history, the Nigerian political elite have creatively designed and sustained different power-sharing arrangements to guarantee ethnic/regional security. Interestingly, the relevance of these institutions has not been openly challenged, although elites from the minority groups have questioned the *modus operandi* of the arrangements. The only time when one of these practices was challenged was in 1966 when the regime of General Aguyi Ironsi (January 1966-July 1966) attempted to abrogate Nigeria’s federal system. However, the regime was quickly removed largely on the account this action (Ihonvbere and Shaw 1998:57). Over the years, there have been efforts by the various elite groups to employ power-sharing as a modality for achieving their interests within the context of non-violent distributive politics¹¹.

¹¹ Over the years, group(s) that fail to gain considerable advantage from power-sharing normally press for a modification of the arrangement(s), but no group has called for the abrogation of the arrangements.

As a final point, it is pertinent to state why the analysis of power-sharing is crucial in this study. Given that intense political competition by the ethno-regional elite groups is a major source of instability in Nigeria, there have been efforts to find ways to mitigate the conflicts and enhance political stability. As Isumonah (2001:5) put it, “the search for stable inter-ethnic relations among Nigeria’s multiple ethnic nations has laid emphasis on sharing of political power”. The move towards ethno-regional power-sharing in Nigeria has also been acknowledged by many other students of Nigerian politics (Mustapha 2004, Suberu 2001, Njoku 2000, Akinyele 2000, Agbaje 1998, Jinadu 1985, Horowitz 1985, and Ayoade 1986), though none of them elaborated on the subject. However, because power-sharing is perceived as a major source of inter-group stability in Nigeria, there is an elite consensus in favor of the continued existence of power-sharing arrangements. Thus, while power-sharing serves as a stimulant of political stability at the societal level, it relies on the support of the political elite for its own continuity. This inter-dependent relationship between the search for political stability at the societal level on one hand, and the continuity of power-sharing on the other hand, has made power-sharing probably the most persistent feature of Nigerian politics. Based on the foregoing, one can argue that the issue of power-sharing is at the centre of the analysis of political continuity in Nigeria.

Four potential benefits of this research are noteworthy. First of all, the research addresses an issue that most students of Nigerian politics tend to sidestep. It fills this gap by providing a new perspective, which challenges the prevailing notion of political discontinuity in Nigeria. The significance of this approach is that it opens the possibilities for a transfer of the lessons learned from the analysis of the continuity of power-sharing to other aspects of Nigerian politics. There is also the possibility of comparison between the Nigerian experience and the experiences of other societies struggling with the challenge of state-building. Secondly, this

research presents an empirical re-examination of the different forms and models of power-sharing. Based on the Nigerian case, this study shows the strengths and weaknesses of the various interpretations of power-sharing, thereby increasing the possibilities for refinement and extension of the models. Thirdly, this research extends the path dependence approach to the study of Nigerian politics, using the empirical materials drawn from the Nigeria case to enrich the power-based perspective within the approach. Finally, this research supersedes other studies dealing with power-sharing in Nigeria by providing a comprehensive and theoretically grounded analysis of the subject.

This thesis is organized in six chapters. The first chapter introduces the relevant academic debates relating to power-sharing, providing a review of the three models of power-sharing – consociational, incentivist, and tri-polar model. This is followed by a section in which the models are applied to Nigeria. Thereafter, the explanations for the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria are presented. The explanations are based on two analytical premises - the convergence of the interests of dominant ethno-regional groups and the use of power-sharing as a measure to pacify the marginal groups. These discussions are followed by a description of the research methodology, presenting the sources of data and the methods of data analysis and presentation.

The second chapter lays out the background of the dissertation within a historical context. First, I explored the roots of power-sharing, tracing it to the effect of colonial misinterpretation and mismanagement of ethnicity in Nigeria. I devoted two sections to analyze the relationship between colonialism and the evolution of power-sharing arrangements in Nigeria. Here, I discussed two legacies of colonialism (the ambiguous nature

of the state building project and the adversarial elite behavior) as the key issues in the development of power-sharing in Nigeria.

Chapters three to five are organized around the three dimensions of power-sharing in Nigeria – the territorial, fiscal, and political. Chapter three presents the territorial aspect of power-sharing, looking specifically at the issue of creation of states. First, I located the practice of states creation within the context of federalism, before moving further to examine the challenge of territorial restructuring in the form of the unending quest for new states by ethno-regional elite groups. Finally, I analyzed the reasons why the practice of state creation has become a regular feature of politics in Nigeria.

In chapter four, I discussed the revenue allocation system as the fiscal aspect of power-sharing in Nigeria. The chapter begins by presenting the basic features of Nigeria's revenue allocation system. Then it proceeds to examine the continuous trend in the revenue allocation system, identifying the principles of fiscal centralization and fiscal equity as the persistent aspects of Nigeria's revenue allocation system. Finally, the chapter presents explanations for the continuity of the principles of fiscal centralization and fiscal equity.

The fifth chapter follows a similar structure like the previous one. Here, I analyzed the role of power-sharing in the process of office distribution. I began by discussing the methods of office distribution in Nigeria and how these office distribution methods have been framed by power-sharing. I argued that two methods of office distribution have become dominant in Nigeria since the 1970s. The first method is based on the principle of federal character while the other is based on the principle of zoning. Thereafter, I provided explanations for the continuity of the principles of federal character and zoning.

The sixth chapter examines how the tendency towards power-sharing has transformed the Nigerian party system since 1979. This played out in the attempts to transform the parties from ethno-regionalist to national oriented parties. The chapter begins with a discussion of the context of the political party reforms. Here, the nature of the electoral and party politics in the 1950s and 1960s were reviewed, and the reasons for the adoptions of the party reforms were explained. Thereafter, the chapter presented the political party reform package, highlighting its nature and attributes. Finally, the chapter analyzed the extent to which the quest for ethno-regional power-sharing has conditioned political party reforms and shaped the structure of Nigerian parties since 1979. The main findings of the entire dissertation were summed up in a concluding section that followed chapter six.

CHAPTER ONE

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will systematize the materials presented by previous efforts to understand power-sharing. The chapter will specify the meaning of power-sharing and examine the relevant academic debates relating to power-sharing, providing a review of the three main models of power-sharing – consociational, incentivist, and tri-polar models. This will be followed by an effort to relate the various conceptions of power-sharing to the Nigerian case. Thereafter, the explanations for the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria will be presented. These explanations will be based on two analytical premises - the convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups and the use of power-sharing as a measure to pacify marginal elite groups. These discussions will be followed by a description of the research methodology. The section on methodology will perform two sets of tasks. First, it will provide an account of the methods by which this study was carried out, giving some insights into the scope and nature of the research that was undertaken. Building on the theoretical discussion, the second task is to consider the kinds of lines and focus of investigation that are likely to prove appropriate to address the research questions raised in the study. This is intended to link the theoretical discussion with the empirical analysis.

1.1 UNDERSTANDING POWER-SHARING

In the past two decades, power-sharing attracted tremendous attention in academic and policy discourse. This development can be attributed to the fact that in the 1990s, ethnic cleavages and the quest for self-determination emerged as one of the most serious sources of violent conflicts in the world; one which requires a constructive management (Lijphart 2002:37).

Furthermore, the salience of the power-sharing discourse stems from the opportunities provided by the wave of democratic transition in Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe for constitutional engineering. The contemporary significance of power-sharing was however preceded by the development of arguments in the 1960s and 1970s that challenged a common assumption that democracy and political stability would be difficult to achieve in multi-ethnic societies. Behind this assumption is the notion that deep social divisions and political differences within plural societies are elements which would ensure perennial instability and breakdown of democracy. However, this claim was challenged when it was shown that power-sharing can facilitate democratic stability in plural societies.

Three models of power-sharing can be discerned. The first is the consociational model which sees “communal groups as the building blocks of a political order based on elite consensus and group autonomy” (Bogaards 2006:122). The second model is the incentivist model which advocates the design of political institutions to provide incentives for elite and mass moderation. The third model – the tri-polar model brings together the relevant attributes of the consociational and incentivist models, and highlights the need to broaden the scope of power-sharing to various spheres of governance (such as territorial, economic, and political) where groups may want to share power. I will now work out the details of each of the models of power-sharing.

I. The consociational model

The groundwork for the development of the consociational model was laid by Arthur Lewis’s (1965) *Politics in West Africa*. Lewis made one of the earliest calls for a rethink of the idea of impracticability of democracy in plural societies. He distinguished between two types of

societies (plural society and class society)¹². According to Lewis, plural societies are divided by tribal, religious, linguistic, cultural and regional differences, and they are more likely to be found in colonized territories of Africa, Asia and Latin America. On the other hand, class societies are societies in which social class is the key source of political identification and differentiation, and this type of societies is predominant in Western Europe. Lewis argues that majoritarian democracy is inappropriate in plural societies because of the risk that primordial groups may be polarized, arousing intense competition between the groups in government and those in opposition. He suggests that the kind of democracy that plural societies need is such that do not polarize the ethnic groups between government and opposition; but one that unites them in a coalition government.

Arend Lijphart's consociational model is grounded on ideas similar to those enunciated by Arthur Lewis. The consociational model was developed in Lijphart's groundbreaking work: *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (1968) and elaborated in his later works (1969, 1977, 1985, 1991, 1995, 1996). The key element in Lijphart's consociational model is elite cooperation. The political stability of consociational democracies is explained by the cooperation of elites from different groups which transcend cleavages at the mass level (Lijphart 1977:16). Related to this element are four important defining features of the consociational model. The first is *executive power-sharing* where each of the main groups shares in executive power in a grand coalition government. The other basic elements of the consociational model are: (1) the application of *proportionality principle* in office distribution and revenue allocation, (2) *autonomy or self-government* for each group, particularly in matters of cultural concern; and (3) *veto rights* that would enable each group to prevent changes that adversely affect their vital interests (Lijphart 1977:25).

¹² This discussion is based on the summary of Lewis' assumptions in Lijphart 1977:144-146.

The consociational model has empirical and normative/prescriptive components. Empirically, the model explains democratic stability in such “culturally fragmented” and “divided” European societies as the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland. Lijphart argued that democratic stability in these countries is a product of the deliberate efforts by the political elite to “counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation” (Lijphart 1968:212). However, scholars have contested the classification of some of the European countries as consociational democracies. One of the most systematic critiques was written by Brian Barry in 1975. He insists that Switzerland, for example, is not an example of consociational democracy because in the first place, the country was never a deeply divided society since political parties cross-cut cleavages and facilitate “consensus rather than highly structured conflict of goals” (Barry 1975:501). Again, he argues that the institutions of referendum and popular initiative in Switzerland contradict the tenets of consociational decision making (Barry 1975:486).

From a purely empirical theory that strives to explain democratic stability in plural European societies, Lijphart extended consociationalism to the rest of the world as the most promising means of achieving democratic stability in plural societies (Lijphart 1977:1-2). The normative element in consociationalism lies in the claim that the consociational pattern observed in Europe may contribute to stability if implemented in plural societies elsewhere around the world. Attempts to extend consociationalism from an empirical to normative model have been hotly contested. In the first place, critics like Barry (1975) and Steiner (1981) have pointed out that European societies such as Switzerland, are not good examples of consociational democracy, as such their experiences may not be applicable to plural societies elsewhere. Others like Horowitz (1985:571-572) have cautioned that consociationalism might

not be appropriate for deeply divided societies in the Third World because of the possibilities that group mobilization around monolithic, politically antagonistic organizations may create conditions for serious inter-group conflicts in these countries. Lijphart (1977:54) responded to these criticisms by listing nine conditions¹³ that are favorable to the implementation of consociationalism, but he added that the conditions “are helpful but neither indispensable nor sufficient in and of themselves to account for the success of consociational democracy”. This hedging, as Lustick (1997:107) and Andeweg (2000:529) noted, makes the conditions unverifiable and “allows Lijphart to recommend consociationalism whether the conditions are favorable or not”.

Further criticisms of the consociational model point to the problem of imprecision in concept definition. Steiner (1981:348-350) for instance, noted that Lijphart failed to develop a precise definition of the concept of consociational decision making. According to him, Lijphart construed consociational decision making primarily as absence of competition without showing the causes of the lack of competition. He suggests a modification of the concept of consociational decision making by distinguishing three modes of decision making that preclude competition: (1) decisions reached by means of amicable agreement, where consensus develops from bargaining among groups of roughly equal standing; (2) decisions by repression, where a dominant group imposes its preferences on the marginal group and prevents the group from pushing through its demands; and (3) decisions reached by interpretation, where a decision reflects the relative status of all groups.

Steiner’s (1981) distinction of the various modes of non-competitive decision making reflects Brian Barry’s (1975:483-486) criticism of students of consociationalism who tend to

¹³ The conditions include (1) multiple balance of power, (2) multiparty system, (3) small population, (4) degree of pluralism, (5) cross-cutting cleavages, (6) segmental isolation and federalism, (7) tradition of elite accommodation, (8) representative party system, and (9) overarching loyalties

emphasize cooperative, formalistic elite behavior at the expense of power relations and manipulations which may be more relevant in explaining democratic stability. Considering Barry's comments, Ian Lustick (1979) proposed the control model as an alternative model for explaining stability in plural societies. He argues that unlike the consociational model which focuses on elite cooperation as the decisive element in decision making, the control model is characterized by the emergence and maintenance of a relationship in which the dominant group(s) enforce stability by constraining the political actions and opportunities of the marginal group(s). Lustick (1979:330) claims that the stability of such divided societies as apartheid South Africa, Israel, and pre-Revolutionary Ethiopia, depended more on the effective exertion of superior power of the dominant groups than on "the 'cooperative efforts' of rival elites". Although it may be difficult to find a contemporary society which presents itself as a typical example of the control model, the analytical insights in the model is useful in analyzing consociationalism.

The application of consociationalism to inter-group conflicts such as the dispute in Northern Ireland exposes more weaknesses of the model. McGarry and O'Leary (2006:48) observed that the Northern Irish experience highlights the shortcomings of consociationalism like the model's "endogenous or internalist" focus, which has resulted in its neglect of the role external actors in promoting consociational settlements. They noted that because the consociational model springs from the experiences of small European democracies (Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland) that were threatened by bigger neighbors, Lijphart failed to consider the role of foreign intervention in facilitating consociational agreements. Recent cases of internationally-driven power-sharing deals such as that of

Kenya¹⁴ support the above observation. Overall, attempts to correct the weaknesses in consociationalism have given rise to the emergence of the second model of power-sharing – the incentivist model.

II. The incentivist model

The incentivist model is based on Donald Horowitz's (1985) contention that consociationalism failed to highlight the incentives for elite cooperation and inter-group accommodation. Horowitz claims that even if the elites commit themselves to a consociational arrangement at the outset in a competitive political environment, centrifugal forces emanating from their followers and political opponents may easily undermine the durability of the agreement. He therefore, argues that what is needed to strengthen consociationalism is to create incentives for sustainable elite cooperation and inter-group accommodation (Horowitz 1991:139-141). This incentive, according to Horowitz, can spring from modifications in the federal and electoral systems.

Horowitz (1985) suggests that incentives for elite cooperation can be cultivated by refining the federal system, especially through states creation. Although many observers and practitioners agree that the creation of state(s) is an important means of enhancing the federal system, there is a disagreement on the form and scope of state creation exercises. On the form of state creation, Horowitz (1985:613) proposes the creation of ethnically homogenous states if groups are territorially concentrated¹⁵. He argued that the creation of ethnically homogenous states has the advantage of fragmenting formerly monolithic ethnic groups and

¹⁴ In Kenya, the international community facilitated a power-sharing deal between incumbent president, Mwai Kibaki, and opposition leader, Raila Odinga, after disputes over December 2007 election results triggered bloody communal conflicts. The deal was mediated by the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. See, "Bush urges Kenya power-sharing", <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7248271.stm>.

¹⁵ It should be noted that the term ethnically homogenous territories does not preclude the existence of sub-ethnic cleavages.

reducing the ability of such groups to make coherent divisive claims at the national level. In this case, issues that might otherwise have been contested at inter-group level may end up at the intra-group level; thus, relieving politics at the national level of frequent inter-group tensions. But where groups are intermixed, Horowitz (1985:617) advocates the creation of ethnically heterogeneous states. He claims that an ethnically heterogeneous state encourages elites from different ethnic backgrounds to intermingle at the state level, creating opportunities for the development of inter-ethnic elite relations that can ease ethnic hostilities at the national level. Finally, Horowitz posits that heterogeneous states afford groups that are minority at the federal level the opportunity to become majority in one or more states, thereby compensating for their marginal influence at the federal level.

On the scope of state creation, Horowitz suggests the proliferation of states. He claims that the more states there are, the less the tendency of ethnic and sub-ethnic groups to be concerned with parochial alignments and issues, and the more their inability to collude across state lines to make coherent and divisive claims at the national level (Horowitz 1985:617). In other words, proliferation of states introduces more complex issue agenda on which states, rather than ethnic groups, may disagree because the interest of states (even the ones predominantly populated by a particular ethnic group) may differ from each other. Related to this point is the view that proliferation of states makes the emergence of ethnic hegemony more difficult.

Let me point out a number of issues arising from the above contribution by Horowitz. First of all, there is the tendency of the strategy of proliferation of states to inspire unending demands for new states; a possibility to which Horowitz did not offer any concrete remedy. The second issue relates to how to deal with multiple minority demands that may arise due to the creation

of many states. Proliferation of states tends to produce new or activate dormant minorities who did not have the capacity to articulate their demands in the former state. The emergence of these new minority groups may compound the woes of societies that are unable to deal with the existing minority demands. This situation places on the multiethnic states the burden of coping with the claims of the “bigger minorities” and the fresh claims activated by the creation of new states.

In addition to the federal system, Horowitz (1985:628) argues that the electoral system can create incentives for elite cooperation. He noted that aspects of the electoral system such as the delimitation of constituencies, electoral principles (like proportional representation or first-past-the-post), the number of members per constituency, and the structure of the ballot, all have a potential impact on elite alignments and electoral appeals in plural societies. The key ingredient of the electoral system which serves as a powerful lever of consociationalism and accommodation is what Horowitz called *vote pooling*. Vote pooling refers to an exchange of the votes of their respective supporters by politicians who have been conditioned by the electoral system to be marginally dependent on votes by other groups for electoral victory (Horowitz 2002:23, 1991:167).

To secure pooled votes, politicians must behave moderately on issues that generate inter-group disagreement. Horowitz (1991:184) identified three elements that are needed to induce inter-group vote pooling. The first element is a multi-party system, the second is the creation of ethnically heterogeneous constituency; while the third element is the provision of electoral incentives that would make vote pooling politically profitable to politicians. Horowitz (1985:639) also highlighted three ways through which electoral incentives can be created. The first is through the enactment of distribution requirements for electoral victory, beyond

the plurality or majority requirement - distribution requirements can also be imposed on politicians through the rules guiding party formation. The second way of creating electoral incentives is through the adoption of preferential voting, which requires that where there are three candidates in an election, each voter must specify his second preference; where there are more than three candidates, his second and third preferences¹⁶. The third approach is through the adoption of a system where political offices are reserved for specific groups.

Overall, the consociational and the incentivist models are different in three major ways. Firstly, the consociational model suggests post-election elite coalitions while incentivist model seeks pre-election elite coalition through vote pooling. Secondly, while the consociational model focus primarily on elite level politics, the incentivist model emphasizes both elite and mass level politics. Thirdly, the consociational model supports parliamentarism because it offers a collegial cabinet in which various segments can easily be represented (Lijphart 1977:33-34), while the incentivist model favors presidentialism¹⁷ (Horowitz 1991:205-206).

¹⁶ The implication of this arrangement is that in the absence of an initial majority, all but the top two candidates are eliminated. The alternative preference voter whose first (or second) choices are not among the top two contenders but whose second (or third) choices are among the top are reallocated to them to compute a majority, see Horowitz, 1985:639-640 for details.

¹⁷ The incentivist model favors presidentialism for two reasons. Firstly, presidentialism makes it impossible for one group to capture the state permanently by mere capturing a majority in the parliament, because presidentialism makes access to government more complex. A group excluded from power in the parliament can still gain access to the government through the president. Secondly, the use of geographic distribution plus plurality rule as the basis for victory in presidential elections can create a system where the elected president can become a conspicuously pan-national figure, because the vote that earned him victory were pooled from different parts of the country. Vote pooling makes the president more than a representative of his own group, and this element can motivate politicians wishing to be president to cultivate relationship with politicians from other groups and parties. But, it can also lead to the opposite outcome where the nationally elected president may tend to favor his own group/region or party at the expense of the others.

III. The tri-polar model

Although the consociational and incentivist models acknowledge different spheres of power-sharing, they focused primarily on the sharing of executive power¹⁸. But considering the multidimensional nature of group interests, other spheres of power-sharing may have equal or greater significance than the political sphere (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). For instance, it is likely that groups with history of being economically marginalized would be more interested in exerting greater control over the national revenue than in occupying public offices¹⁹. In this sense, the diversity of group interests points to the need to broadly conceptualize power-sharing.

The initial attempt to extend the scope of power-sharing to multiple dimensions was made by Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie in their study of post-civil war settlements. Hartzell and Hoddie (2003) developed a four-part model which divided power along political, territorial, economic, and military dimensions. I amended this model to three dimensions (territorial, economic, and political) because in the context of this study, the military dimension is subsumed under the political dimension. This is because the military dimension is mostly relevant in immediate post-civil war societies where distribution of coercive power among the former warring parties is essential (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003:320). Since Nigeria is not an immediate post-civil war society, I considered it appropriate to overlook the military dimension.

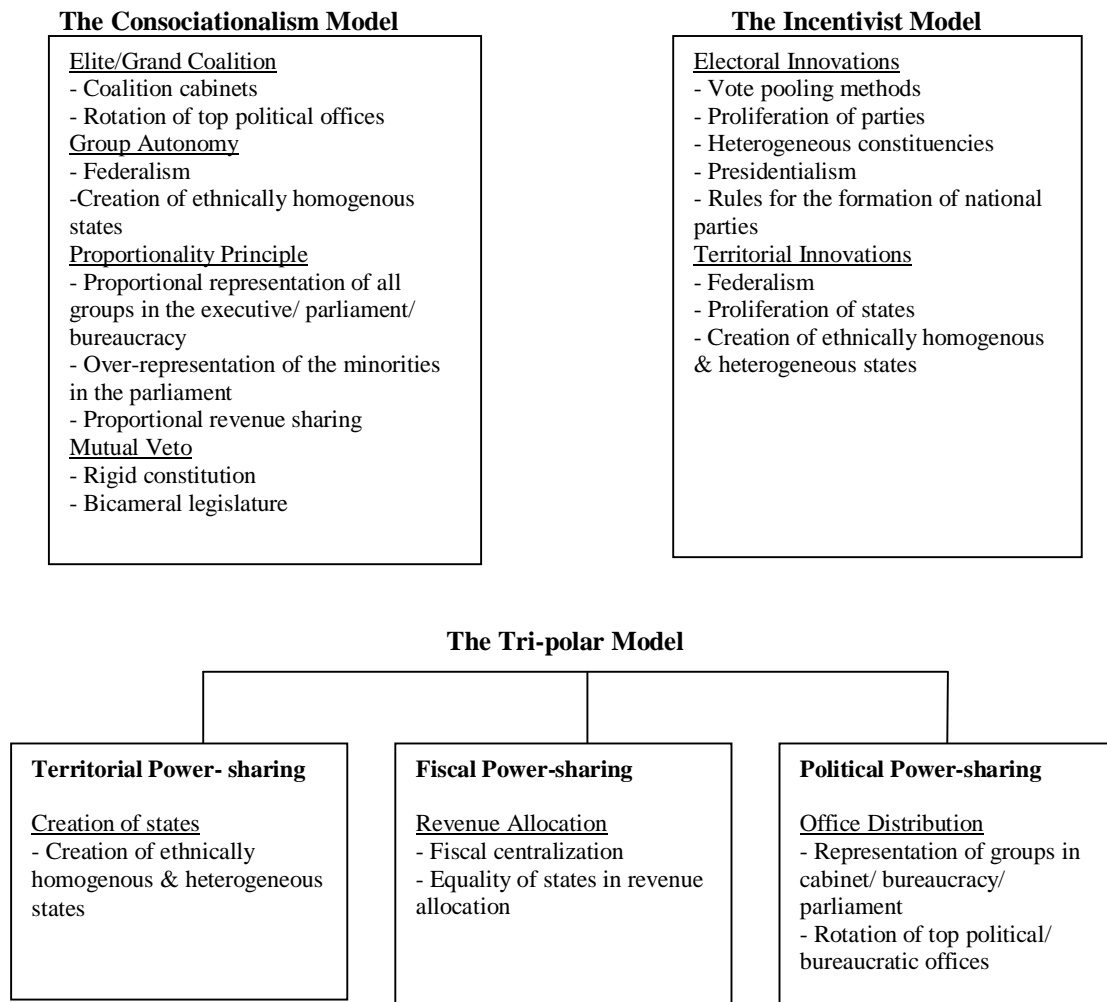
The tri-polar model categorizes power-sharing arrangements into three major dimensions - political, territorial, or economic. The *territorial dimension* of power-sharing is made up of

¹⁸ These models acknowledged other dimensions of power-sharing (prescribing measures such as proportional allocation of economic resources and creation of states), yet they paid greater attention to executive power-sharing.

¹⁹ In practice, the control of public offices and national revenue might be connected in complex ways making analytical distinction of the two quite difficult.

arrangements that define the territorial structure of the country and specifies the process of devolution of powers. The *fiscal dimension* of power-sharing constitutes principles and practices of national revenue sharing. The *political dimension* of power-sharing includes principles and practices of distributing political and bureaucratic offices. The specific features of the three models of power-sharing reviewed in this section are illustrated in figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1
The Models of Power-sharing



1.2 THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES OF POWER-SHARING IN NIGERIA

This section will apply the conceptions of power-sharing, developed in section 1.1 above, to the Nigerian case. First, I will briefly sketch the structure of power-sharing in Nigeria, and then examine the extent to which the process of power-sharing corresponds to the models discussed. The basic structure of power-sharing in Nigeria relates closely with the tri-polar model, covering three major dimensions – the territorial, fiscal, and political dimensions. The territorial dimension of power-sharing relates to federalism and creation of states. The fiscal dimension of power-sharing relates to the revenue allocation system. Finally, the political dimension of power-sharing relates to the methods of office distribution.

The process of power-sharing in Nigeria corresponds to most of the elements of consociational and incentivist models of power-sharing. In the territorial dimension of power-sharing, creation of state is the main arrangement through which federal units are formed and territorial powers shared. The two forms of states creation highlighted by both the consociational and incentivist models can be identified in Nigeria. First, there is the creation of ethnically homogeneous states, especially among the geographically and demographically large ethnic groups like the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo. Then ethnically heterogeneous states were created to hold together several minority groups.

The fiscal dimension of power-sharing relates to revenue allocation and is dominated by two important processes. At the vertical level of revenue allocation, power-sharing is characterized by fiscal centralization. This gives greater amount of national revenue to the federal government vis-à-vis the state and local governments. At horizontal level, fiscal powers are shared based on the principle of equality of states. The principles of fiscal

centralization and equality of states are complemented by the centralized system of revenue collection and administration in Nigeria.

The political dimension of power-sharing is concerned with office distribution. Here, power sharing is implemented through two methods of office distribution - federal character and zoning. The federal character principle ensures that each state of Nigeria is considered in the selection and recruitment into government agencies while zoning is an informal arrangement in which the states in Nigeria are aggregated into zones or regions for the purpose of allocating offices. These processes ensure that the top political offices are shared among Nigeria's ethno-regional elite groups. The processes also correspond to consociationalism's elite coalition and proportional representation. One can further locate the geographical distribution requirement prescribed by the incentivist model within the political dimension of power-sharing. The requirement stipulates that for a person to be deemed as duly elected as president, he/she must have not less than one-quarter of the votes cast in each of at least two-thirds of all the states in Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory; in addition to the highest number of votes cast in the election. The goal of all these measures is to ensure that persons from a few states or ethno-regional group do not dominate the government and that the president enjoys broad support. Having outlined the structures and processes of power-sharing in Nigeria, I will now turn to the reasons for its continuity in the country.

1.3 EXPLAINING THE CONTINUITY OF POWER-SHARING IN NIGERIA

This study adopts path dependence as analytical tool for explaining the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria. Path dependence describes "those historical sequences in which contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties" (Mahoney 2000:507, see also Pierson 2000 and 2004). There are two basic types

of path dependence analysis. The first is the study of reactive sequences – chains of temporally ordered and causally connected events, while the second involves the study of self-reinforcing sequences – the formation and long-term reproduction of a given institutional arrangement. In self-reinforcing sequences, the initial steps in a particular direction induce further movement in the same direction such that over time it becomes hard to reverse the direction (Mahoney 2000:512, Thelen 1999, Alexander 2001). This study is concerned with self-reinforcing sequences, since its goal is to explain the mechanisms or processes that reinforce the practice of power-sharing.

There are four perspectives for explaining self-reinforcing processes in political arrangements (Mahoney 2000:515-525). The first is the utilitarian view, which claims that actors rationally choose to reproduce institutions because the potential or actual benefits of the institutions outweigh their costs and that change can only occur when it is no longer in the interest of the actors to reproduce the institutions. The second perspective - the functional view argues that political arrangements serve specific functions which lead to their expansion and enhance their ability to perform the functions, resulting to further expansion and eventually consolidation. The functional explanation suggests that it is only an exogenous shock that can induce institutional change. The third perspective - the legitimation view holds that institutional continuity is anchored on the actors' subjective orientations and beliefs about what is appropriate or morally right. Consequently, change is possible only when alternative conceptualizations supersede the underlying legitimacy of an institution. The last perspective - the power-centered view maintains that political arrangements distribute costs and benefits unevenly to actors, creating a situation where actors with varying share of resources have contradictory interests in the continuity of the arrangements. It assumes that continuity is a conflictual process working to the advantage or disadvantage of groups. Change can then

occur if the marginal elite group challenges the existing arrangements or if a division occurs within the dominant elite group.

In explaining the continuity of power-sharing arrangements in Nigeria, I will adopt the power-centered perspective. I will argue that what reinforces the power-sharing arrangements in Nigeria is the power dynamics among the elite. My arguments will be guided by two analytical premises drawn from observed empirical processes of power-sharing in Nigeria. The first is that there has been a convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing since 1970, while the other is that the dominant elite groups have used power-sharing as a measure to pacify the marginal elite groups. Let me first identify the Nigerian political elite before explicating these issues.

Political elites are persons who hold top positions in important organizations or who have held such positions in the past and “who participate in or directly influence national political decision-making” (Burton and Higley 2001:182). These elites are essentially politicians who have a privileged access to the state, but there are also traditional rulers, senior military officers, administrators, professionals, academics, and businessmen (Madunagu 1994^b:15). The Nigerian political elite developed along the ethno-regional boundaries created by the colonial and post-colonial governments (Nolutshungu 1990:89). In present-day Nigeria, there are five main ethno-regional elite groups – the Northern elite, Yoruba elite, Igbo elite, Niger Delta elite, and Middle Belt elite. The ethno-regional elite groups in Nigeria fit into a hierarchy of status and power based on their political influence²⁰. Currently, the Northern elite are undoubtedly the leading group, followed by the Yoruba, Igbo, Niger Delta, and

²⁰ The political influence of the elites from each group is a function of many factors among which demographical, historical, administrative, and economic factors are most prominent.

Middle Belt elites, respectively²¹. I will provide a detailed analysis of the ethno-regional elite groups – their identity, representation, interests, and strategies – in chapter two (section 2.3).

Although the Nigerian political elite developed along five distinct ethno-regional lines, they are drawn together by two major linkages - the North-South and majority-minority divisions, depending on whether the issue at stake is office distribution, revenue allocation or state creation. With regards to the issue of office distribution, the contest is usually between the Northern elite (a coalition of North and Middle Belt elite) and Southern elite (an alliance of Yoruba, Igbo, and Niger Delta elites). The North-South regionalism emanated from the policies adopted by the colonial government between 1905 and 1946 (Paden 1997:245). As I will show in chapter two, the colonial administration divided Nigeria into two - the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria, and administered the protectorates as separate colonies. Although these protectorates were amalgamated in 1914, it was until the 1940s that Nigerians from these two regions began to have serious political and administrative contact.

The increased contact between the North and the South in the 1940s revealed the imbalance between the two regions. Due to the attempts by the colonial administration to preserve Islam in the North, the expansion of western education in the area by the Christian missionaries was restricted (Mustapha 2004). This gave the South, where missionary activities and western education were allowed, educational advantage over the North. The Southern head-start in education raised fears among the Northern elites that the South would dominate the bureaucracy and other state agencies (Ukiwo 2007). On the other hand, the geographical and demographical preponderance of the North over the South also manifested. This led to fears

²¹ This hierarchy is certainly not static; there are possibilities of shifts depending on how much influence a group wields at any particular time.

among the Southern elites (especially the Igbo and Yoruba elites) that they are bound to lose out in a majoritarian electoral contest with the North. The elite solution to the above disparities came in form of the adoption of different methods of office distribution such as federal character and zoning.

Besides the North-South division, the ethno-regional elite groups also converge along the majority-minority lines – the Northern, Yoruba, and Igbo elites constitute the majority, while elites from the Middle Belt and Niger Delta are the minority. The relationship between the majority and minority elite groups goes beyond numerical superiority or inferiority, involving deeper patterns of socio-political predominance and subordination. As such, the majority-minority thesis cannot adequately capture the struggles between majority and minority elite groups for share of state powers. I will therefore adopt the dominant-marginal framework to widen the understanding of majority-minority politics in Nigeria. The marginal elite groups come from the numerically inferior ethno-regional groups and occupy a position of “actual or potential socio-political subordination” *vis-à-vis* the dominant elites (Ukeje and Adebani 2008:577). In this context, the Northern, Yoruba, and Igbo elites constitute the dominant elite group, while the Niger Delta and Middle Belt elites are the marginal elite group. The relationship between the dominant and marginal elite groups plays out vividly in the area of territorial and fiscal power-sharing, as the analysis in chapters three and four shows.

Over the years, the marginal elite groups have tried to use state creation and the revenue allocation arrangements to increase the flow of state resources to their area. At the same time, the dominant elite groups have built on their historical dominance using state creation and revenue allocation to channel resources to their area. In other words, both the dominant and marginal elite groups have an interest in using state creation and revenue allocation

arrangements to advance or redress their political fortunes. It is against this backdrop that the continuity of these arrangements can be discerned. As I mentioned earlier, the continuity of the power-sharing arrangements in Nigeria is reinforced by two processes, namely: the convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing and the use of power-sharing as a measure to pacify the marginal elite groups.

I. Convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing

To provide a backdrop for understanding the process of convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing, it is essential to briefly outline the nature of elite relations in the pre-1970 era. An analysis of how the convergence of interests unfolded in the post-1970 era then follows.

A. *The period of elite competition*

In the 1950s and 1960s, Nigerian politics was dominated by competition among the three dominant elite groups – the North, Igbo, and Yoruba. Three political parties which represent the interests of the three groups also emerged; each party controlled power in the three regions of Nigeria²². It appears that the goal of each of the three elite groups was to exercise hegemony in Nigeria as a whole or at least maintain parity with the other groups. As a result, there was a deliberate strategy by each elite group to tighten its control on its own Region while striving to gain access into the other regions (Jackson 1972). In this struggle, the North's great asset was its large population that gave it 174 out of 312 seats in the Federal Legislature in 1960. The Yoruba and Igbo elites realized that they could only control the federal government if they capture seats in the North. So they helped organize minority parties in the North while the North reacted by sponsoring minority parties in the Eastern and

²² These parties are the Northern People's Congress (North), the Action Group (Yoruba), and the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (Igbo); the parties controlled Northern, Western, and Eastern Regions, respectively.

Western Regions. This is the setting against which the general elections of 1959 and 1964 took place.

The intense competition among the elite groups led to gross electoral malpractices – false imprisonment and beating of political opponents in the three regions (Mackintosh 1965:22). In 1964, the Igbo elite mobilized the Eastern Region to boycott the general election, alleging that it was rigged mainly in the Northern Region (Sklar 1991:157). There were also allegations of blatant rigging in the Western Regional election of October 1965. This was followed by violent protests and breakdown of law and order in most areas of the Western Region. It was in these circumstances that the military coup of January 1966 occurred. But the coup was seen especially by the North as an Igbo coup since nearly all the coup leaders were Igbo officers and almost all those that lost their lives in the coup were non-Igbos. To make matters worse, the coup leaders surrendered to Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi, an Igbo officer who was the most senior officer. In July 1966, Ironsi was assassinated in a coup masterminded by mostly Northern officers. The coup leaders asked Lt-Colonel Yakubu Gowon to become the Head of State.

Even after the July 1966 coup, there were reports of continued organized violence against the Igbos in many areas of the North. In September 1966, thousands of Igbo residents in Northern Region were killed and nearly one million refugees fled to the Eastern Region (Sklar 1991:160). Before then, Colonel Gowon had called a conference – the *ad hoc* constitutional committee to work out a new constitutional framework that would save Nigeria from the path of disaster. All the conference delegates, except the Eastern Region, accepted the proposal to create more states and to give the federal government more powers. The Igbo elite preferred a loose association of strong regions and rejected the idea of states creation.

The elites from non-Igbo groups in the Eastern Region rallied behind Gowon persuading him to create more states out of the old Regions (Dappa-Biriye 1995). Sensing that the Igbo elite were bent on secession, Gowon announced the creation of twelve states on 27 May 1967, to undercut the secession bid. On 30 May 1967, the secession of Biafra was announced, sparking off a civil war beginning from 6 July 1967 to 15 January 1970.

B. *The period of elite coalescence*

Since the 1970s, there have been fundamental transformations in elite power relations in Nigeria. Contrary to the adversarial elite relations that characterized the 1950s and 1960s, the dominant elite groups have worked more closely within the framework of power-sharing since 1970. This stance reflects the “conservative” view of politics espoused by the dominant elite groups since the 1960s (see Post and Vickers 1973:63, Ekeh 1989:36). The view canvases for the continuation and consolidation of the colonially inherited system of power distribution which favors the three dominant elite groups²³. As Richard L. Sklar (1967:527) puts it:

Nigerian conservatives...had a formula for peaceful development...It prescribes the full regionalization of all political organizations capped by an agreement among regional leaders to respect the political *status quo* and share the fruits thereof on an equitable basis. That conservative tendency was as strong among leaders in the South as among leaders in the North.

The collective support for power-sharing by the dominant elite groups can, therefore, be located within this perspective²⁴.

²³ The dominant elite groups seem to prefer a system of power-sharing which preserves the hierarchy of power among the five ethno-regional groups, with the North being the leading group followed by Yoruba, Igbo, Niger Delta and then the Middle Belt.

²⁴ But it must be noted that rather than an equitable power-sharing, power-sharing in Nigeria is based on a hierarchy of power among the elite groups with the Northern elite ranking topmost.

The explanation for the support for power-sharing by the dominant elite groups can be found in the relative balance of power among the three groups. This balance of power is based on the inability of any of the groups to dominate the entire political system – the North having supremacy over the executive while the Yoruba and Igbo elite dominate the bureaucracy, commercial and financial systems (Ibrahim 1999:13). This situation breeds mutual fear of domination among the elites – the Northern elite fears that the more educated Yoruba and Igbo elites would dominate the economy and state institutions while the latter are concerned that the more populous North would have upper hand in majoritarian electoral contest. In this circumstance, power-sharing features as the modality for allaying the fears of domination and moderating elite competition. In all, the mutual support of the dominant elite for power-sharing is the elites' strategy for maintaining a balance in their relations.

The convergent interests of the dominant elite in the continuity of power-sharing unfolded along three distinct paths. The first is through the post-war soul-searching on how to minimize bitter elite competition. This reflected in measures taken since 1970 by the elite to avoid “winner-takes-all” outcomes in politics. The search for stable inter-group relations has motivated the dominant elite groups to adopt power-sharing as the framework for non-violent distributive politics. The second path of convergence is linked to the political ascendancy of the federal government vis-à-vis the states in the post-war era²⁵. This led to greater nationalization of politics as opposed to the regionalization strategy of the past era. The increasing national outlook of politics forced the various elite groups to seek ways of achieving their interests within a pan-Nigerian framework, and power-sharing featured as the modality for elite accommodation in Nigeria's “centralized federation”. The last path of convergence is an outcome of the increase in the number of competing elite groups following

²⁵ The reasons for the ascendancy of federal government over the states are discussed in chapter four (section 4.3). They include the 1966 military intervention, the war time state of emergency, transformations in the post-1970 party system, and the declining powers of the states following proliferation of new states.

the creation of states. The creation of states such as Rivers, Cross-River, Benue, and Plateau, provided elites from the marginal ethno-regional groups with a platform that would enable them develop. Consequently, two additional ethno-regional elite groups – Niger Delta and Middle Belt emerged, expanding the number of competing elite groups in Nigeria. Increasingly, the new elite groups are challenging the hegemony of the three dominant elite groups - pressing for the reform in the system of power-sharing (Onwubiko 2005:9). The nature of the restructuring proposed by the marginal elites would upset elite balance of power in Nigeria. As a result, the dominant elite groups, particularly the Northern elite, have rejected the proposals for reforms, insisting on the retention of the *status quo*.

In the context of elite struggle for power, the continuity of power-sharing depends on the strength of the groups that support or oppose the arrangements. Recent observations show that power-sharing arrangements in Nigeria would likely persist because of the unhindered political predominance of the three dominant elite groups backing the arrangements. However, there are possibilities of change if the convergence of interests among the dominant elite is disrupted or breaks down. Change is also possible if the marginal elites can persuade the dominant elite to support reforms. In the mean time, the dominant elites have ensured the continuity of power-sharing arrangements by making sure that the marginal elites are pacified with a share of power.

II. Power-sharing as a pacification strategy

Despite the intensity of the pressures for reforms by the marginal elite groups, the continuity of the power-sharing in Nigeria has been maintained through the pacification of the marginal elites. The pacification strategy manifests in the practice of allocating a small proportion of any allocable resource to the marginal groups. For instance, creation of states in Nigeria has

followed a pattern whereby states are created in areas controlled by the marginal elites in almost all the state creation exercises, but the greater number of states are created in the domains of the three dominant elite groups. In this sense, the creation of states in the areas of the marginal elite groups serves as a means of appeasing the marginal elites and justifying the entire state creation exercise. The involvement of the marginal elite in the power-sharing process keeps them from rejecting the process and at the same time, ensures the continuity of the power-sharing arrangements.

Moreover, the diversity of allocable resources and power-sharing arrangements enhances the pacification strategy. This enables the elite groups to channel their preferences to related arrangements if their interests cannot be achieved within a particular power-sharing arrangement. For instance, groups who failed to achieve their interests (like, increased share of national revenue) through the revenue allocation system may try to achieve similar interests by demanding for the creation of new states. Since the creation of a new state attracts additional share of national revenue, it allows them to realize what they failed to achieve through demands for change in the revenue allocation system. Therefore, the dynamism and complementarity of the power-sharing arrangements encourage the elites to pursue their interests within the framework of power-sharing, even when they fail to achieve their interests through a specific power-sharing arrangement. The above notwithstanding, change may still be inevitable especially when the pressure for change is so strong that it cannot be warded-off by the allocation of small proportion of allocable resources (Lindner 2003:918).

1.4 METHODOLOGY

This study employs the method of process tracing. Process tracing is a method of intensive case study, involving a re-description of history, with detective consideration of causal factors and their effects, drawing possible different paths through which the factors cause their effects (Bennett and George 2005:6). This method is typically useful at accounts of time order and at identifying new explanatory elements. The method of process tracing seeks to generate and analyze data on the causal mechanisms, processes, events, and the intervening variables that link putative causes to observed effects. The application of process tracing involves tracing the causal or process mechanism(s) at work in a given case. A mechanism is a set of propositions that could be the explanation for some social phenomenon or event, the explanation being in terms of interactions between individuals and other individuals, or between individuals and some social aggregate (Hedstroem and Swedberg 1998:25, Tilly 2001, Mayntz 2003).

Using the process tracing method, I analyzed two premises that guide the explanation of the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria. The premises include: (1) that there is a convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing, and (2) that there are consistent attempts to pacify the marginal elite groups through power-sharing. I examined these premises within Nigeria's historical, political, and socio-economic contexts and against the backdrop of events such as military intervention in politics, the Nigerian civil war, and the rise of oil economy in Nigeria. The process tracing method was also useful in tracking significant junctures in Nigerian politics, periods when decisions leading to the continuity of power-sharing arrangements were made. I focused on the constitutional developments in Nigeria between the periods 1970 to 2007. I used the pre-1970 period as a point of reference in setting the context for my analysis of power-sharing.

I. Sources of data

The main sources used for this research include public reports (such as memoirs, media reports, publications by groups and organizations like political parties), opinions (like editorials, speeches, pamphlets, letters to the editor, personal notes, paid announcements, and comments on internet sites), government documents and reports, and summaries and analyses of events (in books, monographs, journal articles, and encyclopedias). Specifically, the study draws on the rich and vast literature on ethnic relations and political developments in Nigeria; focusing primarily on studies in five relevant disciplines: political science, history, economics, sociology, and geography (see among others, Akinyemi, Dele-Cole, and Ofonagoro 1979, Ekeh and Osaghae 1989, Nnoli 1994 and 1995, Amuwo, Agbaje, Suberu, and Herault 1998, Osaghae and Onwudiwe 2001, and Gana and Egwu 2003). Substantial materials were also drawn from the popular debates and commentaries on power-sharing published in the Nigerian press - The Guardian, Daily Times, New Nigerian, This Day, Newswatch, Tell, The News; non-Nigerian media such as the independent weekly West Africa (London), and various internet sites like Naijanet (<http://www.naijanet.com>) – one of the most important internet sites for discussion of social and political developments in Nigeria.

I obtained access to the above sources through a number of libraries and archives. During my research for this dissertation, I visited several libraries and information centers in Nigeria, including the libraries of University of Nigeria Nsukka, Bayero University Kano, and University of Port Harcourt, the National Library Enugu, the Centre for Resource Documentation Library Kano, the Centre for Advanced Social Sciences Library Port Harcourt, the National Archives Enugu, the Electoral Institute Abuja, the Independent

National Electoral Commission (INEC) Library Abuja, the Federal Character Commission Abuja, and the Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission Abuja. I also made use of a variety of sources outside Nigeria, including the Central European University Library Budapest, the Institute of Federalism Library in Fribourg, as well as the Nordic African Institute Library and Dag Hammarskjöld Library in Uppsala.

II. Data analysis and presentation

In this study, data analysis involves three concurrent flows of activities namely; data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, all of which are accepted methods of qualitative data analysis (see Miles 1979, Miles and Huberman 1984). I approached the task of data reduction through selecting, simplifying and focusing of the data collected from field research. Since most of the data for this study were drawn from secondary documents, data reduction was achieved through summarizing, paraphrasing, and subsuming of relevant data under a broader theme or narrative. Also as part of data reduction, I converted some qualitative data into quantitative data (these were presented in tables). The second step in the process of data analysis involves the construction data displays. Data displays are simply an organized assembly of information that facilitates conclusion drawing. Looking at such displays makes it easy for one to understand or further analyze a given event or phenomenon. In this study, the construction of data displays entails setting up of various descriptive and explanatory figures, tables, and boxes. The last step in the process of data analysis is conclusion drawing. This involves drawing meaning from the reduced and displayed data – noting patterns, themes and possible configurations, subsuming particulars under the general, drawing conceptual and theoretical linkages, as well as building explanations based on logical chain of evidence.

Narratives were used as data presentation technique. Narratives have since been recognized as part of the methods in social science research²⁶ (see for example, White 1984, Fisher 1985, Calhoun 1998, Rhodes and Brown 2005). Narratives refer to the ways in which we construct disparate facts and weave them together cognitively in order to make sense of our reality (Patterson and Monroe 1998:315). The process of narrative construction was guided by the theoretical framework, which ensured that the narratives reflected the theoretical arguments. The theoretical framework was the basis for determining the salient points. In line with Buthe's (2002:487) observation, narratives were useful in "presenting information about correlations at every step of the causal process, ...[in] contextualizing the steps in ways that make the entire process visible rather than leaving it fragmented into analytical stages". Through narratives I was able to include detailed analysis of various events as well as to simplify the reality by determining the elements of the historical accounts that are salient and worthy of attention, and those that are insignificant and require omitting.

²⁶ See Adebani (2001) for a fine application of this method to the study of Nigerian politics.

CHAPTER TWO

The Root of Power-sharing

In a country like Nigeria with its diverse peoples and their corresponding diverse political, cultural and economic endowments, true federalism must reflect a genuine attempt to regulate relationship among the groups, as well as a reflection of these identifiable divergences within a framework of national unity... We in Nigeria must evolve our own power-sharing formula, take our own decisions and develop our own institutions anchored on our historical experiences²⁷.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the historical context within which power-sharing was conceived and established in Nigeria. It analyzes two key historical issues underlying the evolution of power-sharing in Nigeria, namely: the process of state building and the nature of elite behavior. The main theme of the discussion in this chapter is the response of the colonial state to the struggles for autonomy, equality and power by various ethno-regional elite groups, and how these responses have provided the groundwork for power-sharing in Nigeria. The chapter provides a basic account of the political developments in Nigeria and how these have been influenced by the emergence of politicized ethnicity in the country.

The chapter is organized into four sections. The first section sets the background of the chapter, analyzing the relationship between colonialism and ethnic diversity, focusing on the nature of political interpretations of ethnicity that emerged under the colonial era. The second section explores the steps that the British colonialists took to establish the Nigerian state and how these steps shaped the structure of Nigerian federation. The fourth section examines the nature of elite behavior that developed under the colonial state and its implications in the post-colonial era. In the concluding section, the chapter argues that power-sharing is the

²⁷ Federal Republic of Nigeria, *Report of the Constitutional Conference Containing the Resolutions and Recommendations*, Vol. II. Abuja: National Assembly Press, 1995:3.

result of efforts to balance the unequal federal structure in Nigeria and to create the framework for non-violent distributive politics in the country.

2.1 COLONIALISM AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN NIGERIA

I. Pre-colonial ethnic diversity summarized

Before the advent of colonialism, the territory that comprised contemporary Nigeria was constituted by multiplicity of ethnic groups and state-systems, which are variously described in the literature as empires, kingdoms, chiefdoms, city-states, village republics and a caliphate (Oyovbire 1983:6). Indigenous social and political structures in these societies were as diverse as other ties such as language, genealogy, and religion, features that hold members of the ethnic communities together. Among all the elements that differentiated pre-colonial societies of Nigeria, language appeared to be the most significant. Scholars suggest that there are over 400 different language groups in Nigeria (Anita and Haruna 1997:149, endnote 1). Language differences in Nigeria are so striking to the extent that within about twenty miles outside a particular communal homeland one is likely to encounter a different language (Nnoli 1978:128).

The use of assorted labels to describe Nigeria's pre-colonial communities alludes to the fact that analysts are yet to acquire a common understanding of the nomenclature of the ethnic groups in the pre-colonial Nigeria. However, the pre-colonial societies in Nigeria can be classified into "mega" and "mini" states²⁸ (Olukoju 1997:13). The mega states were the extensive empires and kingdoms established by communities such as the Hausa- and Kanuri²⁹-speaking peoples of North-west and North-east, respectively; the Jukun, Igala, and

²⁸ This use of the term state in Nigeria's pre-colonial context is for analytical purposes and should not be construed in terms of modern statehood.

²⁹ The Kanem-Bornu Empire was one of the most prominent mega-states. Under the leadership of Mai (the King), the kingdom developed extensive political and social systems as well as large commercial networks. The

Nupe of the North-central; and the Yoruba and Bini in South-west and South-south regions, respectively.

The mini-states were the communities that were not able to establish political structures above the village level before the arrival of the colonialists (Olukoju 1997:13). These communities include the Igbo of the South-east (with the exception of peripheral kingdoms like Onitsha and Aboh), the Tiv and Gwari of the North-central, and the Ibibio and Ijaw of the South-south regions. Many of ethnic groups in contemporary Nigeria lived in mini-states. The distinction between the mega and mini states relates to the two divergent interpretations of ethnicity in Nigeria, namely: the social distance thesis and the social proximity thesis (see Iwaloye and Ibeanu 1997:56). The mini states provide the basis for the social distance thesis while the social proximity thesis draws its logic from the mega states. These theses are important because they provided basis for the adoption of various policies during the colonial era.

II. Interpreting ethnic diversity I: the social distance thesis

The social distance perspective highlights the cultural distinctiveness among the pre-colonial communities that constitute Nigeria. It was championed by non-Nigerian anthropologists such as C. K. Meek, Margery Perham, P. C. Lloyd, Simon Ottenberg, and M. G. Smith, especially those that studied the “mini-states”. Some individuals in the colonial government like Arthur Richards, former Governor of Nigeria (1943–1948) applied this approach in their policies. In a much quoted comment by Richards, he stated:

kingdom also had a trained and well-equipped army in addition to lively diplomatic relations with other states. The warm diplomatic relations between the Kanem-Bornu Empire and other states manifested in the visits to the Kingdom by emissaries from Egypt and Mali Empire as well as the visit by officials of the Kingdom to Mecca, Saudi Arabia on a pilgrimage around 1097AD (Ihonvbere and Shaw 1998:3).

It is only the accident of British suzerainty which has made Nigeria one country... Socially and politically there are deep differences between the major tribal groups. They do not speak the same language and they have highly divergent customs and ways of life and they represent different stages of culture (cited in Osuntokun 1979:99).

Although the ethnic groups in Nigeria were culturally distinct, yet they were not politically, socially, and economically isolated from each other. Many studies have shown the existence of strong contacts and interactions among the pre-colonial societies in Nigeria (Olukoju 1997). Thus, the social distance thesis makes sense only as an argument used by the colonial government to justify the policy of “divide and rule” adopted in Nigeria during the early periods of colonialism. This is why the thesis regards some cultural differences as significant and others are insignificant. For instance, the linguistic variation between the Igbo and Yoruba is seen in the social distance perspective as significant cultural difference while the linguistic variation among various Igbo communities is treated as insignificant (Nnoli 1978:107). The objective of this kind of interpretation is perhaps to maintain a boundary between the local people and limit Nigerian nationalism.

III. Interpreting ethnic diversity II: the social proximity thesis

The social proximity argument emphasizes the cultural and ethnological commonalities and linkages between the different ethnic groups in Nigeria. This was the perspective adopted and used by many Nigerian nationalists in efforts to mobilize the people against colonial rule. Over the years, Nigerian anthropologists, historians and political scientists have identified various integrative elements that existed in Nigeria’s pre-colonial societies (Ikime 1980, Jinadu 2002). These integrative elements can be found in ecology, marriage, religion, the land tenure systems and other complementary networks of economic, political and socio-cultural exchanges (Nnoli 1978:108-110). There were some in the colonial administration, particularly those that are opposed to indirect rule, who acknowledged the deep ethnological

and cultural affiliations among Nigerian communities. For instance, a memo by the colonial administration described communities in the pre-colonial Nigeria as follows:

Linguistically and culturally, it was argued, there was no part of Nigeria where a line can be drawn and it can be said here the North ends and the South begins. The inheritance of culture and ideas has been without exception through thousand years from North to South and East to West. Tribe has followed tribe, cultural conception followed cultural conception, but though the extremes visibly differ, there is a distinguishable woof running through the whole while the web is mainly varied by environment (cited in Iwaloye and Ibeanu 1997:56).

The above statement shows the divergences in how the colonial administration perceives ethnic diversity in Nigeria.

The interpretation of ethnicity in Nigeria is politically significant. In the first place, there was the tendency by some colonial administrators to use the social distance thesis as justificatory argument to support the policy of “divide and rule” in Nigeria (Okonjo 1974). On the other hand, Nigerian nationalists made use of the social proximity thesis in mobilizing the masses against colonial rule and in favor of independent Nigerian nation. In all, it can be argued that although the various ethnic groups in Nigeria differ culturally, there were several factors such as trade and migration that facilitated cultural interaction and assimilation. This provides the basis for national unity, however, the divisions within the colonial administration made it difficult for any clear policy toward national unity to emerge. This is the root of the subsequent ambiguities that dominated the state building project in Nigeria.

IV. Lessons from the above interpretations

The foregoing survey of the interpretations of ethnicity in Nigeria has important implications for the analysis of the evolution of power-sharing in Nigeria. In the first place, it supports the view that the contemporary ethnicity in Nigeria is a recent social construction which did not

exist in its present form during the pre-colonial period. In line with the constructivist view, the above discussion suggests that ethnic identities had undergone remarkable re-interpretation in the context of colonialism that they have little resemblance to the initial ethnic formations³⁰ (see Usman 1995^a:1883, Usman 1995^b, Isumonah 2004). The fact is that through generalization and extension of ethnic boundaries, language and cultures, new ethnic identities were constructed. In fact, the Native Authority (NA) system through which the early colonial administration was run recognized this and ensured the autonomy of the various groups, by governing them as separate towns or sub-ethnic nationalities such as Ijebu, Oyo, Egba, or Ekiti (Osaghae 1998:4, Olukoju 1997:17). It was the decision to regionalize Nigeria that tremendously transformed the ethnic boundaries in Nigeria (Nnoli 1978:35-63, Osaghae 1991:238-239). The point being made here is that if we accept that contemporary ethnicity is socially and politically constructed then it follows that recent effort at power-sharing (especially state creation and zoning) is a continuation of the state building project initiated by the colonial government. As it was in the colonial era, the political engineering process is controlled by the dominant elite groups.

The second point relates to the impact of the interpretations of ethnicity on colonial policies in Nigeria. The failure of the colonial government to adopt a particular interpretation of ethnicity gave rise to ambiguities in colonial policies. As Nwabughuogu (1996) showed, the colonial government could not decide early whether to forge ethnic groups in Nigeria together in a unitary state or keep them apart in a federal state. The former Governor of Nigeria, High Clifford dismissed the idea of unitarism claiming that:

³⁰ It has been noted, for example, that the name Yoruba and the language by the same name, which is now being claimed by groups in South-west Nigeria such as Ekiti, Ijesha, Ijebu and Egba, each of which had claims of being distinct from the others, specifically belonged only to those from the old Oyo empire (Osaghae 2001:19, fn 8).

Assuming...that the impossible were feasible – that this collection of self-contained and mutually independent Native States, separated from one another, as many of them are, by great distances, by differences of history and traditions, and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social and religious barriers, were indeed capable of being welded into a single homogenous nation – a deadly blow would thereby be struck at the very root of national self-government in Nigeria, which secures to each separate people the right to maintain its identity, its individuality and its nationality, its own chosen form of government; and the peculiar political and social institutions which have been evolved for it by the wisdom and by the accumulated experience of generations of its forbearers (see Coleman 1958:194).

Clifford's comment reflects the early colonial policies, which tried to keep ethnic groups in Nigeria as apart as possible. These policies include indirect rule, administrative duality, and regionalism (Smith 2005:131-132).

At the same time, the colonial government adopted the “amalgamation policy” to forge the pre-colonial societies into a single political entity (Nigeria), although the motivation for amalgamation policy is largely economic – to reap the economic benefits of “unity in diversity”. Oyovbaire (1983:8) observed that “as a social system, colonialism did not destroy completely the pre-colonial social relations of production, distribution and exchange and of patterns of authority and culture”. These were some of the structures that the colonialists sought to harmonize and utilize to their economic advantage. The ambiguities in colonial policies had far reaching effects on post-colonial Nigeria. The most obvious is that the post-colonial state inherited fractured and fragile institutions, and an absence of a unified sense of Nigerian identity (Smith 2005:132). In the next section, I will explore in greater details how the ambiguities in the colonial policies played out in the process of state formation, and the implication of this on Nigeria's territorial structure and political process.

2.2 COLONIAL LEGACY I: AMBIGUOUS STATE BUILDING PROJECT

The mode of British penetration and occupation of Nigeria was instrumental to the creation of an asymmetrical territorial and political structure in the country. The British penetration of Nigeria as well as the creation and consolidation of the Nigerian state was accomplished through three major ways. First, the British officials captured Lagos and from there, they extended into the Yoruba hinterland. Secondly, there was penetration through the lower areas of the River Niger into the hinterland of the South-east. Thirdly, penetration into Nigeria was completed when the British through the Royal Niger Company moved into the communities in Northern Nigeria, and secured a trade monopoly. The British government later retrieved Northern Nigeria from the Royal Niger Company around 1898-1900 (Osuntokun 1979:92, Oyovbaire 1983:9). Once the penetration and occupation of Nigeria was completed, the British colonialists settled down to the task of designing the territorial and political structure of Nigerian state. The process of creating the architecture of Nigerian state passed through five stages, namely: autonomy, amalgamation, administrative duality and indirect rule, regionalization, and federalism.

I. Stage one: autonomy

The complex route through which the creation of the Nigerian state occurred precipitated two serious challenges to the British government. The first was the challenge of policy – how to govern the disparate and complex communities that constituted Nigeria, while the other was the challenge of logistics - related to problems of communication and acute financial and personnel shortages. The initial strategy adopted by the British colonial administration to overcome these challenges was to administer the different parts of Nigeria as independent and autonomous territories, and to do so indirectly through the existing local authorities. This

strategy of British consolidation in the Nigerian colony formed the root of what later metamorphosed into Nigeria's regional and federal structure.

In 1898, when the British government decided to replace the Royal Niger Company as the administrator of Northern Nigeria, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Joseph Chamberlain, attempted to design a coherent policy of colonial development of Nigeria by appointing the Niger Committee, headed by Lord Selborne (Osuntokun 1979:92). The task of the Committee was to consider the future structural and institutional design of the incipient Nigerian state. This was the first major opportunity for territorial and administrative organization of Nigeria. The Committee suggested that it would be more economically and financially viable for the British government to unite the different parts of Nigeria once communication permitted. The Committee also recommended that it would be to British advantage to establish an administrative policy system in Nigeria, which would make use of existing African political institutions, so that the British can keep expenses in Nigeria to a minimum (Ballard 1971:334). Finally, the Committee suggested that the amalgamation of the "Niger Territories" should be carried out in installments (Tamuno 1998:15).

II. Stage two: amalgamation

The British government administered the colony of Nigeria as three separate units until 1906, when two segments of Southern Nigeria (the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos) were brought together under a common administrative leadership. This action reduced the administrative components of Nigeria to two - the Northern Protectorate and the Southern Protectorate. In 1912, the two separate territories were then placed under the leadership of Frederick Lugard, who became the Governor of Nigeria. In 1914, the Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria were amalgamated.

The reasons for the amalgamation of Nigeria are numerous and have been adequately treated in the literature (Okonjo 1974); only a few important points deserve to be recounted. Firstly, amalgamation provided a means by which the British could subsidize the administrative cost of the poorer Northern Protectorate through the South's custom receipts. Southern Nigeria was financially self-reliant while the British administration in the North was supported by the annual grant-in-aid. The practical impossibility of maintaining artificial barriers between the South and the North was the second major reason for the amalgamation of Nigeria. People speaking the same language and sharing a common historical heritage, finding themselves on different sides of the North/South frontier naturally crossed at will to see relatives or transact business. Finally, the British government thought that the two Nigerian Protectorates constitute a continuous stretch of British territory without any intervening foreign possession between them. Thus, Britain wanted to resolve the absurd differences in the policies being followed by the administration of each section of the country (Osuntokun 1979:93). Once the amalgamation of Nigeria was completed and Fredrick Lugard installed as the Governor of Nigeria, the next challenge was to address the logistical difficulties of running a large colony such as Nigeria. Armed with the notion that Nigerians are separated from each other by wide social distance and with the desire to find the cheapest possible means of governing the colony, Lugard adopted the twin policies of administrative duality and indirect rule.

III. Stage three: administrative duality and indirect rule

Although Nigeria was officially amalgamated in 1914, the colonial government's policy of administrative duality led to the continued separation of the administrative units of the Northern and Southern protectorates, each virtually independent of the other (Jinadu 2002:13). This strategy was supported by the different forms of administrative goals pursued

by the colonial government in the two protectorates. The main goal of the colonial administration in Southern Nigeria was to build a commercial enclave, thus it focused primarily on the development of natural resources and trade. On the other hand, the major goal of the Northern Nigeria colonial administration was basically to administer the local communities; as such, the administration was characterized by the making and implementation of “native policies” (Ballard 1971:334).

The period of separate administration of different parts of Nigeria was long enough to impart the communal groups with distinct identities - different traditions, ways of life, value orientations - that were hard to reconcile after independence, leading one scholar to refer to the two colonial protectorates as “two British tribes”, due to the social and political differences and mutual ill-feelings that the colonial administrators had passed on to them (Afigbo 1991:20). To a large extent, important political departments in the administrations of the Southern and Northern Protectorates were kept separate even after the 1914 amalgamation. Administrative officers were hardly transferred from one part of the country to the other. The result was that there were two separate Nigerian governments. Therefore, what emerged in Nigeria up to 1919 was a country and two different territorial administrations (Osuntokun 1979:97). The two colonial administrations were separate in structure and personnel, with the Governor of Nigeria as the only link. In the North, the Lt. Governor ruled in consultation with the Emirs while in the South, particularly in the Colony of Lagos, there was a Legislative Council established in 1886, which ruled along with the Lt. Governor (Oyovbaire 1983:10).

Administrative duality in Nigeria was reinforced by another colonial administrative practice called indirect rule. Indirect rule was first established in Northern Nigeria between 1900 and

1913. Then, it was extended to Benin and the Yoruba areas of Western Nigeria, between 1916 and 1919. From 1927 it was exported to Eastern Nigeria; and by 1937 it had spread all over Nigeria, except for the municipalities of Lagos, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Kaduna, Kano and Zaria (Nnoli 1978:113). Indirect rule was basically designed to overcome the problems of shortage of trained British administrators and limited funds. In 1906, for example, there was only one British officer to about 2,900 square miles of territory, and one to about 45,000 Nigerians in the Northern Protectorate (Okonjo 1974:27). Equally, there was a near absence of artisans, clerical and technical staff required by the colonial government to function. But in the midst of this challenge, Lugard discovered a comparatively well-established bureaucracy run by the Hausa-Fulani Emirs. The Emirs had an administrative system that extended over a vast territory with considerably large population, a tax collection system as well as a security and judicial system. Lugard imposed his authority on the Emirs, adopted their personnel as agents of the British colonial government and used their established administrative framework to run the Northern Protectorate.

As I mentioned earlier, when Lugard became the Governor of Nigeria in 1912, he began to extend indirect rule to the Southern Nigeria, but in that region indirect rule was confronted by serious hitches. In the South-west, the Yoruba Obas were less authoritarian than the Northern Emirs and therefore could not get their people to accept the new regime the way the Emirs did (Nnoli 1978:113). In the South-east, it was even a more disastrous scenario because of the absence of one-man traditional authority as was the case in the North and partially in the South-west. In order to overcome the difficulties created by the absence of local chiefs in the South-east, the British colonial officials embarked on the exercise of creating local chiefs by law. This led to the emergence of a new class of local administrators known as the “warrant chiefs” (Afigbo 1972). The creation of the warrant chiefs was a highly complicated process

because of the absence of consistent criteria for the exercise. For instance, in Ikwo clan in Abakaliki Division in what is today known as Ebonyi State, Anyiogu Agwu was intuitively selected as the warrant chief of the area because he possessed strong physical features, which the colonial officials considered essential in ruling a “native people”. Also, in Oraukwu in Onitsha Division of the present day Anambra State, the colonial official appointed his warrant chiefs from among those who attended the initial meeting he summoned after he took control of the village (Okonjo 1974:55). Unfortunately, most of the warrant chiefs did not have any traditional claim to the responsibilities, which the colonial officials had bestowed on them. As a result, there was widespread popular rejection of the warrant chiefs. In all, the implementation of indirect rule policy resulted to social upheavals especially in the Eastern part of Nigeria. It was amidst these circumstances that Fredrick Lugard was removed as the Governor of Nigeria in 1919. His exit opened the way for the regionalization of Nigeria.

IV. Stage four: steps towards regionalization

After Hugh Clifford succeeded Fredrick Lugard as the Governor of Nigeria in August 1919, he was faced with structural ambiguities and increasing separatism. Clifford criticized the amalgamation process in Nigeria insisting that the scheme failed to provide for integration. He proposed to reform Lugard’s administrative structure by amalgamating the separate Northern and Southern departments and by co-coordinating administrative activities through an expanded central secretariat, with its Chief Secretary serving as the Deputy Governor. However, the proposals were stifled by the colonial office. Instead, the Office suggested a federal solution to the problem of governing Nigeria. A dispatch sent to Clifford by the Secretary of State for Colonies, Lord Milner, contained a proposal, which states that: “from the point of view of scientific decentralization it would be decidedly preferable if there were three or four, and not merely two, Lieutenant Governors in Nigeria” (Ballard 1971:337);

indicating the division of Nigeria into more than two Provinces. In a response to this proposal, Clifford agreed that there should be three groups of provinces, with the South divided at the Niger and the new Eastern Provinces extended to the Benue River (Ballard 1971:337). However, this reform was not implemented and no change in provincial arrangement was effected until 1939. Although Hugh Clifford failed to secure an endorsement to reverse Lugard's indirect rule, he succeeded in getting an approval for the restructuring of the administrative machinery of the colonial government. In 1921, Hugh Clifford replaced Lugard's uncoordinated secretariat with a new secretariat structure, which streamlined the technical departments and introduced a more centralized administration that were not envisaged by Lugard in 1914 (Okonjo 1974:125).

Graeme Thompson, Clifford's successor, continued the centralizing policy. This trend continued between 1931 and 1935 when Donald Cameron was appointed as the Governor. Donald Cameron opposed any measure tending to divide Nigeria into separate territorial units, arguing that for "geographical and economic reasons" it was not likely that any part or parts of Nigeria would become "separate, self-contained political and economic units". He warned that any attempt to frame British policy in such a way as to foster the development of the North as a separate political unit would amount to reviving "a state of affairs that the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigeria in 1914 was specifically designed to terminate" (Nwabughuogu 1996:47). However, Herbert Richmond Palmer, an apostle of Lugard, championed an opposition against increasing centralization. Palmer and his successors in the colonial service of Northern Provinces saw the centralizing policies of the colonial government as a threat to the survival of the indirect rule system. They resisted attempts to unify the North and the South, opposing for instance, the transfer of officers from the South to the North, apparently to avoid the spread of Southern ideas and methods in the

North (Nwabughuogu 1996:46-47). Colonial officials opposed to centralization maintained that “it had been the policy goal of the Northern Nigeria to develop into a semi-autonomous state” that would eventually unite with the South in a kind of federation (Okonjo 1974:293).

By the time Bernard Bourdillon took over as the Governor of Nigeria in 1935, the relationship between the colonial officials in the Northern Nigeria and the Southern Nigeria had become very frosty (Ballard 1971). One of the most urgent tasks that faced Bourdillon was to reconcile the Northern colonial officials which preferred a more independent native administration with the Southern colonial staff that wanted a unitary Nigerian state. Bourdillon called a conference of Northern Provinces Residents in 1937 in an attempt to dispel the tension within the colonial public service. At this time, it was clear to him that the only condition on which the cooperation of the Northern Nigeria colonial officials could be secured was to grant them some concessions. Consequently, he scrapped the Clifford Constitution and replaced it with one which would provide Regional Councils in the provinces with a Central Council in Lagos. Bourdillon awarded the North some degree of regional autonomy under its own Chief Commissioner and also allocated to the Northern Provinces half of the seats in the Central Legislative Council (Okonjo 1974:309). He pressed the “regionalization” idea further by splitting the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria into two: Eastern and Western Provinces with Enugu and Ibadan serving as their administrative headquarters, respectively (Okonjo 1974:311-313). This act reverted Nigeria to its structure before 1906. However, Bourdillon could not constitutionalize the administrative reorganizations he introduced before he retired in ill health in 1943. The challenge before his successor, Arthur Richards, was therefore to constitutionalize the new regional system.

V. Stage five: constitutionalization of regionalism and the emergence of federalism

Arthur Richards was convinced that Nigeria falls naturally into three regions - the North, the West and the East, as a result, he quickly settled down to working out a constitutional framework for the administrative reorganizations initiated by Bernard Bourdillon in 1939 (Ballard 1971:346). After a rapid approval by the Colonial Office, the Richards draft constitution was pushed through the Legislative Council in 1945; it took effect the following year - 1946. The Richards Constitution did not last long due to the severe criticism that trailed its enactment. The Constitution was rejected by Nigerian nationalists because of the unilateral way in which its proposals were conceived and adopted. The nationalist leaders were displeased with the Richards' Constitution because they felt that it was imposed from London, without any consultation with Nigerians. Also, the nationalists, particularly members of the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), felt that constitutionalizing Nigeria's regions would lead to the disintegration of the country (Ihonvbere and Shaw 1998:20). The colonial administration, however, made efforts at showing that contrary to the views of Nigerian nationalists, the intention behind the Richards Constitution was not to break up Nigerian unity but to build it from below (Ballard 1971:346).

In 1948, John Macpherson was appointed the Governor of Nigeria. He encouraged the nationalists to discuss the proposed Nigerian Constitution. This led to the convening of a Grand National Conference at Ibadan in 1950 (Ihonvbere and Shaw 1998:20-21). It was at this conference that the initial push for ethnic power-sharing and self-rule manifested visibly. Delegates at this conference requested different levels of autonomy such as regional self-rule and the Nigerianization of the public service. The outcome of the Ibadan Conference was the Macpherson Constitution of 1951. The Constitution proposed a further decentralization of authority to the Regions and the creation of a central government with both legislature and executive. The territorial-political organization introduced by the Constitution is perceived by

some scholars as “quasi-federalist” (Jinadu 2002:16). Nigeria’s regions were transformed into a limited form of federal units, with the British-controlled central government still largely dominant, but with considerably enlarged powers of the regions. The introduction of the “quasi-federalism” in 1951 marked the first major step toward power-sharing in Nigeria. The 1951 Constitution expanded the powers of the three regions created in 1946. It provided for Regional Legislature and an Executive Council in each of the regions. In the Northern and Western Regions, there were provisions for Houses of Chiefs and Houses of Assembly, while the Eastern Region had only a House of Assembly. The regional legislatures have the power to legislate on limited matters such as Agriculture, Education, Local Government, and Public Health (Ezera 1960).

Nigeria’s tendency toward federalism was not a surprising one. As early the 1940s, nationalist leaders such as Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo, put forward concrete proposals for a territorial restructuring that would reflect the geopolitical and ethno-linguistic configurations of the country³¹. Thus, the shift from administrative duality and indirect rule to regionalism as well as the shared views of the colonial government and the Nigerian elite on the desirability of a territorial power-sharing led to the evolution of federalism in Nigeria. The shape of Nigerian federation was molded around the conception of federalism as a constitutional mechanism which defines ethnic and regional diversity as the major determinant of the territorial structure of the society. Here, the units (regions/states) that were to be federated were created around ethnic groups. In this sense, one can rightly acknowledge that the periods between 1945 and 1954 were critical in providing an ethnic mould for Nigerian federalism.

³¹ See Azikiwe (1943) and Awolowo (1947) for their thoughts on the organization of Nigerian State.

In 1954, a new Constitution was introduced to strengthen Nigeria's federalism. The Constitution established Federal Council of Ministers (consisting among others, the Governor-General and three Ministers from each Region) and Federal House of Representatives (with 184 members – ninety-two from Northern Region, forty-two each from Western and Eastern Regions, six from Southern Cameroons, and two from Lagos). The Constitution also provided for the appointment of Premiers in the Regions, in addition to establishment of Regional High Courts. Thus, the 1954 Constitution empowered the Regions to establish institutions of the three arms of government – the executive, legislature and judiciary. Competitive party politics was also allowed at the Regional level to fill the political positions created by the Constitution.

The advent of party politics led to the emergence of an ethno-regionalist party system dominated by three political parties (Jinadu 2002:17). Each of the three major parties drew its electoral support from the major ethnic group in the region of its dominance. In this case, the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) received overwhelming support from the Hausa-Fulani dominated North; the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons³² (NCNC) was strong among the Igbo in the East (although it was also popular in the Western Region); and lastly, the Action Group (AG) had its stronghold in the West and was popular among the Yoruba (it also derived considerable support from minorities in the East and North). There were also other parties like the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), Benin-Delta People's Party (BDPP), and United National Independence Party (UNIP), but these parties had marginal political influence.

³² The NCNC was not originally an ethno-regional party. It was the intensity of ethnic politics in Nigeria that forced the party to use the Igbo as its support base.

The tri-polar structure of the federal and party systems alienated the minority ethnic groups. As a result, these groups adopted three major strategies to address the problem. The strategies include: (a) the constitutional self-determination policy involving alliance with the ruling party in another region to agitate for a new state; (b) the compromise policy of cooperation with the ruling party in the region; and (c) a non-constitutional self-determination policy with demands for separate states through riots, revolts and threats of secession (Okpu 1977:118). In 1957, due to the intensity of the minority demands for creation of states, the British government set up a Commission (the Willink Commission) to investigate the fears of the minorities and means of allaying them. The Commission considered the requests of the minority groups and recommended against the creation of more regions/states. Thus, Nigeria gained independence in 1960 as a federation of three regions dominated by the three largest ethnic groups, and a federation in which the Northern region alone had a greater population and land mass than the other two regions combined³³. This unequal federal structure was a major challenge which the post-colonial Nigerian state had to confront. As I argued in chapter one, the structural imbalance in Nigerian federation was part of the factors that led to the collapse of the First Republic. I will discuss the efforts to restructure the post-colonial Nigerian federation and how this gave rise to territorial power-sharing in chapter three. Meanwhile, there is another historical issue that provided the context for the evolution of power-sharing in Nigeria. This relates to the political behavior of the Nigerian elite.

2.3 COLONIAL LEGACY II: ELITE BEHAVIOR

As I noted in chapter one, there are five main ethno-regional elite groups in Nigeria – the Northern, Yoruba, Igbo, Niger Delta, and Middle Belt elite groups. The ethno-regional background of these groups impacted them with distinct identities and interests that were

³³ Based on the 1960 figures, the Northern region constitutes about 54 percent of Nigeria's population and occupy about three-quarters of its land mass. Subsequent census data, including the 2006 census figures, agree with the 1960 figures.

difficult to reconcile during the late colonial and early independence periods. Real efforts at moderating elite competition and conflict of interests only began since the 1970s within the framework of power-sharing. The following analysis briefly outlines the identity, representations, interests, and strategies of the various ethno-regional elite groups. Thereafter, the section examines the nature of elite behavior in Nigeria and presents explanations for the advent of adversarial elite behavior.

I. Ethno-regional elite groups in Nigeria

A. *The Northern elite*

The Northern elite³⁴ originated in the Northern Region and is dominated by the aristocracies and ruling elite of Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, and Nupe ethnic groups - the ruling elite which the British met and conquered in the areas which later became the Northern Protectorate (Madunagu 1994^a:19). The Northern elite draw their strength, resilience and cohesion especially from a common religion – Islam and a *lingua franca* – the Hausa language (Paden 1997:247, Falola 2001). Although the Northern elite appear cohesive, they are divided into various competing blocs. Elites from Sokoto Caliphate are the leading group in the North³⁵ (Paden 1997:246, see also Mustapha 2002, Miles 1987); followed closely by Borno³⁶. There is a precarious balance between Sokoto and Borno since the era of colonial rule³⁷, and this has remained an important element in the political coalition-building in contemporary Northern politics³⁸. Besides the traditional rivalry between Sokoto and Borno, there is also

³⁴ Also referred to as the Northern Oligarchy, Sokoto Caliphate, Hausa-Fulani, or simply the North

³⁵ The Sokoto Caliphate was established around 1804 after the Fulani Jihad overthrew the former Hausa states. The Sokoto Caliphate is an extensive empire made up of a cluster of states widely referred to as the emirate states. During the colonial era, the emirate states stretched from Sokoto in the west to Adamawa in the east and from Katsina in the north to Ilorin and Niger in the south.

³⁶ The Kanuri dominated area of Borno is the oldest Islamic community in sub-Saharan Africa - dating as far back as the 11th century - See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/kanuri>

³⁷ In the 19th century, when Sokoto attempted to conquer Borno, there was a standoff, and Borno's resistance to Sokoto has become part of the historical legacy of elite politics in the North.

³⁸ In the First Republic, Sokoto and Borno shared the two most important positions in the Northern Region – the Premier and the Governor. In the Second Republic, the alliance between Sokoto and Borno was strained when

rivalry within the Caliphate; the most popular being the one between of Sokoto and Kano³⁹ (Post and Vickers 1973:102, see also Dudley 1968, Feinstein 1987, Omoruyi 1989, Kukah 1993)

Since the 1970s, there have been more manifestations of divisions within the Northern elite. In the 1980s, there was much talk about the existence of the “Kaduna Mafia”, which entered into serious rivalry with the pro-Sokoto “Shagarite elements” that supported the leadership of the Sokoto-born Nigerian President, Shehu Shargari (Othman 1984, see also Ekwe-Ekwe 1985:619-620). The regimes of Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha further disrupted the cohesiveness of the Northern elite, when in their bid to stay-tight in power they tried to paralyze all political strongholds in Nigeria, including the Kaduna Mafia⁴⁰. The regimes also attacked the highly revered throne of Sultan of Sokoto⁴¹. The attacks on the Sultanate whittled-down the influence of the Caliphate in the North. In fact, there were speculations that a Kanuri led pan-Northern Mafia headed by General Abacha⁴² emerged and took over the leadership of the North from Sokoto; such talks died out after the demise of Abacha in 1998. The death of Abacha left the North without any visible leading elite group.

To halt the decline of the Northern elite in Nigeria politics, the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) was established in March 2000 by Emirs, former Heads of States, and other prominent

Waziri Ibrahim, (Borno) vied against Shehu Shagari (Sokoto) in the presidential election. Recently, there seems to be a renewed collaboration between Borno and the Caliphate following the appointment of Babagana Kingibe (Borno) as the Secretary to the Government of the Federation by President Umaru Yar’adua (Katsina).

³⁹ The rivalry between of Sokoto and Kano resulted in a civil war in the 1890s. In March 1963, when the Premier of Northern Region, Ahmadu Bello (Sokoto), forced the Emir of Kano, Muhammad Sanusi, to abdicate his position on charges of corruption, many people in Kano interpreted the act as an attack on their kingdom by Sokoto. As a result, the Kano People’s Party (KPP) was formed; there was also a demand for the creation of Kano State.

⁴⁰ The decline of the Kaduna Mafia was followed by the emergence of a group of retired generals and politicians nurtured by Babangida, which some call the “Minna Mafia” (Njoku 2005:107, fn. 13). The Minna Mafia went underground after the exit of Babangida.

⁴¹ Firstly, the stool was “defied” when Babangida imposed his friend, Ibrahim Dasuki, on the Caliphate without regard to the age long tradition of selection of the Sultan by the king-makers. Then the more severe blow came when Abacha removed and exiled Sultan Dasuki.

⁴² See *ibid.* Abacha was Kanuri by descent, although his official home state was Kano.

Northerners “to foster and strengthen the foundation of Northern unity”⁴³. Over the years, the ACF has positioned itself at the forefront of the engagement between the Northern elite and elites from other parts of the country. The organization articulates and expresses the views of the Northern elite on issues such as the Sharia crisis, violent conflicts involving Northerners, and the debate over power-shift⁴⁴. On issues relating to power-sharing, the Northern elite support the maintenance of the *status quo*.

B. *The Yoruba elite*

The Yoruba occupy the area known for many years as “Western Nigeria” and it is constituted by several distinct sub-groups like the Oyo, Ife, Ijesha, Ekiti, Ijebu, Ketu, and Ondo (Law 1973:208). In the 1940s when regionalism was introduced in Nigeria, the Yoruba regarded the Western Region as their own, thereby “merging ethnic and regional identities as one” (Falola 2006:29). Considering the sub-ethnic divisions among the Yoruba, the elite tried to create a pan-Yoruba identity to unite the people in the context of ethno-regional competition for power in Nigeria. The central figure in the efforts is Obafemi Awolowo. In 1945, he established a cultural association known as the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* (the society of the descendants of Oduduwa) (Falola 2006:37, Sklar 1991). Through the *Egbe*, Awolowo mobilized the Yoruba elite to establish a Yoruba political party – the Action Group (AG) in March 1951 (Post 1966, Vaughan 1994, Adekunle 2006). Thus, much of Yoruba elite politics since the First Republic is dominated by opposition and support for Awolowo and his ideology⁴⁵ (Falola 2006:41, see also Adebaniwi 2007).

⁴³ Constitution of Arewa Consultative Forum, <http://www.arewaconsultativeforum.org/acf%20constitution.htm>

⁴⁴ See for instance, *Northern Political Agenda – the Way Forward*, a speech by Sokoto State Governor, Attahiru Bafarawa during the 2nd anniversary seminar of the Arewa Consultative Forum on 28th March 2002.

⁴⁵ The Yoruba elite were split between *Awoists* – who described themselves as “progressives” and *anti-Awoists* – who are seen as the “conservatives”

The Yoruba had early access to Western education; this helped them to produce most of the educated elite that championed Nigerian nationalism. The Yoruba elite felt that their progress in education and social advancement would pave the way for them to lead Nigeria (Ukeje and Adebani 2008:570). However, attempts by two Yoruba elites – Obafemi Awolowo and M. K. O. Abiola at winning presidential elections during the First, Second, and Third Republics failed. The Yoruba blame Igbo and Northern elites for frustrating the ambitions of their sons⁴⁶ (Ibrahim 1999:14, Sklar 1991). In particular, the annulment of the June 12 1993 election which a Yoruba, M. K. O. Abiola, was the presumed winner by a Northern military ruler, Ibrahim Babangida provoked the Yoruba elite⁴⁷ (Abegunrin 2006).

In order to defend Yoruba interest, a group led by former Ondo State Governor, Adekunle Ajasin formed the *Egbe Afenifere*⁴⁸. A militant group, the *Oodua People's Congress* (OPC) was also formed by a former presidential aspirant, Fredrick Fasehun. The tempo of Yoruba agitation was however toned down following the sudden death of General Abacha and the resolve by Nigerian political elite to concede power to the Yoruba elite – a concession that produced Olusegun Obasanjo as president in 1999⁴⁹. For a substantial part of Obasanjo's first four-year term, the *Afenifere* resented his leadership⁵⁰. Obasanjo's response to the opposition

⁴⁶ They point to the alliance between the Igbo and Northern elites after the 1959 election, which kept the Yoruba elite out of power and eventually capitalized on a split in the AG to destroy the party and to imprison Awolowo and his supporters in 1963.

⁴⁷ To appease the Yoruba elite, Babangida appointed Ernest Shonekan, a respected Yoruba businessman as the head of an interim national government while departing on 27 August 1993. Many Yoruba elite opposed Shonekan's government pressing for the upholding of the June 12 election. But on 17 November 1993 another Northern general, Sani Abacha toppled the Shonekan government. Abacha appointed prominent Yoruba elites into his government to pacify the Yoruba. But this could not halt the opposition. Then Abacha adopted repressive tactics - assassination, imprisonment, and harassment of Yoruba elites opposed to his regime.

⁴⁸ Ex-Senator Abraham Adesanya became the leader of *Afenifere* following the death of Adekunle Ajasin. For an assessment of the *Afenifere*, see Olufemi Tosin Aduwo 2004. "Awolowo, Afenifere and the Yoruba People", *Sunday Vanguard*, 7 November.

⁴⁹ The concession allowed for only Yoruba candidates in the 1999 presidential election. Obasanjo contested under the platform of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) while Olu Falae vied under the Alliance for Democracy (AD). The *Afenifere* and the OPC opposed the candidature of Obasanjo, ensuring that he lost in the entire Yoruba area to the AD, a party associated with the *Afenifere*.

⁵⁰ The opposition against Obasanjo stems from the belief that as a military ruler in 1979, Obasanjo failed to stand up in favor of his kinsman Obafemi Awolowo whose victory in a presidential election was robbed by the

by *Afenifere* was to paralyze the organization⁵¹ (Adindu 2003). This measure brought Obasanjo to the centre stage of Yoruba elite politics between 2003 and 2007.

C. *The Igbo elite*

The formation of Igbo identity followed the demarcation of regional administrative boundaries by the colonial government (Harneit-Sievers 2006). A large part of the present-day Igbo society was constituted into the Eastern Region in 1946 alongside several non-Igbo groups in the Niger Delta; the Igbo constituted the majority. In the pre-colonial era, the Igbo area suffered scarcity of land and other factors such as poor harvest due to its small landmass (Ibeanu 2007:23). The advent of colonialism therefore offered the many Igbo people the opportunity to move away from agriculture and to embrace western education, which offered fresh opportunities in administration (Van Den Bersselaar 2005).

The early contact with western education and massive urban migration by the Igbo marked the first phase of the evolution of the Igbo elite⁵² (Harneit-Sievers 2006:117, see also Ubah 1980, Olutayo 1999). The second phase of the evolution of the Igbo elite is between 1940s and 1960s, a period dominated by ethnic politics and in which the Igbo elite led by Nnamdi Azikiwe used the existing kinship solidarity and networks among the Igbo to mobilize political support (Wolpe 1969). At this time, *Igbo-ness* came to be defined in terms of

Northern elite. Obasanjo was also accused of not supporting the struggle for the upholding Abiola's presidential election victory annulled by a Northern military ruler. These allegations portrayed Obasanjo as pliant and conservative figure who works at cross-purposes with Yoruba interest, which *Afenifere* stands for.

⁵¹ First, he co-opted a key member of *Afenifere* – Bola Ige into the inner core of his government. Through Ige, a rival group – the Yoruba Council of Elders (YCE) that opposed *Afenifere*'s Yoruba nationalist ideology was established. Finally, the political arm of *Afenifere* – the AD was rooted out from the South-west. This was achieved by sponsoring a splinter group within the AD; the intra-party crisis worked against the party's fortunes during the 2003 election - the party lost all but one of the six Yoruba states it held previously.

⁵² Igbo migrants included the early educated elite who were employed by the colonial government or British corporations. Some personalities like Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chukwuemeka Ojukwu who later became prominent Igbo leaders were born and raised outside their home towns. Both Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chukwuemeka Ojukwu were born in 1904 and 1933 respectively, in Zungeru (Wushishi District, Niger Province later State) in Northern Nigeria.

opposition or support for the political ambition of Azikiwe⁵³. The third phase in the evolution of Igbo elite is the period of Nigerian civil war (1967-1970). The mass killings of Igbo diaspora in 1966 and the traumatic war experience that followed produced a “community of victims” and a “community of suffering” in Igboland (Harneit-Sievers 2006:121, Spalding 2000). Through the war propaganda machine, *Igbo-ness* was framed around the war experience (collective suffering) and support for *Biafra*⁵⁴. Since the end of the civil war in 1970, the Igbo elite have been engaged in efforts to re-integrate into Nigerian politics and society. In the early 1970s, the exile of Ojukwu, the ban on politics, and the proscription of ethnic unions left the Igbo without any personality or structure to mobilize politically. Since then, the political influence of the Igbo on national politics has waned seriously and no individual has been able to achieve broad acceptance as Igbo leader⁵⁵.

In the 1990s, the Ohaneze Ndi Igbo – an umbrella socio-political organization took the center stage of Igbo politics⁵⁶. Ohaneze centered its struggles on the issue of Igbo marginalization, which has become the dominant theme of Igbo mobilization in the post-war era. The activities of the organization received greatest attention in 1999 when it submitted a memorandum to the Human Rights Violations Investigation Panel (the Oputa Panel) about human rights violations against the Igbo during the civil war as well as post-war Igbo marginalization⁵⁷. Since then, the activities of Ohaneze have been stalled by series of

⁵³ For many people victory or defeat of Azikiwe is interpreted as victory or defeat of the Igbo. Nnamdi Azikiwe eventually became the Premier of the Eastern Region, but failed in his bid for the position of Prime Minister. Thereafter, he became the Governor-General of Nigeria (a ceremonial head of state).

⁵⁴ Elites like Nnamdi Azikiwe that opposed the war were shut out of the Igbo community until Ojukwu’s exile and Biafran defeat in 1970.

⁵⁵ For public discussion on the divisions among Igbo elite, see Peter Claver-Oparah 2003. “Who Heads the Ohaneze?”, <http://www.thisdayonline.com/archive/2003/11/22/20031122com02.html>

⁵⁶ Though Ohaneze was formed in 1976, the organization was not well known until it was restructured in 2001.

⁵⁷ See *The Violations of Human and Civil Rights of Ndi Igbo in the Federation of Nigeria (1966-1999): A Call for Reparations and Appropriate Restitution*. Memorandum submitted by Oha-Na-Eze Ndi Igbo to the Human Rights Violations Investigation Panel, 1999. <http://www.africaresource.com/war/vol2.2/ohaneze.pdf>.

factional and personality disputes among its members⁵⁸ (Irukwu 2007). The ineffectiveness of Ohaneze probably informed the emergence of a more radical group, the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB). MASSOB wants Igbo secession from Nigeria, but the body has failed to gain relevance in Igbo politics due to widespread condemnation of its strategy by both Igbo elite and the masses.

D. *The Niger Delta elite*

The Niger Delta is defined geographically as “a triangle with its apex between Ndoni and Aboh, descending eastwards to the Qua Iboe River at Eket and westwards to the Benin River with its base along the Atlantic coast between the Bights of Benin and Biafra” (International IDEA 2000:239). Historically, the area consists of the present day Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States⁵⁹. In 2000, the Obasanjo regime expanded the definition of the Niger Delta to include all the nine oil producing states⁶⁰. However, in political terms, the Niger Delta is restricted to the six states of the South-south zone, namely Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers⁶¹. The people of the Niger Delta are extremely heterogeneous ethnically and culturally⁶² (UNDP 2006:48). But in spite of their ethnic and cultural heterogeneity, they share common historical experiences, which conditioned the growth of the Niger Delta elite.

The development of the Niger Delta elite was shaped by mobilization and resistance against the British colonialists⁶³, Igbo and Yoruba elites as well as the post-colonial Nigerian State.

⁵⁸ For an analysis of these disputes, see Anayochukwu Agbo 2007. “Ndigbo’s Divided House”, http://www.tellng.com/news/articles/070208-3/news/nation_dividehouse.html

⁵⁹ See “Niger Delta” at Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niger_Delta

⁶⁰ This led to a distinction between the “core” and “peripheral” Niger Delta. The core Niger Delta includes Bayelsa, Delta, Rivers, and Akwa Ibom States; while the peripheral Niger Delta comprises Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo, Imo, and Ondo States.

⁶¹ This study adopts the political definition of the Niger Delta.

⁶² Five linguistic and cultural groups dominate the area – the Ijoid, Edoid, Delta Cross, Yoruboid, and Igboid

⁶³ Between 1886 and 1898, successful Niger Delta trading kingdoms such as Opobo, Bonny, and Brass were subjugated and brought under colonialism. Attempts by leaders like Jaja of Opobo, Ibanichuka of Okirika, and

During the colonial era, the Niger Delta groups were split between the Eastern and Western Regions and brought under Igbo and Yoruba domination in the regions (see Saro-Wiwa 1989). The “servant-master” relationship that existed between the Deltans and the British during the colonial era was carried over to the post-colonial period, but this time the masters were Igbo and Yoruba elites. As a result, the initial resistance to British domination was transformed to resistance against Igbo and Yoruba domination in the regions⁶⁴ (Naanen 2002:341). The provincial movement provided the groundwork for the subsequent demands for states creation in the Niger Delta.

The recent struggle of the Niger Delta elite is shaped by the rise of an oil economy in Nigeria (Mustapha 2003). The growing realization of the value of oil in the global market as well as the deplorable socio-economic situation in the Niger Delta have forced the people of the area to emphasize their economic strength vis-à-vis the political dominance of the three dominant groups (Obi 1998). In the post-independence period, the Niger Delta elite intensified their demands for accommodation in Nigerian politics, using oil as their “bargaining chip”. Increasingly, this posture has pushed the Niger Delta elite into the fore-front of Nigerian politics⁶⁵. In their struggles against the Nigerian state (dominated by the Northern elite), the Niger Delta elite have sometimes forged alliances with Igbo and Yoruba elites; though the alliances have often collapsed⁶⁶. The recent effort by the Niger Delta to reach out to the Igbo and Yoruba elites contradicts an earlier posture where the “southern minorities seem to

Abbi Amakiri IV of Kalabari to resist British domination were crushed through British superior military power. The recalcitrant Niger Delta leaders were deposed, forced into exile, or imprisoned.

⁶⁴ In 1941, for instance, the Ijaw Rivers Peoples’ League was formed to press for the removal of Rivers territory from Owerri province. Some non-Ijaw groups like the Ogoni and Etche also made similar agitations. The colonial government eventually created the Rivers province in 1947.

⁶⁵ The zoning of the vice presidency to the Niger Delta and the emergence of Goodluck Jonathan as Nigeria’s Vice President in May 2007 attest to the increasing profile of Niger Delta elites in Nigerian politics. This is in addition to the huge amount of money allocated to the area from the national revenue following the application of the 13 percent derivation principle in revenue allocation.

⁶⁶ The Southern Solidarity Forum (SSF) formed by Igbo, Yoruba, and Niger Delta delegates during the 1994 Constitutional Conference is a good illustration.

distrust both Yoruba and Igbo clusters, and prefer coalitions with northern zones” (Paden 1997:250). The vocal opposition of the North to demands by Niger Delta elites for greater “resource control” is perhaps the main reason for this new trend.

E. *The Middle Belt elite*

In the First Republic, the term Middle Belt was defined politically as the area of Kabba, Plateau, and Benue Provinces (Paden 1986:343). Later, the term was extended to accommodate the political aspiration of minority groups in North-central Nigeria⁶⁷. The Middle Belt consists of a large number of ethnic and linguistic groups that have historically resisted political and religious domination of the Muslim Hausa-Fulani⁶⁸ (International IDEA 2000:283). However, the advent of colonialism in the Middle Belt introduced what has been called “Fulani sub-imperialism” (Kastfelt 1994:13). After the British gained control of the Sokoto Caliphate, they used the Caliphate foot soldiers to conquer communities in the Middle Belt. Thereafter, a large amount of political power was transferred to the Fulani, whom the colonial authorities intended to rule through - under the “indirect rule” system (Kastfelt 1994:12). Many of the non-Islamic ethnic groups which were independent of the Fulani in the eighteenth century now found themselves subjected under the administrative control of the Fulani through the military and political intervention of the British⁶⁹.

⁶⁷ Including the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, Benue, Plateau, Taraba, Kogi, Nasarawa, Kwara, Niger, Kaduna, Gombe, Adamawa, Yobe, and Kebbi States.

⁶⁸ In the 19th century, groups in the Middle Belt were faced with the expanding Jihad movement. Jihad refers to the Islamic holy war waged in Northern Nigeria by Usman Dan Fodio and his Fulani armies in order to establish emirates of the Sokoto Islamic Empire. Except for parts of the present day Niger, Kwara, and Nasarawa States, the Jihadists could not establish emirates in most parts of the Middle Belt due to local resistance and the advent of colonialism.

⁶⁹ For instance, until 1945, the Emir of Bauchi ruled Jos through his relations. The Lamido of Adamawa administered most communities in the present Adamawa State through his Fulani kinsmen; while the Emir of Zaria appointed emirs and chiefs to rule over communities who were hitherto independent of Zaria in the pre-colonial era.

The simultaneous domination of the Middle Belt by the British colonialists and Fulani sub-imperialists split the people between Islam and Christianity⁷⁰ (Kastfelt 1994:14). Christianity became an alternative religion to “a people looking desperately for something to counter the dominance of Islam”, which they associated with Fulani political domination (International IDEA 2000:284). Also, the advent of Christianity in the Middle Belt gave the people access to western education, which was crucial in elite formation and political mobilization.

Political mobilization in the Middle Belt centers on resistance to Fulani and Islamic domination. Under the leadership of Christian politicians, various ethnic associations in the Middle Belt allied in 1955 to form the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) with the aim of pushing for the creation of a separate Middle Belt State (Harnischfeger 2004:440). Beginning from mid-1958, the NPC regional government exerted immense political pressure on the UMBC, leading to a split in the party between pro- and anti-NPC elements. The UMBC was further subdued following the suppression of anti-NPC revolts in the Tiv Division in 1960 (Dent 1966, Anifowose 1982). However, the rise of Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon⁷¹ as the Head of State in 1966 and the eventual creation of a “Middle Belt state” (Benue-Plateau State) in 1967 brought much delight to the area. During the Second Republic, the Middle Belt identity faded following the split of the Middle Belt elite into three political parties⁷². The elites tried to revive the identity following claims of marginalization by subsequent administrations⁷³ (Sen 2002). More recently, the Middle Belt elite under the umbrella of the Middle Belt

⁷⁰ The Christian missionaries who were restricted from operating in the Islamic emirates by the colonial administration were welcomed into the “pagan” areas.

⁷¹ Who hails from Angas ethnic group in Plateau State.

⁷² The most prominent Middle Belt politician and UMBC leader, J. S. Tarka, joined the Northern dominated NPN along with many politicians from Benue State; elites from Plateau State joined the NPP, while politicians from minority communities in Adamawa State joined the GNPP.

⁷³ The revival of Middle Belt identity reached its height on 22 April 1990, when a group of mostly ‘Christian Middle Belt’ officers led by Major Gideon Orkar announced that it had taken over the government and had decided to excise the five most northerly states from the rest of Nigeria, due to the domination of the rest of the country by the ‘Muslim North’. Thereafter, the Middle Belt Forum was established in 1991 and a weekly magazine, *The Meridein*, launched in 1995 to give voice to the Middle Belt. See Major Orkar’s speech at <http://www.dawodu.com/orkar.htm>.

Forum (MBF) have tried to forge an alliance with the Niger Delta elite⁷⁴ (see Thisday 22 April 2005). But, not much has come out of the alliance.

II. The nature of elite behavior

The consociational model draws a distinction between coalescent and adversarial elite behaviors. Coalescent elite behavior is defined by elite cooperation, consensual decision making, and mutual compromises; while adversarial elite behavior is marked by elite competition, opposition and conflict (Lijphart 1977:25, 53). Based on the model, elite cooperation is required to achieve stability in a divided society like Nigeria. But during the First Republic, Nigerian politics was characterized by inter-elite competition. It was until the end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970 that the elite began to make real efforts at forging durable alliances, through the establishment of power-sharing arrangements.

Power-sharing was adopted to moderate the adversarial elite behavior that marred Nigeria's first democratic experiment and plunged the country into a civil war. The adversarial behavior manifested in intense struggle for power, which led to thuggery, arson, massive electoral fraud, malicious impeachments, carpet-crossing, decampments, and expulsions from political parties (Dudley 1982, Diamond 1988, Joseph 1991). Beginning from the 1940s when party politics was first introduced in Nigeria, the main feature of the struggle for power has been "the tension between the largely Moslem North ...and the three southern regions"⁷⁵ (Mackintosh 1965:21). The enormous effort invested in this struggle for power is explained by the tremendous importance of political power in Nigeria. According to Ake (1981:1162-1163) there is "a desperate struggle to win control of state power... since this control means

⁷⁴ This is illustrated by the Middle Belt/South-south Summit of 22 April 2005, attended by prominent elites from the areas such as former Head of State, Yakubu Gowon and retired Supreme Court Judge, Adolphus Karibi-White.

⁷⁵ Yoruba, Igbo, and the Niger Delta

for all practical purposes being all powerful and owing everything”. Put differently, the control of state power provides opportunity to acquire wealth and prestige, and to be able to distribute patronage in the form of jobs, contracts, scholarships, and gifts of money.

The premium on state power has forced the elite to also drag members of their ethnic and regional groups into unwholesome rivalry. Nnoli (1978) lucidly demonstrates the relationship between ethnic conflicts and elite competition in Nigeria. He described how the struggle for state power had pushed the elite to appeal to ethnic identity, making it the dominant form of identity in the country. Besides the elite, members of various ethnic groups were also drawn into the struggle for the private material benefits offered by the control of state power through patron-client relations. The competition for state resources therefore occurs at two levels – at the level of the individual elite and the level of the ethnic groups. The incorporation of ethnic groups into the struggle for the control of state power has transformed Nigerian state into what Richard Joseph (1991) characterized as a “prebendal state”. According to Joseph (1991:67) a prebendal state is:

not only one in which the offices of state are allocated and then exploited as benefices by the office-holders, but also as one where such practice is legitimated by a set of political norms according to which the appropriation of such offices is not just an act of individual greed or ambition but concurrently the satisfaction of the short-term objectives of a subset of the general population.

In a prebendal state, individuals such as traders, contractors, civil servants, farmers, traditional rulers, and teachers, take part in the struggle to capture the state, the same way the political elite do.

III. Explanations for adversarial elite behavior

There are two explanations for the advent of adversarial elite behavior in Nigeria. They include the resource competition induced by colonialism and the mode of elite formation and competition.

A. *Colonialism-induced scarcity and resource competition*

The first explanation for the advent of adversarial elite behavior is the one proposed by Okwudiba Nnoli (1978), which argues that adversarial elite behavior in Nigeria is a product of the resource scarcity and competition induced by colonialism. He maintained that through the destruction of the traditional economy and the introduction of the modern economy, colonialism induced a shift in the mode of production from the predominantly subsistent agriculture to the modern export-oriented agriculture supported by an expanded service sector. In the colonial era, the economy was dominated by foreign capital and this placed severe limits on opportunities for the local people to develop indigenous modern productive base. Consequently, the increasing number of Nigerians drifting from the rural to the urban centre in search of resources and opportunities in the modern means of production was confronted by the scarcity of the modern capital. Nnoli maintained that the scarcity affected access to “employment, education, political participation and the provision of social services” and that under this circumstance, “individuals had to rely on various useful devices [such as ethnicity and corruption] to gain access to the scarce goods and services” (Nnoli 1978:87, emphasis added).

Although Nnoli’s concepts of resource scarcity and resource competition seem persuasive in understanding the elite competition in the colonial era, the issue of resource scarcity does not suffice in post-colonial period. At independence, the exit of British officials placed the

Nigerian elite in charge of state resources, even though the economy was still dominated by foreign enterprises. However, the nationalization of foreign-owned business and the oil boom of the 1970s widened the resource base of the state, making the issue of resource scarcity irrelevant. In fact, it is the question of distributive inequities that have taken the centre stage since independence. This has intensified elite struggles for state resources. According to Schatz (1984:55) “with the recent predominance of ‘government’ as a source of fortune...access to, and manipulation of, the government-spending process has become the golden gateway to fortune”. Thus, if one follows the arguments developed above, the emerging trend is the transition from “scarcity-induced” resource competition in the colonial period to “abundance-induced” competition in the post-colonial era. The major factor that fuels the competition in the post-colonial period is the unequal distribution of resources among the competing elite groups.

B. *Mode of elite formation and competition*

The second explanation for the advent of adversarial elite behavior in Nigeria points to the process of elite formation and the nature of elite competition that ensued. The development of the political elite in Nigeria owes much to the activities of the colonial state and the British commercial firms (Sklar 1963:480-1). The expansion of state bureaucracy and the administrative structures of the foreign enterprises encouraged the recruitment of Nigerians into the state and business institutions. In 1964, for instance, the state employed sixty-four percent of all wage earners while most of the remaining thirty-six percent were employed by foreign companies (Diamond 1988:63). Though there was an early emergence of administrators especially in the public sector, however, there was no corresponding early growth of indigenous entrepreneurs in the private sector (Ekekwe 1986:60). The indigenous businessmen that emerged later were those who depended mainly on local commerce. Many

of the local businessmen raised their initial capital through apprenticeship in the large foreign commercial establishments or through commissions earned from foreign enterprises that encouraged many of them to enter into commerce in areas where those enterprises were seeking to reach (Ekekwe 1986:61).

In addition to the colonial state and British commercial concerns, the regional structure of Nigeria's federal and party systems played an important role in the development of the political elite. Nigeria's tri-polar federal and party structure provided an expanded base for accumulation by the emerging political elite. It also led to "fusion of elites" (Sklar 1979:537). The regions brought together wealthy businessmen, senior administrators in private and public sector organizations, leading politicians, learned professionals, and prominent traditional rulers. With time, the emergent political elite tried to consolidate political and economical power. Efforts towards political consolidation reflected in the intensification of the nationalist struggles. The elites were able to persuade the colonial government to make several concessions such as the granting of regional self-government in 1954 – six years before the national self-government (Nafziger 1973:507). Also, they secured British approval for the policy of "Nigerianization" of the public service in the 1950s. The extraction of these and other political gains by the indigenous political class led to a considerable decline in the strength of the central government and on the contrary, a substantial increase in the prominence of the regional governments – the base of the new elites.

Although the elites prospered politically, attempts to consolidate economically were constrained by the absence of an indigenous economic base for capital accumulation outside of the state. The space for upward economic mobility for indigenous private enterprises was greatly limited by the colonial administration. The colonial government established a firm

control over the most lucrative sources of revenue in the country – agriculture, mining, petroleum, shipping, electricity and telecommunication etc. (Diamond 1987:573). The statutory agricultural marketing boards controlled the export of cash crops while indigenous mining activity was restricted by the colonial government. State monopolies were established to run many sectors of the economy, thereby restricting the possibilities for the development of indigenous private enterprises; there were also expanded government parastatals that managed sectors such as transportation and other public utilities (Diamond 1988:63).

In the face of these economic constraints, the nascent political class turned to the regional governments for the badly needed capital for their economic consolidation. Once the political elite captured the regional parliament and formed the central government, they were able to control the system of distributing a wide range of patronage such as positions and employment in government service and public corporations, licenses for market stall, permit for export of agricultural products, and land allocations for private and commercial use (Nafziger 1973:509). The regional governments “created elaborate systems of administrative and commercial patronage, involving the liberal use of public funds to promote indigenous private enterprise” (Sklar 1979:534). In the course of the attempts to widen the opportunities for economic accumulation and consolidation, the members of the political elite became engulfed in intense struggles to capture the regional governments – their most important resource base.

By 1951, ethnic and regional sentiments were introduced into political struggles. The dominant elite groups in the three regions hijacked the regional governments through the

ethnicization of political parties⁷⁶. This development plunged the political elite into fierce elite struggles that were coated with ethnic colors. The struggle among factions of Nigeria's political elite took place at two levels – the national and regional levels. At the national level, the three dominant elite groups under the platforms of their parties squared up against each other in a fight for the control of the national government. At the regional level, the marginal elite groups engaged the dominant elite groups in contest. The former, protested the monopolization of political power and the sources of patronage by the latter. This led to intense political struggles within the regions – the minority struggles. These struggles led to the dispute between Northern and Igbo elites over the 1964 election results and the crisis over the Western Regional election in 1965. This was the context against which the First Republic collapsed in 1966 and the country entered into a civil war in 1967. The soul-searching among the political elite that preceded the civil war reflected in the adoption of power-sharing arrangements to “avoid ‘winner-takes-all’ outcomes in elections” and to minimize political competition (Nolutshungu 1990:94).

2.4 CONCLUSION

I have argued that the roots of power-sharing in Nigeria can be found in the unequal structure of the Nigerian federation as well as in the adversarial behavior of the political elite. Nigeria's unequal federation was the outcome of the colonial government's indecisiveness on whether to administer Nigeria as a unitary or federal state. The result of the ambiguities in the colonial state building project is the emergence of weak federal institutions and recurring pressures for territorial restructuring in post-colonial Nigeria. Meanwhile, the unequal federal structure in Nigeria created fears of ethno-regional domination. The attempts by various

⁷⁶ In the Western Region, the Yoruba elite through the Action Group (AG) dominated the regional government. In the Northern Region, the Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri elite secured the control of the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) and used the party to dominate the region. In the Eastern Region, the Igbo elites took control of the National Council for Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), and the region.

ethno-regional elite groups to avoid domination gave rise to intense political competition resulting to democratic failure and a civil war. It was based on these negative experiences of the past that the Nigerian elite opted for power-sharing.

In addition to rectifying the inequalities in Nigeria's federal structure, the choice of power-sharing was made to moderate the adversarial behavior of the political elite. As I argued in this chapter, the intense competition among the elite was a salient feature of Nigerian politics during the early years of independence. This led to violent ethnic conflicts in many parts of the country. It is in a bid to alleviate divisive politics in the post-war Nigeria, that power-sharing arrangements were established. Because the issues generating conflicts are multifaceted, power-sharing arrangements were extended from the territorial dimension (involving federalism and creation of states), to the spheres of office distribution and revenue allocation. Although the introduction of power-sharing has not completely eradicated adversarial elite competition in Nigeria, there are possibilities that the continuous application of the arrangements would facilitate greater political accommodation and elite cooperation. However, the continuity of the power-sharing arrangements depends largely on the tendencies of the various elite groups to accept the arrangements. In the next chapter, I will analyze creation of states as the territorial aspect of power-sharing; examining its evolution, the principles and logic underpinning its application as well as the actors and interests behind its continuity.

CHAPTER THREE

Creation of States: The Territorial Aspect of Power-sharing

The creation of the Mid-West State, Sir, will only set the ball rolling for the creation of all other states in the Federation of Nigeria...The creation of new states is the only basis on which the unity of this country is going to continue and it is upon the creation of states that the breaking of the monopoly of all other Regions by one Region which constitutes an unbalanced structure in the federation will be achieved⁷⁷.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will analyze the creation of states as the territorial aspect of power-sharing in Nigeria. The chapter examines the ways in which the country has responded to the challenges of territorial reorganization in the context of its ethnic diversity. The chapter identifies fear of domination by the elite as the most important reason for the struggles for creation of states in Nigeria. In addition to the demands for self-determination by the minority ethnic groups, pressures for state creation are fuelled by distributive concerns – in terms of the access to power and resources which stems from the control of many states. The major focus of this chapter is to explain why creation of states has become a key feature of Nigerian politics. The chapter argues that creation of states has assumed a central position in Nigeria's federal politics due to two major factors: the convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of states creation and the use of states creation as a measure to pacify the marginal elite groups. Thus, contrary to the views in the literature that creation of state is a mere regime survival strategy (see for instance Kraxberger 2004) or class consolidation mechanism (Nnoli 1978, Ekekwe 1986), this chapter contends that creation of states has a deeper logic that transcends specific regimes and constitutes a vital component of the struggle for power in Nigeria.

⁷⁷ A statement by Joseph Tarka, leader of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) see, *Nigeria: Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives 1961-62*, Vol. 1, Federal Government Printer, Lagos, 1962, col. 784.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section examines the notion of creation of states in the context of federalism, exploring how creation of states fits into the nature and features of federalism. The second section analyses the challenge of territorial division in Nigeria, particularly with respect to the unending demands for new states in the country. The third section examines the responses of the Nigerian state to the repeated calls for territorial reorganization and addresses the question of why creation of states has become a crucial element in Nigerian politics. The chapter recaps its arguments in the concluding section.

3.1 CREATION OF STATES IN A FEDERAL CONTEXT

The practice of creation of states can best be understood within the context of federalism. Federalism denotes the practice of a multi-tiered government combining elements of self-rule and shared rule (Watts 2001:24). Self-rule means that each tier of government rules itself, or can decide alone on certain matters. On the other hand, shared rule means that different tiers of government share competencies, although there is usually an institutional set up through which sub-national tiers of government are accorded special participation and input in decision-making (Stauffer and Topperwien 2005:42-43). Most federal political systems are identifiable by common structural features⁷⁸ (Watts 2001:28). But in reality, federalism goes beyond a mere structural arrangement; it requires a commitment to partnership and active cooperation on the part of the actors and communities that strive to preserve their own respective integrities (Gana 2003, Saunders 2002, Zimmerman 2001).

⁷⁸ Including: (a) at least two orders of government acting directly on their citizens, (b) a formal constitutional distribution of legislative and executive authority and allocation of revenue resources between the orders of government that ensures some areas of genuine autonomy for each order, (c) provision for the designated representation of distinct regional view within the federal policy-making institutions, usually including the representation of regional representatives in a federal second legislative chamber, (d) a supreme constitution not unilaterally amendable and requiring for amendment the consent of a significant proportion of the constituent units either through assent by their legislature or by regional majorities in a referendum, (e) an umpire, usually in the form of courts or by provision for referendums (as in Switzerland regarding federal powers) to rule on disputes over the constitutional powers of governments, and (f) processes and institutions to facilitate intergovernmental collaboration in those areas where governmental powers are shared or inevitably overlap.

In a large and complex society like Nigeria, federalism usually shifts from the practice of providing linkages between vertical levels of government – national, state, and local – to providing a balance between horizontal segments of the society (including ethno-regional interests). According to Paden (1991:413) the structure and process of vertical federalism is “essentially part of a classical model based on concepts such as decentralization, accountability, and states’ rights”. This model is based on the division of powers and functions among the different levels of government. The nature of the division of such functions varies among different federal systems, and can change considerably over time. But in federal systems that emphasize horizontal balance, the various forms of sub-national cleavages are acknowledged, and state structures are created to accommodate, alleviate or crosscut them (Paden 1991:413). The notion of equal treatment of the different state governments in the federal system is crucial in horizontal federal arrangements. In all, a cooperative elite behavior is a vital element in a federal system, whether the emphasis is on the vertical or horizontal level (Lijphart 1979).

Besides the behavioral issues and the question of vertical/horizontal balance, another important aspect of federalism is the issue of symmetrical and asymmetrical distribution of federal powers. Symmetrical federations are usually based on an aggregating process that involves the ceding of a series of responsibilities and powers to the central authority by the federated units (Requejo 2001:44). The elements of *symmetry* in this arrangement lies in the fact that the cession of powers involved and the relations between all federated units themselves and the federation, are more or less uniform. However, in asymmetrical federal arrangements, the federal constitution establishes different relations for the units, and this is reflected in the varying levels of self-government, in the symbolic and institutional framework of the polity, in resource distribution as well as in the character of representation

of the units at the federal level (equal vs. proportional representation) (Requejo 2001:44). In many cases, *de jure* (legal) asymmetry is usually an off-shot of *de facto* asymmetries (cultural, geographical, historical, economic) existing between the federal units (Swenden 2002, Tillin 2006). Asymmetries of federal power may arise in two different forms of relations. The first is with regards to horizontal comparison between the powers of different constituent units to govern their own jurisdictions. The second relates to the vertical division of powers between institutions of federal and of constituent units (Baubock 2002:3). In many cases, it is with regards to the former that asymmetry of federal power is most relevant.

Whether a federation is symmetrically or asymmetrically structured is, to an important extent, a function of its historical and political foundation. The structure of any federation often depends on the process through which the federal arrangement evolved. Generally, federations can emerge through integration - a process by which a number of separate political units unite or combine to solve common problems, or through differentiation - where formerly unitary polities are divided into distinct political sub-units (Asobie 1996:126). Federations can also emerge through three processes: “coming together”, “holding together”, and “putting together” (Stepan 2004:33-37). The “coming together” federations are represented by the classical model of federalism (like the United States and Switzerland), where formerly independent polities, all of which have prior identities and sovereignty agreed to pool their sovereignty to form a federation (Elazar 1995:1). In this model, less powerful groups are more likely to secure preferential treatment or asymmetric powers in an attempt to preserve their identity and sovereignty. Also, federalism may serve as an instrument of minority rights protection - a device that would ensure that no group dominates the entire federation. Creation of states is less likely in coming together federations since questions

about internal borders would have been settled at the time when the federal bargain was finalized.

On the other hand, creation of states is more likely in “holding together” and “putting together” federations. In “holding together” federations, multinational polities with features of unitary system may decide to devolve power as a way of “holding together” the different communities that constitute the polities. India, Spain, and Belgium are good examples of “holding together” federations. The fundamental goals of federalism in this case are to unite diverse, often hostile groups under a single national authority as well as to offer the different groups considerable authority at the local level. Federalism therefore, seeks to create a balance between local identities/peculiarities and national cohesion in order to accommodate the interests of groups which may prefer greater or lesser levels of autonomy. Creation of states can therefore be useful in promoting local autonomy within a federation “held together”. In the case of “putting together” federations, the constituent parts of the federation are often integrated into the union by non-voluntary means. The former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Nigeria are classical examples of federations that were “put together” by superior powers. In these countries, creation of states is often a crucial issue, because it presents itself as a key mechanism with which groups can redress the structural deficiencies in such federations. It is against this backdrop that creation of states in Nigeria would be analyzed. In the next section, I will examine the basis for states creation in Nigeria, looking at the ways in which the government has responded to the challenge of incessant demands for new states.

3.2 THE CHALLENGE OF TERRITORIAL RESTRUCTURING: RECURRENT QUEST FOR NEW STATES

To a large extent, the formal division of Nigeria into three regions by Britain in 1946 was targeted differentiation. It was a measure aimed at granting self-rule to the three geo-political zones of Nigeria, while leaving the control of the centre to the colonial government. However, the regionalization of Nigeria in 1946 was a decision which came to be bitterly contested on two main grounds. In the first place, the Northern Region was geographically and demographically larger than the other two regions combined. As Table 3.1 below shows, the Northern Region possessed fifty-four percent and seventy-five percent of Nigeria's population and landmass, respectively. This situation gave the Northern Region electoral advantage vis-à-vis the rest of the regions.

Table 3.1
The Structure of Nigerian Federation before 1963

Regions	Territory		Population	
	Sq. Km.	%	No.	%
Northern Region	729,815	75.49	16,845,376	54.02
Eastern Region	119,308	12.34	7,974,399	25.58
Western Region	117,524	12.16	6,087,414	19.52
Lagos Colony	70	0.01	272,304	0.87
Total	966,717	100.00	31,179,492	100.00

Source: Adejuyigbe (1989:207).

In addition, the division of Nigeria into three regions secured regional hegemony for the three “biggest” ethnic groups in Nigeria – Hausa-Fulani (Northern Region), Yoruba (Western Region) and Igbo (Eastern Region). As can be seen in Table 3.2, the Hausa-Fulani constitutes fifty-four percent of the Northern Region, the Yoruba seventy-six percent of the Western Region, and the Igbo sixty-four percent of the Eastern Region⁷⁹. In the three regions, three

⁷⁹ As I mentioned earlier, these figures are based on rough estimates derived from various reports on Nigeria's population, since no official tabulation of the size of ethnic groups in Nigeria exists.

political parties dominated by the three majority ethnic groups emerged under a First-Past-The-Post electoral system. As a result, there were fears by the minority ethnic groups that the majority ethnic groups would dominate the country⁸⁰.

Table 3.2
Ethnic Composition of Nigerian Regions, 1963

Eastern Region			Northern Region			Western Region		
Ethnic Nation	1963 Pop. in '000	%	Ethnic Nation	1963 Pop. in '000	%	Ethnic Nation	1963 Pop. in '000	%
Igbo	7,991	64.5	Hausa/Fulani	16,318	54.7	Yoruba	9,777	76.4
Ibibio	2,806	22.6	Kanuri	2,258	7.6	Edo	1,704	13.3
Ijaw	1,072	8.63	Tiv	1,374	4.6	Igbo	821	6.4
Efik	343	2.8	Yoruba	1,144	3.8	Ijaw	263	2.1
Others	183	1.47	Nupe	648	2.2	Others	236	1.8
_____	_____	_____	Others	8,066	27.1	_____	_____	_____
Total	12,395	100	Total	29,808	100	Total	12,801	100

Source: Adejuyigbe (1979:197).

Since the 1950s, there have been recurrent struggles by the elite for the creation of new states. The struggles for new states have occurred in two main phases. In the first phase, the struggle for new states was dominated by elites from the minority groups; while in the second phase, the struggles have been dominated by elites from the three dominant ethno-regional groups.

I. The struggles for new states by the minority groups, 1954-1967

The tripartite structure of Nigerian federation enhanced the growth of cultural-nationalism among the three major ethnic groups. This reflected in the establishment of socio-cultural associations such as the Ibo State Union and the pan-Yoruba *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* - Society of the Descendants of Oduduwa (Coleman 1958:385). Although the original objectives of these organizations were community development and preservation of communal identity, with time the associations acquired political importance. Through their leaders, these associations became closely associated with factions within the nationalist movement, and later the political parties. For instance, although the National Council of Nigeria and

⁸⁰ Yoruba and Igbo elites in particular feared that Northern elites would dominate the country.

Cameroons (NCNC) had a national focus at its inception, it was later considered by many to be the political arm of the Ibo State Union; the Action Group (AG) on its part was seen as a political protrusion of the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa*.

The promotion of cultural nationalism by the dominant elite groups as well as their preponderant influence in regional and national politics generated a lot of anxieties among the elite from the minority groups⁸¹. The elite from these groups tried to ensure that they were not dominated by mobilizing different socio-cultural organizations and political parties⁸² to press for the creation of new states. As the terminal date for colonial rule approached, the minority groups became even more articulate, unrelenting and forceful in their demand for the creation of states. The following is how James Coleman (1958:386) analyzed the situation:

Self-government meant that power would pass from British to Nigerian hands, that is, to the hands of those Nigerians able to command a majority in the existing political subdivisions, the Regions. As the major regional parties were believed to be effectively controlled by leaders of the numerically dominant cultural groups...it followed – not necessarily, of course, but at least in the eyes of many minority leaders – that self-government would mean permanent Hausa, Yoruba, or Igbo domination. Clearly, therefore, the most effective safeguard for a minority group would be a redrawing of the map and the creation of additional political subdivisions in which their minority status was either extinguished or minimized.

At the 1957 Constitutional Conference, agitation for creation of states received a significant attention. The delegates devoted considerable time to the discussion of the problems of regional minorities and some specific proposals for the creation of states as well as the

⁸¹ The more prominent minority ethnic groups include the Kanuri, Nupe, Tiv, Igala, Jukun, and the Ilorin-Kabba Yoruba in the Northern Region; Edo, Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri, and the Western Igbos in the Western Region; and Ibibio-Annang, Efik, and Ijaw in the Eastern Region.

⁸² The cultural organizations and parties include the Edo National Union, the Ibibio State Union, and Warri National Union; the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the United Nigeria Independence Party (UNIP), and the Benin-Delta Peoples Party (BDPP).

desirability of breaking up existing regions. These issues generated heated debates and disagreements among the parties, but finally it was agreed that the question of state creation was of such complexity that a commission of inquiry should be appointed. Consequently, the British government approved the setting up of the Willink Commission in 1957. The Commission received lengthy memoranda from movements for creation of states⁸³. The demands for the creation of states were based on political concerns. During the public hearings held throughout Nigeria between 1957 and 1958, the Willink Commission was presented with the claims to the effect that the minority groups were being excluded politically in the regions (Akinyele 1996:77).

However, none of the proposals for creation of states submitted before the Willink Commission was endorsed. The Commission found that many of the fears expressed by minorities were genuine, but felt that these fears could not be removed by creating new states⁸⁴ (Akinyele 1996:78-79). In all, the Willink Commission rejected the creation of states based on ethnic criterion, fearing that it would enthrone ethnic divisions in a permanent form. According to the Commission:

It is of the first importance to find means of allaying fears which do not perpetuate differences that might otherwise disappear. This is the reason why we do not accept in its entirety the principle of ethnic grouping, that is, the principle that a recognizable ethnic group should whenever possible form a political unit (Cited in Akinyele 1996:79-80).

⁸³ Of special interest are the requests put forward for the creation of Middle-Belt State from the Northern Region, COR, Rivers, Ogoja and Cross River States from the Eastern Region, and Mid-West, Ondo, Yoruba Central and Lagos Colony States from Western Region, in addition to the request for the transfer of Ilorin Province to the Western Region

⁸⁴ The Commission rejected the demands for Ondo and Yoruba Central States because it felt that their creation would fragment Yorubaland into several states. The plea for the creation of a Lagos Colony State was rejected on the ground that the proposal did not represent any discernible minority interest. The requests for the creation of Ogoja and Cross River States were dumped because they lacked popular support. The case for the creation of Rivers, Mid-West, Middle Belt and COR States, which enjoyed popular support, was rejected because the Commission felt that their creation would initiate fresh minority problems.

The Willink Commission felt that in view of the multiplicity of ethnic groups in Nigeria, creation of new states would not adequately address the fear of domination by the minority groups. Consequently, the Willink Commission recommended constitutional safeguards to ensure that the rights of minorities are protected. The constitutional measures include the insertion of human rights clause into the constitution and the establishment of an electoral body to handle elections at the federal and regional levels. The Commission further recommended that the government should always strive to appoint candidates from minority areas to government agencies whenever suitable ones can be found (see Anifowose 1982:52).

The release of the Willink Commission was the anti-climax of the state creation saga which started about four years earlier. The agitation for state creation was temporarily put to rest when the British Government warned that if more states were to be created, they must be given time to settle down. As such, independence would be delayed for about two years. This threat forced the parties in the struggle for states creation to accept the Commission's report (Akinyele 1996:81). But the issue of ethnic minority states remained a major theme in Nigeria's federal politics. The elite ensured that provisions for the creation of new states were included in the 1960 Independence Constitution. The 1960 Constitution was not fundamentally different from the previous one (the 1954 Constitution), except that it formalized Nigeria's independence from Britain and resolved other legal issues relating to independence such as the question of citizenship⁸⁵. The constitution also made provision for creation of states, stipulating that a bill for the creation of a new state should be passed by two-thirds of the members of each house of the two houses of the federal legislature and

⁸⁵ See chapter II, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1960*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

accepted either by each house of a majority of the regions or by each house in two regions, including any region that would lose territory to the new state⁸⁶.

In their efforts to win electoral support outside their regional bases, the dominant political parties in the Western and Eastern Regions, the AG and NCNC, capitalized on the issue of creation of states (Suberu 2001:83). Both parties supported the demands for creation of states in other regions, but resisted the splitting of their own regions⁸⁷. The intense competition between the three dominant elite groups in Nigeria led to serious electoral malpractices in the 1964 general election and the 1965 Western Regional election. The result was violent protests and breakdown of law and order in many parts of the Western Region. This was the situation when the military intervened in January 1966. Because the January coup was regarded particularly in North as an “Igbo coup”⁸⁸, there was a “counter-coup” by Northern officers in July 1966. This was followed by attacks on the Igbo residing in the North in late 1966 and an attempted secession by the Igbo dominated Eastern Region and an outbreak of civil war in July 1967.

On the eve of the Nigerian civil war in May 1967, the then Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon announced the creation of twelve states. Two factors were mainly responsible for the

⁸⁶ Ibid, section 1(3).

⁸⁷ Although the AG was opposed to the division of the Western Region, it forged alignments with minority parties seeking the creation of states in the Northern and Eastern Regions. Similarly, the NCNC which resisted the splitting of the Eastern Region had as its main allies, organizations committed to the creation of the Mid-West State. Thus, the AG and the NCNC used the issue of creation of states to strengthen their position in the struggle for power at the centre, a contest in which the Northern party – NPC had a leading position. The political manipulation of the issue of states creation played out most vividly in 1963, when the NCNC and the NPC took advantage of the rift in the AG in 1962 to partition the Western Region. The creation of the Mid-West State was more a success for the NCNC than for the NPC. The former had long regarded the Mid-West as its sphere of influence. In alliance with the Benin-Delta Peoples Party (BDPP), the NCNC had won most of the Mid-West seats in the 1954 elections. The NCNC had consistently promised the people of the Mid-West of its support in the struggle for the creation of the Mid-West State, and when the opportunity came in 1962, the party made the best use of it. In all, the support of the NCNC for the creation of the Mid-West State was part of the party’s plans to consolidate its position in the Mid-West and to increase its power at the federal level.

⁸⁸ The coup was regarded as an Igbo coup because most of the coup leaders were Igbo officers and the victims mostly non-Igbo, especially Northerners.

division of Nigeria's four regions into twelve states. The first is the imminent secession of the Igbo dominated oil-rich Eastern Region, and the desire by Nigeria's leader, Yakubu Gowon to urgently undermine support for the secession among the minorities in the Eastern Region. It was believed that responding to the requests of the minorities for states creation would help achieve this goal (Suberu 1998:282). The second factor relates to the changes in the composition of Nigeria's governing elites. The military coup of July 1966, in particular, effectively transferred the reins of national power from politicians and soldiers from the dominant groups to military-bureaucratic elites from the minority groups⁸⁹ (Adamolekun 1986:109-112, Osaghae 1991:252). Although the minority elite appeared to be working for the Northern interest, there were indications that they pressurized the Northern and Yoruba elites to support the creation of new states (Sklar 1967, see also Dappa-Biriye 1995).

Unlike the 1963 territorial restructuring, the Igbo elite suffered the greatest loss during the 1967 creation of states exercise. The excision of the oil-rich area of Rivers from the Eastern State left Igboland landlocked and economically isolated, and weakened the secessionist campaign by the Igbo elite. Again, out of the eight states created in areas of three dominant groups, the secessionist Igbo got only one - the East-Central State. The Yoruba got three states - Western, Kwara and Lagos states, while the North was divided into four states - Kano, North-Western, North-Central and North Eastern States. The minority groups were congregated into four states. The minorities in the Eastern Region were composed into two states - Rivers and South-Eastern States. The boundaries of the Mid-West State were left intact to hold together the minorities in the former Western Region, while the pre-dominantly Christian minority groups in the Middle Belt who never accepted the rule of the Moslem

⁸⁹ The key personalities from the minority groups that were in the governing elite include the Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, prominent bureaucrats like Allison Ayida, Eme Ebong, Phillip Asiodu and Abdulaziz Attah, and key politicians like Joseph Tarka. These individuals favored the restructuring of Nigerian federation as a way of redressing the imbalance between the three dominant groups and the minorities.

North got Benue-Plateau State. The decision to create only one state out of the Igbo area which has 65 percent of the Eastern Region's population while two states were created in the minority areas is seen as a measure to punish the Igbo elite for attempting to secede.

The minority elite gained tremendously from the 1967 creation of states exercise. First of all, the creation of four minority states freed the elite from the control of the dominant elite in the former regions. Secondly, the new states offered them opportunity to participate in the mainstream of national politics as leaders of their individual states. Thirdly, the new states provided the minority elite a stronger platform for political mobilization (see Tamuno 1972). Over the years, the minority elite widened their ethno-regional mobilization within the Middle Belt and Niger Delta areas. The gains made by the marginal elite groups perhaps created an awareness of the political utility of state creation among the dominant elite, most of whom initially opposed the creation of states. Thus, beginning from the 1970s, the clamor for creation of new states became very loud among the dominant elite groups, particularly the Igbo elite who felt short-changed in the 1967 exercise.

II. The struggles for new states by the dominant groups, 1976 - 1996

The end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970 witnessed fresh and far more numerous demands for creation of new states. But this time, the demands came mainly from the dominant elite groups. This was a major turn around in the attitude of the dominant elite to creation of states. In the 1950s and 1960s, the dominant elite groups were opposed to creation of states⁹⁰ because they felt that changes in boundaries may disturb the equilibrium among the three groups (Awa 1964:47). The reasoning was that if the regions were split into smaller states to accommodate minority agitation, new elites and parties would almost certainly emerge at the

⁹⁰ Although they supported the partition of the regions belonging to their rivals

national level, since Nigerian politics has tended to develop along ethno-regional lines. In that event, the domains of the dominant groups would shrink seriously in size and importance. Thus, the change of attitude by the dominant groups in the 1970s was quite surprising.

There are two main explanations for the agitation for new states by the dominant groups in the 1970s. The first explanation attributes it to the distributive considerations which replaced ethno-political imperatives as the underlying motivation for demands for new states (Suberu 1991:502). The need for the federal military government to establish presence all over the country immediately after the civil war in 1970 led to the centralization of the making and implementation of social policies. Increasingly, the state governments were transformed as conduits of distributing federal resources to the people. The linkage between the states and the government's policy intervention in areas such as health, education and public utilities made the number of states controlled by a group to correspond to the amount of resources that the group would likely receive. Since having more states attracts higher federal resources, each ethno-regional elite group struggled to have many states (Ekekwe 1986, Suberu 2001). To widen their share of federal resources, the three dominant groups argued for the creation of states that are equivalent in population. According to Suberu (1991:502) the argument for states that are equivalent in population was made "not necessarily in order to prevent the domination of the federation by a few large states, but primarily to ensure some per capita equity in the distribution of national resources". The quest for greater federal resources led to the struggles for new states by the three dominant groups.

The second explanation for the struggle for new states by the dominant groups points to the indecision of Nigeria's war time Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, on the issue of

creation of additional states. General Gowon had expressed his intention not to create more states in October 1970, when he declared that “the twelve states structure had in fact produced a basis for political stability in that the structural imbalance of the First Republic has been decisively corrected”; yet in the same speech he promised to create more states “before handing over power to an elected government” (Yahaya 1978:203). The contradiction in the utterances of General Gowon provided the impetus for politicians from the dominant groups to openly canvass for more states in their areas to widen their share of federal resources. In response, General Gowon announced on October 1st 1974 a commitment in principle to create more states; however the implementation was left in suspense. General Gowon’s declaration of his government’s commitment to the creation of more states without simultaneously creating the new states undermined the existing state administrations (Yahaya 1978:203). His indecision led to vigorous struggles for new states by the dominant elite groups in an attempt to convince the government that their demands were genuine and serious.

General Gowon did not create additional states before he was toppled in July 1975 by General Murtala Mohammed. The 1975 coup was led by some military officers that were unhappy with the Gowon regime, especially the overbearing influence of some civilians (the “super permanent secretaries”) on the administration and the slow pace with which the regime handled the transition to civil rule program (Ihonvbere and Shaw 1998:80-81, Ojiako 1979:79-83). At the onset of his administration in 1975, General Mohammed established a Commission (the Irekefe Panel) to examine the desirability or otherwise of creating more states. The Panel received a total of thirty-one requests for new states mostly from the dominant groups. Based on the recommendations of the Irekefe Panel, General Mohammed announced the creation of seven new states in February 1976. The Government however,

warned that it would not accept any more demands for new states, insisting “that existing borders should not be disturbed unduly” (Suberu 1991:506). As a result, the 19-state structure was maintained throughout the administration of the military government which handed-over to a democratically elected government in 1979.

The return to democracy in 1979 led to a more open political atmosphere which created room for fresh agitations for the creation of new states by the political elite. Between 1979 and 1982, forty-nine demands for the creation of new states were submitted to the National Assembly. The three dominant groups requested for the creation of thirty-two new states while the minority groups demanded for seventeen new states⁹¹ (Suberu 1991:504). The National Assembly could not complete deliberations on the demands before the civilian government was removed in December 1983 through a military coup⁹².

In 1986, the military government established a Political Bureau to gather, collate and synthesize the contributions of Nigerians on the political future of the country. The Bureau was presented with several memoranda requesting the creation of new states⁹³. The political bureau recommended the creation of only two states - Katsina (North) and Akwa Ibom (Niger Delta), arguing that the two demands has been intense and prolonged⁹⁴. The Bureau could not agree on the creation of four states – Wawa (Enugu), Delta, Kogi, and Sardauna, despite strong points made about them⁹⁵. In 1987, the Babangida regime created two new states (Katsina and Akwa-Ibom), reflecting to the recommendation of the Bureau. The regime went

⁹¹ A breakdown of the requests shows that the North asked for nineteen new states, Yoruba six states, Igbo seven states, Niger Delta eleven states, and Middle Belt six states.

⁹² The new military government cited widespread corruption in the civilian administration as the main reason for the coup.

⁹³ There were requests for the creation of New Anambra, Wawa, Ebonyi, Adada, Abia, Aba, Njaba, and Anioma States from the Igbo elites. The North requested for the creation of states such as Katsina, Sardauna, and Gombe States. The Yoruba requested for states like Ekiti, Oshun, and New Oyo.

⁹⁴ See *The Report of the Political Bureau*. Abuja: The Directorate of Social Mobilization, 1987: 183.

⁹⁵ The members of the Bureau who supported the four states argued for the need to promote inter-ethnic justice and balanced development within Nigerian federation.

further to create nine new states in 1991, including the four earlier supported by some members of the Political Bureau⁹⁶.

When General Sani Abacha took over power after the exit of General Babangida in 1993, he inaugurated a National Constitutional Conference in January 1994 to lay out the framework for Nigeria's transition to the Fourth Republic. Again, the issue of creation of states featured prominently in the deliberations of the conference. A total of forty-five requests for new states were submitted to the Conference. This time, the three dominant groups requested for the creation of twenty-six new states while the minority groups demanded for nineteen new states⁹⁷. However, the Conference referred the matter to the Abacha government after it failed to reach any agreement. On 1 October 1996, General Abacha announced the creation of six new states.

3.3 WHY CREATION OF STATES HAS BECOME A FEATURE OF NIGERIAN POLITICS

In this section, I will account for why demands for and the creation of states have become a feature of Nigerian politics. The section will argue that the recurrence of states creation in Nigeria anchors on the convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of states creation. It was mentioned earlier that there is a major shift in the struggles for state creation before and after 1970. The state creation exercises of 1963 and 1967 were marked by opposition of at least one of the three dominant groups to creation of states. In 1963, Northern and Igbo elites ganged-up to partition the Western Region, despite the protests by the Yoruba elite. In 1967, the Northern and Yoruba elites co-operated with the Middle Belt and Niger Delta elites to divide the four regions into twelve states notwithstanding objections by the Igbo elite. However, since the 1970s, a new pattern has emerged in the politics of states

⁹⁶ The nine states include Abia, Delta, Enugu, Kogi, Kebbi, Jigawa, Osun, Taraba, and Yobe.

⁹⁷ The North demanded for fifteen new states, Yoruba seven, Igbo four, Niger Delta twelve, and middle Belt seven.

creation. Contrary to the pre-1970 period when there were dissenting voice(s) to state creation, the post-1970 era has witnessed unanimous support for creation of states by all the five ethno-regional elite groups in Nigeria. In fact, since the 1970s, there have been efforts by each of the elite groups to out-bid the others in the quest for new states. This is the backdrop against which I would explain the continuity of states creation in Nigeria.

The convergence of the interests of the elite groups, especially the dominant elite groups, in favor of states creation can be explained by the post-war emphasis on equality in the distribution of federal resources or the recognition of Nigeria's "federal character" in resource allocation among the states. In a bid to show its presence all over the country after the civil war, the military government centralized the collection and spending of the national revenue, and used the states as conduits of distributing federal resources, including siting of federal projects, distribution of scholarships and jobs, and allocation of political and bureaucratic offices. The decision to centralize national resources and to distribute them proportionately had far reaching implications. First, it made the states, contrary to the former regions, to be overly dependent on the federal government, especially for revenue. Secondly, it transformed the states into carriers of federal resources and political opportunities and in this sense, the higher number of states a group has, the greater the amount of resources and opportunities it is likely to receive. In this case, the three dominant elite groups in Nigeria tried to maintain their dominance by ensuring that they receive the greater number of new states during each state creation exercise. Individually, the dominant elite groups have tried to out-bid each other in their lobby for new states; collectively, they have overtaken the minority groups in agitation for new states.

In 1976, when seven new states were created, the three dominant groups dominated six out of the seven states⁹⁸. This trend continued in the state creation exercises of 1991⁹⁹ and 1996¹⁰⁰.

Table 3.3 below shows the distribution of states among the ethno-regional elite groups in Nigeria in 1967, 1976, and 2008.

Table 3.3
States Controlled by Ethno-regional Elite Groups in 1967, 1976, 2008

States Controlled by Ethno-regional Elite Groups in 1967				
Ethno-regional Elite Groups	No. of States Controlled	% of States Controlled	1963 Population Est.	% of Total Population
North	4	33.3	23,399,886	42.0
West (Yoruba)	3	25.0	13,330,457	23.9
East (Igbo)	1	8.3	7,227,559	12.9
Niger Delta	3	25.0	7,702,742	13.8
Middle Belt	1	8.3	4,009,408	7.2
Dominant Groups	8	66.6	43,957,902	78.9
Marginal Groups	4	33.3	11,712,150	21.0
Total	12	100	55,670,052	100
States Controlled by Ethno-regional Elite Groups in 1976				
Ethno-regional Elite Groups	No. of States Controlled	% of States Controlled	1963 Population Est.	% of Total Population
North	7	36.8	23,640,499	42.4
West (Yoruba)	5	26.3	12,645,577	22.7
East (Igbo)	2	10.5	7,277,892	13.0
Niger Delta	3	15.7	7,652,409	13.7
Middle Belt	2	10.5	4,443,675	7.9
Dominant Groups	14	73.6	36,766,700	78.2
Marginal Groups	5	26.3	18,903,352	21.7
Total	19		55,660,052	100
States (including the FCT) Controlled by Ethno-regional Elite Groups in 2008				
Ethno-regional Elite Groups	No. of States Controlled	% of States Controlled	2006 Population Est.	% of Total Population
North	14	37.8	58,271,697	41.6
West (Yoruba)	7	18.9	29,953,081	21.3
East (Igbo)	5	13.5	16,381,729	11.7
Niger Delta	6	16.2	21,014,655	15.0
Middle Belt	5	13.5	14,382,380	10.2
Dominant Groups	26	70.2	104,606,507	74.7

⁹⁸ The Igbo were predominant in Imo State; the Yoruba dominated Ondo and Ogun States, while the North got Bauchi State (Hausa-Fulani), Niger States (Nupe), and Gongola State (Fulani). The only state in which the minorities were dominant was Benue State.

⁹⁹ In 1991, the dominant groups got six out of the nine states created: the North (Jigawa, Kebbi, and Yobe), Igbo (Abia and Enugu), and Yoruba (Osun). The minority groups got (Kogi, Delta, and Taraba States).

¹⁰⁰ In 1996, the dominant groups got five out of the six new states created: the North (Zamfara, Gombe and Nasarawa), Yoruba (Ekiti), and Igbo (Ebonyi). The minority groups got only Bayelsa State.

Marginal Groups	11	29.7	35,397,035	25.2
Total	37	100	140,003,542	100

Source: Adapted from Adejuyigbe (1979:211), Adejuyigbe (1989:211), National Population Census figures <http://www.prb.org/Template.cfm?Section=PRB&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=13767>

A number of important points are observable from the table above. The first is the fact that the dominant elite groups have adopted states creation as a means of sharing federal units based on the hierarchy of power among the five ethno-regional elite groups in the country. The distribution of the federal units follows a pattern in which the most powerful group - the North gets the highest share followed by the Yoruba, Igbo, Niger Delta and then the Middle Belt. The creation of new states which was initially conceived as a means of redressing the imbalance between the dominant elite and the marginal elite had been used by the dominant groups since the 1970s to consolidate their power. Thus, the mechanism through which the minority groups tried to secure territorial autonomy and inter-group balance has been hijacked and used by the dominant groups to further their interests. Certainly, the North made the greatest gain, maintaining its leading position with an increase in the percentage of states under its control from thirty-three to almost thirty-eight percent. On the contrary, the Niger Delta suffered the greatest loss. The percentage of states under its control decreased from twenty-five percent in 1967 to sixteen percent in 2008. As I noted earlier, the number of states per region is very significant because federal revenue and offices are distributed equally among all the states.

The creation of more number of states in areas of the dominant elite groups led to dissatisfaction by the minority elite groups with states creation. The minority elite were upset by the failure of their expectations that the creation of states would “produce a viable federation” (Smith 1981:360). Instead, the arrangement continued to widen the political and

economic advantage of the dominant elite groups. In the 1980s and 1990s, the elite from the former Bendel State, complained that:

Since its creation in 1963 as the Midwestern Region, what is now known as Bendel State has remained ...virtually intact. In the interim, the Northern Region has been carved up into ten states; and the Western Region into three states...the argument that the Bendel State has a disproportionate share of existing federal appointments is as absurd as it is untenable. If anything, the Bendel State has suffered and is suffering inverse discrimination (Bach 1997:342-343).

Complaints such as the above were also widespread in other parts of the Niger Delta, where the issue of states creation was tied to the broader claims of economic marginalization.

The elite from Rivers State made the most vocal expression of their dissatisfaction with the method of allocating new states, insisting that the refusal to carve out more states from the State is part of the historical domination that has denied the oil producing states access to oil revenue (Suberu 1996:41, see also Saro-Wiwa 1994 and 1999). The argument put forward by groups such as the Rivers State Committee for the Creation of More States is that Rivers State is the only state prior to 1996 whose boundaries remained unaltered since the 1967 creation of state exercise. The group wrote that “the people of Rivers State feel that they are losing something vital because, in the past, they were one out of 12 and, today, they are one out of 30. They feel that the other parts of Nigeria are enjoying greater resources than them because of the new states created” (The Guardian, 29 June 1994:1).

It is not however entirely clear how the number of states controlled by groups reflects on the amount of revenue they receive. For instance, the data in Table 3.4 below contradict the view that having greater number of states attracts higher revenue from the Federation Account. It is

interesting to note in the table that the three dominant groups that controls twenty-six states or seventy percent of Nigeria's thirty-six states received about fifty-nine percent of the federal revenue between 1999 and 2004; while the minority groups with eleven states or twenty-nine percent of the states received forty-one percent of the revenue. This analysis is even more interesting when one looks at the North which controls the greatest number of states – fourteen states or thirty-seven percent of the states, but received thirty-one percent of the federal revenue. In contrast, the Niger Delta with six states or sixteen percent of the states collected nearly thirty percent of the federal revenue. The above analysis calls for a reassessment of the assumption that the control of many states translates to greater share of federal revenue.

Table 3.4
Breakdown of Revenue Allocation to States, June 1999 - July 2004

S/N	States	Dominant Ethnic Group	Amount Allocated in billions of naira	% of Amount Allocated	% of Total Pop. 2006 Est.
Northern States					
1	Adamawa	Fulani	50.424	2.1	2.26
2	Bauchi	Hausa	56.248	2.38	3.34
3	Borno	Kanuri	55.628	2.35	2.96
4	Gombe	Fulani	41.776	1.77	1.68
5	Jigawa	Hausa	51.075	2.16	3.10
6	Kaduna	Hausa	65.422	2.77	4.33
7	Kano	Hausa	80.127	3.39	6.70
8	Katsina	Hausa	62.905	2.66	4.13
9	Kebbi	Hausa	49.452	2.09	2.31
10	Nasarawa	Hausa	38.540	1.6	1.33
11	Niger	Nupe/ Hausa	57.488	2.4	2.82
12	Sokoto	Hausa	50.907	2.15	2.64
13	Yobe	Kanuri	47.102	1.99	1.65
14	Zamfara	Hausa/Fulani	49.468	2.09	2.32
			756.562	31.9	41.57
Western (Yoruba) States					
15	Kwara	Yoruba	44.469	1.88	1.69
16	Ekiti	Yoruba	38.675	1.6	1.70
17	Lagos	Yoruba	85.833	3.64	6.43
18	Ogun	Yoruba	52.077	2.2	2.66
19	Ondo	Yoruba	73.471	3.1	2.45
20	Osun	Yoruba	47.700	2.0	2.44
21	Oyo	Yoruba	61.097	2.59	3.99
			403.322	17.01	21.36
Eastern (Igbo) States					
22	Abia	Igbo	47.875	2.0	2.02
23	Anambra	Igbo	44.333	1.88	2.98
24	Ebonyi	Igbo	43.999	1.86	1.55
25	Enugu	Igbo	45.542	1.9	2.32
26	Imo	Igbo	55.909	2.37	2.81

			237.658	10.01	11.68
	Middle Belt (Northern Minority) States				
27	Taraba	Mumuye/Jukun	46.272	1.96	1.64
28	FCT	Gwari	69.506	2.9	1.00
29	Benue	Tiv/Idoma	53.845	2.28	3.01
30	Kogi	Igala	47.620	2.01	2.34
31	Plateau	Anga	33.921	1.4	2.27
			251.164	10.55	10.26
	Niger Delta (Southern Minority) States				
32	Delta	Urhobo/Itsekiri	207.205	8.78	2.92
33	Edo	Edo/Ishan	47.673	2.0	2.29
34	Akwa-Ibom	Ibibio/Annang	137.185	5.8	2.80
35	Bayelsa	Ijaw	125.911	5.3	1.21
36	Cross River	Efik/Ekoi	45.546	1.93	2.06
37	Rivers	Ikwere	145.791	6.18	3.70
			709.311	29.99	14.98
	Total (Dominant Groups)				
			1,397.542	58.92	74.61
	Total (Marginal Groups)				
			960.475	40.54	25.24

Source: Compiled from Ibrahim 2005: 166-167, Notle 2002:181, National Population Census figures
<http://www.prb.org/Template.cfm?Section=PRB&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=13767>

But in order not to relegate the importance of creation of state in Nigerian's distributive politics, it is essential to mention that the data in Table 3.4 reflect only an aspect of the distributive issues – federal revenue shared horizontally among the states. There are other important areas such as appointment into the federal executive and government agencies, and the siting of federal projects, where control of many states plays important role. Moreover, the data reflects only the contemporary period. The situation in which the Niger Delta states enjoys a relatively greater share of federal revenue is a very recent phenomenon. This development is attributable to the introduction of the thirteen percent derivation principle in revenue allocation in 1999. Following the new practice whereby thirteen percent of revenues derived from particular states are returned to the states before redistributing the rest based on other criteria, the oil producing states in the Niger Delta now tend to have greater share of federal revenue despite their small population and predominance in only few states. The importance of states creation can also be better appreciated when one considers what the revenue profile of the Northern, Yoruba, or Igbo states would have been, had they been constituted into only one state each.

On the whole, states creation has become a regular feature of Nigerian politics because of the tendency by the elite groups to use it as a mechanism for enhancing and consolidating their positions. The dominant groups use creation of states to preserve the balance among them, ensuring that the hierarchy of power between them is maintained. On the other hand, the minority elite groups use creation of states as a basis to press for reforms that would enhance their position vis-à-vis the dominant elite groups. Although the dominant elite groups have dominated the creation of state exercises, yet they have tended to allow the creation of states in the minority areas to accommodate the interests of the minority elite. This gesture has constrained the minority elite from rejecting the practice of states creation. Instead, they have focused on pushing for a fair share of the new states.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have analyzed the origin and pattern of state creation in Nigeria as well as the reason for the regularity of state creation in the country. The chapter suggests that creation of states is the arrangement through which the elites undertake the formation of the federal units. It maintains that creation of states has become a feature of Nigerian politics due to the convergent interests of the various elite groups in the continuity of the arrangement. The chapter argues that unlike the 1950s and 1960s, the post-1970 Nigerian politics witnessed a convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of state creation. This is demonstrated by the tenacity with which the three groups pressed for the sub-division of their areas, contrary to their earlier resistance to the issue of state creation.

This change of attitude is attributed to the transformation of states as conduits of federal resources after the civil war in 1970. The post-war military government in a bid to show its

presence all over the country adopted the principle equality of states in distribution of federal resources. This made the number of states controlled by a group the determinant of the amount of resources it is likely to receive. As the analysis showed, the dominant groups used their predominance in the federal government to ensure that they controlled most of the states created since the 1970s. On their part, the minority elite groups intensified their demands for states creation in order to counteract the hegemony of the dominant elite groups. As the case of Rivers State illustrates, strong agitations by aggrieved elite groups led to the creation of states in their areas. In the next chapter, I will analyze fiscal aspect of power-sharing in Nigeria. The analysis will focus on explaining why and how Nigeria's revenue allocation system gained and preserved its stability against the backdrop of volatile political and social setting.

CHAPTER FOUR

Revenue Allocation: The Fiscal Aspect of Power-sharing

We believe that fiscal arrangements in this country should reflect the new spirit of unity to which the nation is dedicated...It is in the spirit of this new found unity that we have viewed all the sources of revenue of this country as common funds of the country to be used for executing the kinds of program which can maintain this unity¹⁰¹.

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The adoption of a federal system of government necessitates the division of state powers on one hand among the groups that form the federal subunits, and on the other hand, between the central government and the subunits in order to offer each level of government a relatively substantial degree of responsibility and to give local communities a sense of autonomy. In this sense, federalism involves political, administrative and fiscal decentralization. Put simply, political decentralization entails transfer of decision-making powers to officials at the state and local levels; administrative decentralization requires the assignment of administrative functions and responsibilities to sub-federal levels of government; while fiscal decentralization involves the devolution of the state's financial resources giving the sub-federal units the fiscal capacity to administer expenditure responsibilities assigned to them (Bird 2003:2-3). Ideally, framers of federal institutions strive to ensure that there is a balance in the political powers, administrative responsibilities and financial resources assigned to each level of government.

However, as many analyses have shown, it is almost impossible for the expenditure obligations of the various governmental units to match their financial capacity (see Offensend 1976:507, Oyovbaire 1978:224). Consequently, some sort of revenue redistribution is needed to boost the fiscal capacity of the financially indigent federating units. In many cases, the

¹⁰¹ See, *Nigeria: Report of the Interim Revenue Allocation Review Committee*, Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, 1969:27.

principles for revenue redistribution in federations generate conflicts among the governmental units or cultural/political groups. In the case of Nigeria, the issue of revenue allocation formula has been a major source of conflict among the various ethno-regional elite groups in the country. These groups are pitted against one another in the struggle to receive the greatest possible share of national revenue. Meanwhile, the historical rivalry between the elite groups has made the issue of revenue sharing even more contentious, leading to heated debates over the fairness of the principles guiding revenue allocation. An outcome of the public debates over revenue allocation is the emergence of an understanding among the elite of the need for more inter-group dialogue and consensus on the issue.

The task of this chapter is to analyze the fiscal aspects of power-sharing in Nigeria namely, the methods of revenue allocation, and to account for their continuity. The chapter is divided into five sections. This introductory section is followed by the second section which maps out the structure of Nigeria's revenue allocation system. The section discusses the basic principles guiding the allocation of expenditure responsibility, the control of revenue powers as well as intergovernmental revenue redistribution. The third section discusses continuity and change in Nigeria's revenue allocation system, and argues that there has been a greater tendency towards continuity than change in the process of fiscal power-sharing in Nigeria. The fourth section analyses the reasons for the continuity of the principles of revenue allocation in Nigeria. It argues that two factors explain the continuity of Nigeria's revenue allocation system: the convergence of the interests of the three dominant elite groups in favor of the existing system and the granting of regular fiscal concessions to pacify the aggrieved elite groups. The chapter ends with a concluding section.

4.1 NIGERIA'S REVENUE ALLOCATION SYSTEM

Like in most federations, the practice of revenue allocation in Nigeria raises four basic questions, namely: (1) who is responsible for what expenditure? (2) Who controls what revenue source? (3) How does the process of intergovernmental revenue sharing operate? (4) Who decides how expenditure responsibilities and control of revenues are assigned? Designers of federal institutions have attempted to settle these questions by devising various principles and practices to guide the revenue allocation system. The following analysis discusses the theory and practice of revenue allocation as a way of addressing the above questions within the Nigerian context.

I. Allocation of expenditure responsibilities

In principle, expenditure responsibilities are allocated to various units of government based on their perceived ability to perform three economic functions of government: economic stabilization, revenue distribution, and allocation of public goods and services (Musgrave 1959). The central government is assumed to be in the best position to carry out the *stabilization* function, which relates to the management of the impact of macro-economic fluctuations in the society. This is especially so, because it is believed that the utilization and coordination of both fiscal and monetary policy instruments are possible only at the national level. The central government is also assumed to be best suited to carry out the *distributive* functions such as revenue and income redistribution in the state. This assumption is backed by the economic reasoning that decentralized redistributive policies would be plagued by lack of coordination and efficiency, "since they would give rise to externalities and diseconomies of scale, and would lead to a competitive 'race to the bottom' among sub-national jurisdictions" (Van Houten 1999:6). Finally, economic theorists prescribe that states and local governments are in the best place to undertake the *allocation* functions such as the

provision of public goods and services to the people, since the preferences for particular goods or services differ by region or locality. These kinds of functions can only be assigned to the central government in a case where there are spillovers in the consumption of these goods between two or more states, or if the economies of scale involved in national provision outweigh the welfare benefits of decentralized provision (Van Houten 1999:6).

In Nigeria, the practice has been to spell out the allocation of governmental functions to the federal units in the Constitution. Therefore over the years, constitution-makers, politicians, and military administrators have been involved in assigning governmental functions to the federal units. In many occasions, the allocation of governmental functions has largely been an outcome of the contest and compromise among the politicians or manipulation of military administrators rather than the product of any specific economic principle (Adebayo 1990:247). Between 1946 and 1954, the central government was assigned with functions such as civil aviation, customs and excise, marine, military and defense, mines, posts and telegraphs, railways, and the supervision of the regional administration. On the other hand, the regional governments were assigned the responsibilities of agriculture, co-operative societies, education, forestry, police, provincial administration, public works, medical and veterinary services, and any other services and works which may from time to time be classified as regional on central government's direction (Adebayo 1990: 247-248).

The politics of constitution-making in the 1950s and 1960s affected the allocation of governmental functions after the 1946-1954 eras. The most significant change, which was in line with the growth in the powers of the regions in the 1950s and 1960s, was the abrogation of the central government's supervisory power over the regional governments. In the 1963 Constitution, governmental functions were categorized into three legislative lists: the

exclusive list of functions which only the federal government can legislate on, the *concurrent list* of functions which both the federal and sub-federal units can legislate on; and the *residual list* in which all the functions not listed in the exclusive and concurrent lists were contained and reserved for the jurisdiction of the sub-federal units¹⁰². In specific terms, items such as external affairs, defense, aviation, maritime, posts and telecommunications, railways, inter-state roads, mines and minerals were included in the exclusive list. The concurrent list contains items such as arms and ammunitions, census, higher education, labor, industrial development, prisons, public safety and order. The residual list includes local governments, town planning, primary and secondary education, health, land and property generally, chieftaincy and local customs, agriculture, forestry, regional roads, and water supply.

Beginning from the late 1960s when the military intervened in Nigerian politics, the federal government began to usurp the expenditure responsibilities hitherto assigned to the states/regions. As a result, issues such as agriculture, forestry, primary, secondary and higher education, health, water supply, and prisons, which were formerly under the jurisdiction of the regional governments, were taken over solely by the federal government or shared concurrently by the federal and state governments. This structure of expenditure responsibility assignment has remained unchanged despite the post-1979 constitutional changes. Table 4.1 below illustrates the present structure of allocation of functions/expenditure responsibilities to various tiers of government as contained in Section 4, Second Schedule of the 1999 Constitution. As can be seen in the table, the 1999 Constitution followed the 1963 arrangement of allocating expenditure responsibilities based on three legislative lists, although there were slight changes in the legislative items. This is a

¹⁰² The law stipulates that in any event of conflict between a federal and sub-federal function in the concurrent list, the federal function would supersede.

long-standing practice in Nigeria's federal system; the persistence of the federal structure has been accompanied by the continuity of the practice.

Table 4.1
Distribution of expenditure responsibilities among federal, state and local governments

Level of Government	Expenditure Responsibilities
Exclusive List	Defense
	Foreign affairs
	International trade including export marking
	Currency, banking, borrowing, exchange control
	Use of water resources
	Shipping, federal trunk roads
	Elections
	Aviation, railways, postal service
	Police and other security services
	Regulation of labor, interstate commerce, telecommunications
	Immigration
	Mines and minerals, nuclear energy, citizenship and naturalization rights
	Social Security, insurance, national statistical system (Census births, death, etc)
	Guidelines and basis for minimum education
	Business registration
Price control	
Concurrent List	Health, Social welfare
	Education (post primary/technology)
	Culture
	Antiquities
	Monuments, archives
	Statistics, stamp duties
	Commerce, industry
	Electricity (generation, transmission, distribution)
Research surveys	
Residual List	Any subject neither assigned to federal nor local government level
Local Government	Economic planning and development
	Health services
	Land use
	Control and regulation of advertisements, pets, small businesses
	Markets, public conveniences
	Social welfare, sewage and refuse disposal, registration of births, death, Marriages
	Primary, adult and vocational education
	Local government
	Development of agriculture and natural resources

Source: Section 4, Second Schedule *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

II. Allocation of revenue mobilization powers

To carry out the expenditure functions/responsibilities assigned to them, the various units of government require a simultaneous assignment of powers to mobilize revenue. This includes the powers to collect and administer taxes and other forms of revenue. However, it is not easy to delineate a clear-cut theory for the allocation of revenue mobilization powers to different units of government in developing federations like Nigeria. As Ahmad and Singh (2003:2) noted, in developing countries, allocation of tax jurisdiction in particular and intergovernmental fiscal relations in general is complicated by the heavy reliance of the states on natural resources and the concentration of these resources in specific regions/states. Nevertheless, the conventional approach is either to centralize the revenue mobilization power at the federal level or to decentralize it among the federal sub-units.

Many scholars who have addressed the issue assignment of revenue powers recommended that the central government should have jurisdiction over most of the revenue sources (Alm and Boex 2002:7). The choice of central collection and administration of important taxes is based on two reasons. The first has to do with the assumption that the collectible taxes may be important for the execution of broad economic goals of income redistribution and price level stabilization because of their values. The second is the notion that huge economies of scale may apply to centralized collection of such taxes by the centre. As one would expect, the decision to centralize collection and administration of taxes would normally throw up a number of challenges. First of all, centralization of revenue mobilization powers has serious implications on the states' tax effort, constituting a major disincentive to fiscal capacity building at the state and local levels. Again, when revenue is centrally collected and transferred to the states, it tends to create the impression that the states can generate funds without any apparent cost. Thus, the constant flow of federal transfers to states may have the

effect of reducing the incentives of the state governments to develop other revenue sources (World Bank 2003:30-31).

In practice, it might not be feasible for the central government to dominate the entire revenue mobilization process due to serious contentions that decentralist elements may put up. Therefore, the suggestion by some analysts is that the powers to collect and administer taxes be allocated to both federal and sub-federal governments based on one important consideration - the mobility of the tax base (Van Houten 1999:6). In this case, the federal government is seen as being best-suited to collect and administer mobile taxes such as capital tax, because the collection of such taxes by the sub-federal governments may stir unhealthy rivalry among the state and local governments due to the fact that the taxes cut across borders. On the contrary, the sub-federal governments are assumed to be more competent to control immobile taxes such as property tax, since these taxes are within their domain. But the problem remains that it is difficult to locate the major taxes such as the personal income taxes and sales taxes within mobility-immobility spectrum, thereby making political debates about the allocation of tax powers even more explosive and difficult to resolve (Van Houten 1999:6). In the meantime, a good case for the decentralization of the revenue mobilization powers is also made based on the principle of “fiscal equivalence” (see Olson 1969), which holds that “to ensure efficient levels of state spending and public goods provision, the level of government which is responsible for a particular expenditure should also be responsible for raising the necessary revenues” (Van Houten 1999:6). Although the existence of shared competencies between different levels of government may hinder the full implementation of this principle, the principle provides a useful guideline for the allocation of tax powers.

In Nigeria, the principle of taxation powers allocation is based on “the need to put at the disposal of each level of government the power to levy and collect taxes so as to generate sufficient funds to carry out the expenditure responsibility assigned to them” (Adebayo 1990:250). But since 1946, when the intergovernmental revenue distribution system was introduced, the federal government has been largely responsible for the legal administration and collection of the most important sources of revenue (Suberu 2001:47). Notice in Table 4.2 below that the most lucrative taxes such as company income tax, petroleum profit tax, and capital gains tax for corporate bodies are all controlled by the federal government. The federal government also controls mining taxes as well as import and export duties. The state and local governments are left with sales tax, property tax, and personal income tax. In 1994, when the Value-Added Tax (VAT) was introduced, also under the control of the federal government, it further eroded the prominence of the sales tax. The effect of this structure of revenue powers allocation is that the tax base of the state and local governments is very limited, making it difficult for them to effectively carry out their expenditure responsibilities. It also encourages the dependence of the state and local governments on revenue collected by the federal government.

Table 4.2
Taxes collectible by the three tiers of government

Level of Government	Taxes and Levies to be collected
Federal Government	Companies income tax
	Withholding tax on companies, residents of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and non-resident individuals
	Petroleum profits tax
	Value added tax
	Education tax
	Capital gains tax on residents of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, bodies corporate and non-residential individuals
	Stamp duties on bodies corporate and residents of the Federal Capital Territory Abuja
	Personal income tax in respect of: (i) members of the Armed Forces of the Federal; (ii) members of the Nigeria Police Force; (iii) Residents of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja; and (iv) Staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Non-resident individuals

State Governments	Personal Income Tax in respect of: (i) Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE); and (ii) Direct taxation (Self Assessment)	
	Withholding tax (individuals only)	
	Capital gains tax (individuals only)	
	Stamp duties on instruments executed by individuals	
	Pools betting and lotteries, gaming and casino taxes	
	Road taxes	
	Business premises registration fee in respect of (a) urban areas as defined by each State, maximum of (i) N10,000 for registration, and (ii) N5,000 per annum for renewal of registration; and (b) rural areas: (i) N2,000 for registration, and (ii) N1,000 per annum for renewal of registration	
	Development levy (individuals only) not more than N100 per annum on all taxable individuals	
	Naming of street registration fees in the State Capital	
	Right of Occupancy fees on lands owned by the State Government in urban areas of the State	
	Market taxes and levies where State Finance is involved	
	Local Governments	Shops and kiosks rates
		Tenement rates
On and Off Liquor License fees		
Slaughter slab fees		
Marriage, birth and death registration fees		
Naming of street registration fee, excluding any street in the State Capital		
Right of Occupancy fees on lands in rural areas, excluding those collected by the Federal and State Governments		
Market taxes and levies excluding any market where State finance is involved		
Motor park levies		
Domestic animal license fees		
Bicycle, truck, canoe, wheelbarrow and cart fees, other than a mechanically propelled truck		
Cattle tax payable by cattle farmers only		
Merriment and road closure levy		
Radio and television license fee (other than radio and television transmitter)		
Vehicle radio license fees (to be imposed by the Local Government of the State in which the car is registered)		
Wrong parking charges		
Public convenience, sewage and refuse disposal fees		
Customary burial ground permit fees		
Religious places establishment permit fees		
Signboard and advertisement permit fees		

Source: Taxes and Levies (Approved List for Collection) Decree No. 21 of 1998

There are two features of tax powers assignment in Nigeria that need to be pointed out. The first is that although taxation powers are constitutionally assigned, the legal and administrative jurisdictions over a tax in one level of government do not necessarily converge. In other words, one level of government may have power to make laws on a

particular tax while another administers it. The second point, which is in fact more significant, is that the level of government that administers and collects a particular tax may not have the right to appropriate its proceeds to itself. In this sense, the federal government administers and collects most of the lucrative taxes, but it does so, on behalf of the entire federation since the proceeds from the taxes are to be shared among the various tiers of government (World Bank 2003:26). These features further complicate the issue of assignment of revenue mobilization powers in Nigeria.

Again, it must be noted that although the federal government dominates the most important sources of revenue, the states and local governments still have a number of revenue sources where they can rely on for “internally generated revenues”. The sources include several miscellaneous fees and levies, some minor business taxes, development levies, and a variety of personal income taxes such as the pay-as-you-earn tax, the self-assessment tax, the withholding tax, and the capital gains tax on individuals. Nevertheless, the amount of revenues collected from these sources is usually low. Some analysts attribute the low “fiscal capacity” of the states to their inability to exert “fiscal effort” toward revenue collection (Alm and Boex 2002:9). Thus, while increased fiscal effort may lead to an increase in the states’ fiscal capacity in absolute terms, the same cannot be said with regards to the effect of increased fiscal effort on the states’ fiscal capacity relative to that of the federal government. In other words, one cannot confidently expect the fiscal capacity of the states vis-à-vis the federal government to change drastically as a result of increase fiscal effort due to the federal government’s stronghold on the most lucrative taxes.

There is a historical imbalance in the fiscal capacities of the federal and states/local governments as the details of the revenue collection profile of the three tiers of governments

between 1969 and 1997 in Table 4.3 illustrates. The table shows that for nearly three decades (that is, from 1980 to 1997), the states/local governments could not raise up to ten percent of Nigeria's total revenue, except in 1986 when they collected twelve percent of national revenue. This asymmetry makes it almost certain that there will also be a significant imbalance between the expenditure responsibilities assigned to these levels of governments and the amount of revenue available to them. The imbalance becomes clearer when one considers the fact that the federal government which controls about ninety percent of the national revenue is assigned with about seventy percent of the total expenditure responsibilities in Nigeria (Oduola 2006:1). Thus, in the face of the federal dominance of the revenue sources in Nigeria, the state and local governments have been forced to spend more revenue than they get. Under this condition, intergovernmental revenue redistribution becomes the key strategy through which the state and local governments can overcome the imbalance.

Table 4.3
Revenue raised by levels of governments, 1970–97

Fiscal year	Total amount (N= million)	Federal government (%)	State and local governments (%)
1969/70	691.06	91.00	9.00
1970/71	1297.74	89.00	11.00
1971/72	1573.60	88.00	12.00
1972/73	1958.07	84.50	15.50
1973/74	5297.72	84.00	16.00
1974/75	6204.04	87.50	12.50
1975/76	7339.51	93.00	7.00
1976/77	8580.00	93.31	6.69
1977/78	7790.70	94.30	5.70
1978/79	11,686.75	92.90	7.10
1979/80	16,248.68	93.35	6.65
1981	14,353.70	92.00	8.00
1982	12,450.30	91.00	9.00
1983	11,191.77	93.50	6.50
1984	12,040.71	93.00	7.00
1985	16,634.50	90.50	9.50
1986	14,455.80	87.14	12.86
1987	27,332.10	92.85	7.15
1988	29,775.50	92.68	7.32
1989	55,472.50	97.11	2.89

1990	100,864.10	97.26	2.74
1991	104,172.80	96.95	3.05
1992	195,697.90	97.32	2.68
1993	196,733.50	96.81	2.69
1994	210,911.60	95.73	4.27
1995	475,393.20	96.76	3.24
1996	541,701.20	96.03	3.52
1997	609,659.20	95.60	4.40

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria, Annual Report, and Statement of Accounts, 1997.

III. Intergovernmental revenue redistribution

In Nigeria, the allocation of expenditure responsibilities and tax jurisdiction has raised fewer contentions compared to the issue of intergovernmental revenue redistribution. One can agree with Phillips (1971:392) that “the vital problem of federal finance in Nigeria is not so much that of allocating taxing powers, as of allocating the revenues produced by federal taxes between the various governments of the federation”. The key issue in the disputes over the system of intergovernmental revenue allocation is the dilemma of choosing between the principle of *fiscal centralization* or that of *fiscal decentralization* at the vertical level, as well as the principle of *fiscal equity* or that of *fiscal efficiency* at the horizontal level. I will return to these issues later.

There are a number of reasons for the practice of intergovernmental revenue redistribution in Nigeria. First, and most importantly, it is used to remedy the fiscal imbalance between the federal and sub-federal governments on one hand, and among the sub-federal governments on the other hand (Olalokun 1979:114). Intergovernmental revenue redistribution serves as a means of redistributing resources in order to equalize the fiscal capacity of the different levels of government in Nigeria as well as to achieve a balanced and even national development. Secondly, intergovernmental revenue redistribution is a means of ensuring that there is a balance between the expenditure responsibility and fiscal capacity of each unit of government (Akindele 1979:185). As I mentioned earlier, it is nearly impossible to devise a federal fiscal

arrangement in which there is a perfect match between the fiscal responsibilities and capacities of the governments. Consequently, intergovernmental revenue redistribution serves as a useful device for aligning the revenue base of the various units of government with their continually changing expenditure responsibilities. Thirdly, intergovernmental revenue redistribution facilitates the financing of the government activities that generate spillovers to administrative jurisdictions (Alm and Boex 2002:18). In this context, intergovernmental revenue redistribution is also used to encourage uniformity in specific sectors such as education, health and the provision of public utilities throughout the federation. Finally, intergovernmental revenue redistribution is used to compensate for adverse impact of national policies on the specific interests of some states as well as to respond to cases of disaster and emergency in any part of the federation (Akindele 1979:186).

Intergovernmental revenue sharing in Nigeria takes the form of constitutionally guaranteed grants from the federal to the state and local governments¹⁰³. This makes it mandatory for all the levels of government to pool part of their revenue together for subsequent redistribution. Thus, instead of using intergovernmental transfers as a means of assisting fiscally weak states, it has become the principal source of revenue for the states and local governments. There are two main categories of revenue bases where the three tiers of government jointly pool their revenue for future intergovernmental redistribution. They include the Federation Account Revenues and Value Added Tax Revenues; each of these pool accounts is shared with a distinct sharing arrangement.

¹⁰³ “Any amounts standing to the credit of the Federation Account shall be distributed among the Federal and State Governments and the total governments councils in each State on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly”, see Section 162 (3-5), *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

The revenue sharing arrangements for funds in the Federation Account operate in two major ways – vertical and horizontal transfers. Vertical revenue transfer is made to address the fiscal imbalance between the federal and sub-federal governments. As such, it assigns a specific share of the Federation Account to each level of government. Vertical revenue transfer in Nigeria comes in a variety of ways such as tax sharing, unconditional grants, block grants, conditional grants and matching grants. The horizontal revenue transfer on the other hand, is directed toward blocking the fiscal imbalances among the state and local governments. To this end, horizontal intergovernmental revenue allocation formula distributes the states’ share from the Federation Account among the states and the local governments’ share among the local governments.

The power to decide the formula for allocating revenue to the different tiers of government is constitutionally vested on the National Assembly¹⁰⁴. The constitution also specifies the principles of horizontal revenue allocation (including issues such as equality, population, internal revenue effort, land mass, and derivation), but authorizes the National Assembly to determine the specific formula for allocating revenue among the state governments on one hand and the local governments on the other hand. The current horizontal revenue allocation formula and the weight of each principle are shown in Table 4.4 below. As can be seen in the table, equality of states and population carry the highest weight among all the principles of horizontal revenue allocation in Nigeria. I will return to further analysis of these principles in the next section.

Table 4.4
Horizontal revenue sharing formula

	Principle	Allocation
1	Equality	45.23
2	Population	25.60
3	Population density	1.45

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, Section 162 (2).

4	Internal revenue generation effort	8.31
5	Landmass	5.35
6	Terrain	5.35
7	Rural roads/inland waterways	1.21
8	Portable water	1.50
9	Education	3.00
10	Health	3.00
	Total	100.00

Source: Source: World Bank 2003:35

The modality for the sharing of the Federation Account revenues has long been dogged by credibility problems. The first area of concern is the vertical revenue allocation formula. Until April 2002, the Federation Account revenues (apart from proceeds from VAT) were shared as follows: 48.5 percent to federal government, twenty-four percent to state governments, twenty percent to local governments, and 7.5 percent to special fund. Some state governments considered the special fund of 7.5 percent an unconstitutional way of increasing the allocation to the Federal Government. They argue that special projects are not a level of government and the constitution requires funds in the Federation Account to be shared only between the governments (World Bank 2003:33). The state governments insisted that the allocation of “Special Fund”, which the Federal Government spent according its discretion was improper. The second issue was the practice of deducting certain first line charges to the Federation Account before applying the sharing formula. For instance, between 1991 and 1995, fifty-two percent of revenues due to the Federation Account were withheld in this manner (World Bank 2003:33). In 2000, first line charges amounting to about twenty-nine percent were applied as follows: thirteen percent derivation, Joint Venture Cash Calls (JVC) consisting of government’s share of the cost of oil production, external debt servicing, and funding of the judiciary.

Issues relating to the lack of transparency in the allocation of revenues in the Federation Account culminated in a legal dispute between the federal government and the state

governments at the Supreme Court in 2002. The highlights of the April 2002 Supreme Court ruling is summarized in Box 4.1 below. Among other things, the Supreme Court ruled that all first line deductions from the Federation Account (except the thirteen percent derivation) are unconstitutional.

Box 4.1
Highlights of the Supreme Court Ruling on Revenue Allocation

This suit arose out of the Federal Government's dichotomization of oil revenue between onshore and offshore sources. Its position was that the principle of derivation was applicable only to oil extracted from onshore deposits; offshore oil extracted from the deep sea in the country's territorial waters is "commonwealth", accruing jointly to the Federation. Some oil states countered by challenging certain practices of the Federal Government relating to Federation revenues. The major rulings of the Court are as follows:

- That oil mined in the deep seas belong to the Federation as a whole and not to the nearest state and as such is as not subject to 13 per cent derivation
- That only onshore mineral resource was subject to the 13 per cent derivation payment to states.
- That natural gas is a mineral resource and, where produced onshore, is subject to 13 percent derivation (the practice of the Federation had been to exclude natural gas from its definition of mineral resource)
- That all revenues accruing jointly to the federation, including unexpected extra earnings from oil, are subject to distribution in the usual manner, the FG having no power to "save" any part of it without the consent of the constituent governments.
- That payment of the 13 percent derivation should be with effect from May 29, 1999 when the constitution came into effect and not from January 2000 as effected by the Federal Government
- That the practice of making certain first line charges on the Federation Account for priority projects and debt service is unconstitutional and should be ended
- That the Federal Capital Territory is not a state, and its area councils are not properly local governments and so could not benefit from direct allocation of resources from the Federation account as had been the case before the ruling.

Source: World Bank 2003:42

Besides the Federation Account, the other category of revenue accruing to the three tiers of government comes from the Value Added Tax (VAT). VAT was introduced in 1994 to replace the states' sales tax. Like Federation Account revenues, VAT revenues are centrally collected and administered. Federal tax offices were opened in all the states and local governments to enhance the collection of the revenue. The formula for disbursing revenues from VAT is shown in Table 4.5. The table shows that the formula of twenty percent, fifty percent, and thirty percent for federal, state, and local governments, respectively was initially

adopted in 1994. As the revenue coming from VAT increased, the Federal Government allocated fifty percent of the VAT proceeds to itself in 1995. This was later adjusted gradually to the current ratio of 15:50:35.

Table 4.5
Vertical distribution formula for VAT, 1994-2001

	1994	Jan – April 1995	May 1995 – Dec 1996	1997 – 1998	Since 1999
Federal	20	50	40	25	15
States	50	25	35	45	50
Local	30	25	25	30	35
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: World Bank 2003:37

The horizontal formula for allocating revenues from VAT is based on the following criteria: derivation, equality of states, and population; while the revenues are shared as follows: fifty percent based on derivation, forty percent based on equality, and ten percent based on population. Some states where the bulk of VAT revenues are derived have expressed dissatisfaction with the VAT horizontal allocation formula. Lagos State in particular, have called for the application of hundred percent derivation in the distribution of VAT revenues in order to maximize its revenue from the source (The Guardian, 30 May 2005:42-43).

4.2 CONTINUOUS TRENDS IN NIGERIA'S REVENUE ALLOCATION SYSTEM

This section examines continuity and change in the practice of revenue allocation in Nigeria. It will argue that Nigeria's revenue allocation system has been dominated, since 1970, by two major principles namely: the principle of fiscal centralization at the vertical level and the principle of fiscal equity at the horizontal level. The following analysis looks at the development of these principles while section 4.3 will examine the reasons for their continuity.

I. Vertical revenue sharing

Tension exists between the federal and state governments over the formula for allocating federally collected revenues. Since 1946, there have been frequent reforms in the formula for vertical revenue sharing, yet its underlying principle has remained considerably stable since 1970. The bone of contention is the question of how much of the centrally collected revenue should be retained by the federal government and how much should be allocated to the state governments. This question is linked to the earlier mentioned dilemma of fiscal centralization versus fiscal decentralization.

Fiscal centralists argue that the federal government should control greater part of the national revenue and use it to achieve even development in all parts of Nigeria. They also claim that the federal government deserves a greater share of the national revenue because it bears responsibility of ensuring political, social and economic stability in the country. This idea is shared by the Raisman Commission set up in 1958 to recommend the revenue allocation arrangement for the post-colonial Nigeria. To the Commission, “the financial stability of the Federal centre must be the main guarantee of the financial stability of Nigeria as a whole, and ...by its strength and solvency, the credit-worthiness of the country will be appraised” (cited in Akindele 1979:183). The fiscal centralists have supported their argument for fiscal centralization by pointing to the need to have a strong central government that can provide the entire country with a sense of national security. They claim that a strong federal government would also guarantee national integration through its ability to intervene and bring about fiscal and developmental equalization among the ethnic and regional groups in the country.

On the other hand, the fiscal decentralists want the state and local governments to control greater share of the national revenue, since their activities have direct impact on the people.

An editorial in one of the major Nigerian newspapers summarized this view:

To expect an allocation which gives the Federal Government 55% and the 19 states [as at 1980] only 30 percent to achieve the contrary will be like living in a world of fantasy. There is sufficient evidence to prove that the ugly phenomenon of growth without development arises from the spending of too much money on a few growth industries to the neglect of people-development oriented projects...Yet do we have to build giant industries and make our people sub-human? Tens of millions of our people are wallowing in abject poverty. States and local governments whose pre-eminent job is to see to their welfare are helpless. They are starved of funds while the federal government soaked in billions of Naira, fritter away much needed money on fruitless and worthless grandiose projects (Daily Sketch, 11 November 1980:2).

The main argument of the fiscal decentralists points to the need to correct the imbalance in the fiscal responsibility and capacity of the federal and state governments.

The history of Nigeria's revenue allocation system has witnessed significant shifts from the principle of fiscal centralization to fiscal decentralization and then back again to fiscal centralization. The adoption of a federal system of government in 1954, the advent of military rule in 1966, and the outbreak of Nigerian civil war in 1967 were the most significant factors behind these shifts. Nigeria's revenue allocation system was dominated by the principle of fiscal centralization for several years before the country was federalized in 1954. However, the earliest step toward fiscal decentralization was made in 1946 when Nigeria was divided into three regions. The 1946 Constitution which regionalized Nigeria, also gave the regional governments "a large measure of financial responsibility" requiring revenue powers (Adedeji 1969:49). However, despite the regions' expenditure responsibilities, the supreme fiscal powers remained with the central government, since the country continued as a unitary state.

At this time, the central government controlled all national revenues, except for the direct or poll tax which was levied and collected by the regional governments (Nnoli 1995:95).

Following the creation of the regional governments in 1946, Sydney Phillipson, the then Financial Secretary to the Nigerian Government was appointed to work out the details of the fiscal arrangements proposed by the 1946 Constitution. The Phillipson Commission was required among other things to determine the amount of revenue to be made available to the regions. The Phillipson Commission identified two categories of revenue in Nigeria's fiscal system – regional and non-regional. Revenues were regarded as regional if they satisfy two criteria. First, such revenues must be identifiable within the region and locally collected by regional authorities. Secondly, such revenue must also be revenues over which no “national or important considerations of policy” were likely to arise (Ashwe 1986:26). Based on these criteria, the commission declared revenues from direct taxes, licensing fees, mining rents, rent from property, and rents from government departments as regional revenues. Non-regional (non-declared) revenues were therefore revenues that did not meet the above criteria. The Phillipson Commission proposed two principles for allocating non-regional revenues: the principle of derivation and the principle of “even progress” or even development (measured by population). On the basis of derivation, the Commission recommended that each region would receive, in addition to the full amount of its share of declared regional revenues, a block grant from the revenue accruing to the central government in proportion to its relative contribution to such central revenue (Suberu 2001:49).

The fiscal decentralist tendencies introduced by the Phillipson Commission was further enhanced by two other fiscal commissions. First, the Hick-Phillipson Commission constituted in 1951 recommended the principle of independent revenue, which gave the regional

governments the powers to control tax rates on taxable regional revenue matters, and to decide how much of the direct taxes would be administered by the local administrations (Nnoli 1995:97). In addition, the Chick Commission inaugurated after the introduction of the 1954 Federal Constitution, expanded fiscal decentralization. As part of the preparations for the granting of self-government to the regions in 1956, the colonial government specifically directed the Chick Commission to ensure that the new revenue allocation formula was based on the principle of derivation (Nnoli 1995:98).

Consequently, the Chick Commission recommended a genuinely decentralized vertical fiscal arrangement. Half of the revenue from import duties on all goods other than tobacco and motor spirit, and the entire proceeds from import and excise duties on tobacco and the import duties on motor spirit, were allocated to the regions on derivation basis. The full proceeds of all mining royalties and rents as well as the personal income tax levied and collected by the federal government were also returned to the region of derivation (Ashwe 1986:30-31). The fiscal capacities of the regions were further boosted by the regionalization of the commodity marketing boards and the division of the accumulated reserves of these boards (Suberu 2001:50). With the implementation of the recommendations of the Chicks Commission and the eventual granting of self-government to the regions in 1956, the federal government lost its fiscal ascendancy over the regions, and the principle of fiscal centralization was replaced with that of fiscal decentralization. The effect of these decentralist measures was remarkable, “whereas in 1951-52...regional revenue was only twenty-four percent of central government revenue, under the 1954 fiscal system the federal and regional governments shared the total current revenue sources of Nigeria on about a fifty-fifty basis” (Adedeji 1969:112-113).

The reversal of the principle of fiscal decentralization and shift toward fiscal centralization began soon after the military intervention of 1966 (Suberu 2003:51). The first major step toward fiscal centralization came with the enactment of Decree 13 of 1970, which provided for the equal division of taxes on tobacco and motor fuel between the federal and state governments. This provision overturned the previous regime where these taxes were returned to their states of derivation. One year later, the federal military government promulgated Decree No. 9 of 1971, which authorized it to take over all rents and royalties that accrue from offshore oil operations. In 1972, the military government promulgated yet another decree. This time Decree No. 51 of 1972 empowered the federal government to take over the income tax paid by armed forces personnel, external affairs officers, and pensioners overseas. In 1975, a further revision to the revenue sharing regime led to drastic reduction of the revenue accruable to the states. Based on Decree No. 6 of 1975, all import duties on motor fuel and tobacco, which previously go to the states of origin, were now posted to the Distributable Pool Account (DPA) from where they would be redistributed between the different tiers of government. The same was the case with all export-duty revenue from produce, hides and skins. Also, eighty percent of on-shore mining rents and royalties were paid into the DPA, reducing the share of the states from the revenue from forty-five percent to twenty percent (Rupley 1981:266).

Since 1970, there has been a persistent trend towards fiscal centralization, although minor exceptions can be observed. The data in Table 4.6 below shows that despite several amendments to the vertical revenue sharing formula since 1970, the federal government consistently maintained its control over almost a half of the revenue in the Federation Account. As can be seen in the table, in 1980, the federal government enjoyed a disproportionate share of the Federal Account based on the formula of 53:30:10. In 1982, the

formula changed to fifty-five percent to federal, thirty-four percent to states, and ten percent to local governments, respectively. Currently, the federal government enjoys fifty-two percent of the federal revenue, while the states and local governments have twenty-six percent and twenty percent, respectively. Except for 1994, the federal government has held at least fifty percent of the revenue in the Federation Account since 1980.

Table 4.6
Vertical allocation of the federation account (1980-to date)

	1980 (Okigbo)	1981 Act	1982	1984	1990	1992	1994	Since 2004
1. Federal Government	53.0	55.0	55.0	55.0	50.0	50.0	48.5	52.68
2. Regional/State Governments	30.0	30.5	34.5	32.5	30.0	25.0	24.0	26.72
3. Local Governments	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	15.0	20.0	20.0	20.60
4. Special funds	7.0	4.5	0.5	2.5	5.0	5.0	7.5	-
(i) Federal Capital Territory	N.A	-	N.A	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	-
(ii) Derivation	N.A	2.0	N.A	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	-
(iii) Development of oil producing Areas	N.A	1.5	N.A	1.5	1.5	1.5	3.0	-
(iv) General Ecology	N.A	1.0	N.A	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	-
(v) Statutory Stabilization	N.A	-	0.5	-	0.5	1.5	0.5	-
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Adapted from Anyanwu (1997:190), *The Guardian*, 12 September 2000:53.

II. Horizontal revenue sharing

The horizontal revenue allocation has produced as much, if not more, contention as the vertical intergovernmental transfer. Arriving at appropriate formula for interstate revenue sharing is one of the most combustible issues in Nigerian politics. Thus, the states (organized around ethno-regional elite groups) are divided over the appropriate principles for sharing revenues accruing from the Federation Account. The major issue in the disagreement is the question of horizontal fiscal balance. The states are divided over the meaning of balance, with some states defining balance in terms “derivation” while others define it in terms of “need”. The differences in views and preferences are based on the strategic calculations of the states – since they have unequal revenue mobilization capacities, each state seeks the formula that would offer it the greatest advantage. Since 1946, the government has devised about twenty

horizontal revenue sharing formulas but none of them have enjoyed complete acceptance. The multiplicity of horizontal allocation formulas complicates the problem of choosing between the principles of fiscal efficiency and fiscal equity (Suberu 2001:57).

On one hand, the principle of fiscal efficiency is based on the notion of efficiency in economics and the concept of Pareto optimality in welfare economics. An economic resource is said to be “Pareto optimal” if the allocation of such resource would not make one person better off and at the same time making another worse off. A change that makes everyone better off is called “Pareto improving change”. In other words, the principle of fiscal efficiency is designed to allocate resources based on most rational and economically efficient grounds. Among the efficiency principles of horizontal revenue allocation are derivation and tax effort. On the other hand, the principle of fiscal equity is based on the notion that persons in like circumstances should be treated identically; that is, equal treatment of equals. The principle of fiscal equity is designed to equalize the fiscal capacities of the states by redistributing national revenues on political grounds. The equity principles include equality of states, population, equal access to development opportunities, even development, national interest, minimum responsibility of government, financial comparability among governments, land mass/terrain, and social development factor (Suberu 2001:57). When these principles are put together, the horizontal revenue allocation matrix that emerges emphasizes four things: allocation of revenue on derivation basis (this particularly relates to oil revenues and VAT collections); provision of general purpose funding for government projects; provision of additional funding for states\regions with more needs; and stimulation of fiscal effort.

Over the years, there has been a shift from the practice of fiscal efficiency to fiscal equity. During the 1950s and 1960s, the efficiency principle of derivation emphasized horizontal

revenue sharing. The derivation principle requires that “all revenue which can be identified as having come from, or can be attributed to, a particular region should be allocated to it” (Phillips 1971:390). Proponents of derivation principle see it as efficient because it enables each region to receive revenues that are proportionate to their contributions, thereby promoting national/regional economic development by encouraging all the regions to identify and exploit revenue sources within their localities. However, opponents of the derivation principle claim that it would encourage the development of the rich regions while the regions endowed with less resource would lag behind in socio-economic development. In the 1960s, Adebayo Adedeji (1969:254) maintained that derivation “poisoned inter-governmental relationships and ...exacerbated inter-regional rivalry and conflict. Perhaps more than any other single factor it hampered the development of a sense of national unity and common citizenship in Nigeria”. Despite its merits, the derivation principle was seen as a divisive element that can lead to greater inter-ethnic/regional imbalance and instability in Nigeria.

The 1970s marked the initial period of the shift toward the equity principle. The most contested aspect of equity principle is probably its excessive reliance on the criterion of equality of states. The criterion of equality of states was introduced after the division of the regions into 12 states in 1967. Together with the criterion of population, it dominated the horizontal revenue allocation formula. As Table 4.7 below indicates, the weight of these criteria was reduced marginally from fifty percent each in the 1970s to forty percent each in the 1980s. Since the 1990s, the weight attached to population has further been reduced to thirty percent. Presently, forty percent (the largest share) of the revenue from the Federation Account is shared among the states based on the criterion of equality of states. This means that each state receives an equal share of this portion of the Federation Account regardless of the state’s population or contribution to the Federation Account.

Table 4.7
Horizontal revenue allocation (Among States) formula criteria
(In percentage)

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>1970-1979</i>	<i>1980-1983</i>	<i>1984-1989</i>	<i>since 1990</i>
(1.) Minimum Responsibilities of Government (Equality of States)	50	40	40	40
(2) Population	50	40	40	30
(3) Social Development Factor				
(a) Primary school Enrolment	-	15	15	2.4
- Direct Enrolment		-	11.25	0.8
- Inverse enrolment		-	3.75	0.8
(b) Health (hospital beds)		-	-	3.0
(c) Water		-	-	3.0
(4) Landmass and Terrain		-	-	10
(5) Revenue Effort	-	5.0	5.0	10
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Adapted from Anyanwu (1997:188, 189 & 191)

The excessive reliance on the criterion of equality of states is justified on a number of grounds. First, it is argued that the principle recognizes the reality that each state government has a minimum responsibility, which is to sustain a basic set of public functions and institutions irrespective of its geographical size, population or fiscal capacity. Secondly, the principle of equality of states represents the fiscal aspect of the overarching practice of symmetrical federalism in Nigeria. This practice manifests in the commitment of the elite to create states of relatively equal population, as well as equal constitutional, legal, and fiscal powers. Thirdly, the principle of equality of states compensates states that could not benefit from other criteria due to their small geographical size, population or financial capacity (Suberu 2001:59).

However, several concerns have been raised against the use of equality of states criterion in particular, and equity principle in general. First, it has been argued that the use of equality of states criterion in revenue allocation is an incentive to the endless demands for the creation of new states (Suberu 1998). Creation of new states is assumed to have the strategic benefit of

increasing the share of a particular ethno-regional group from the national revenue. Critics see the continuous fragmentation of the federal structure as a duplication of government apparatus at the state level. Furthermore, critics of the equity principle argue that the emphasis given to the principle in horizontal revenue sharing leads to high rate of efficiency losses because it frees the states from the effect of scale of economies. This is illustrated by the fact that the expenditures of the new states not only include the construction and operation of new state administrative facilities, but also some non-essential facilities funded by the states such as television and radio stations (Alm and Boex 2002:24). The absence of the equality-based funds would force the states to pursue cost-saving measures when dealing with issue of scale of economies.

Critics of the equality of states criterion also raise the question of fairness. First, they argue that the criterion allocates more benefits to less populated states over the more populated states when federal revenue distribution is considered on a per capita basis. This strand of opinion suggests that equity would be better guaranteed by distributing resources in per capita terms since the citizens through their states are the ultimate recipients of the federal funds. The crux of the argument is that it is more expensive for a state like Lagos to provide public services to its over nine million residents than for a state like Ebonyi with only about three million residents. Critics of equality of states criterion also argue that it gives undue advantage to the dominant ethno-regional groups (which have greater number of states) and constrains the federal government from allocating adequate funds to cater for the needs of the minority groups, especially in the oil producing Niger Delta.

In the foregoing section, I have analyzed continuity and change in Nigeria's revenue allocation system. The section identified the two principles of revenue allocation system in

Nigeria – the principles of fiscal centralization and fiscal equity. Through a historical analysis, it was shown that, despite minor adjustments, the principles of revenue allocation in Nigeria have been considerably stable since 1970. In the following section, I will account for the continuity in Nigeria’s revenue allocation system.

4.3 EXPLAINING CONTINUITY IN NIGERIA’S REVENUE ALLOCATION SYSTEM

There are three major points that explain the continuity of the principles of fiscal centralization and fiscal equity. They include the post-1970 political ascendancy of the federal government over the state governments, convergence of the interests of the dominant ethno-regional elite groups in favor of the fiscal equity principle, and the practice of using fiscal concessions to pacify the marginal elite groups. The first point relates to fiscal centralization while the other points address the issue of fiscal equity.

I. The political ascendancy of the federal government over the state governments

The continuity of the principle of fiscal centralization is closely tied to the political ascendancy of the federal government over the state governments. Beginning from the late 1960s, the federal government gained upper hand in national decision making, using its pre-eminence in policy making to centralize and control Nigeria’s revenue allocation system. As one analyst puts it:

Over the years...there have been consistent attempts by the Federal Government to browbeat the States and Local Governments into believing that whatever was allocated to them from the federally collected revenue was out of the benevolence of the Federal Government. This has resulted in the orchestration of the so-called dependence of State and Local Governments on the Federal Government (Mbanefo 1997:13).

It is in the context of post-1966 federal-state relations that the federal government’s support for the continuity of the fiscal centralization principle can be understood.

In order to adequately understand the processes that led to the political ascendancy of the federal government over the states and why this trend has been difficult to reverse, it might be useful to reflect historically on the nature of federal-state relations in Nigeria. The relations between the federal and state governments in Nigeria have passed through two broad historical phases. The first phase (1954-1966) is the era when the regions/states were dominant in Nigerian federation while the second phase (after 1966) is the period when the federal government gained ascendancy over the state governments. The following analysis is organized around this framework.

A. *Federal-state relations before 1966: weak federal and strong regional governments*

Between 1954 when federalism was formally introduced in Nigeria and the initial military intervention in 1966, the regional governments enjoyed political primacy in the federation. Although the constitution divided power between the federal and the regional governments in a coordinate manner, the regional governments had political advantage over the federal government. The strength of the regional governments manifested visibly during the early constitutional negotiations in the 1950s and 1960s. At this time, regional politicians used their political dominance to ensure the adoption of several decentralist measures, including derivation and fiscal decentralization.

The power of the regional governments *vis-à-vis* the federal government stems from nature of pre-1966 party system. The Nigerian party system during the 1950s and 1960s was essentially ethno-regionally based. The support for the three major parties in the country came from the three dominant ethno-regional elite groups – the Northern, Yoruba, and Igbo elites who gave their support to the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), the Action Group

(AG), and the National Council for Nigerian Cameroons (NCNC), respectively. Consequently, party politics at this time was dominated by leading politicians in the three ethno-regional groups. Because the British were still in control at the centre, these politicians persuaded the colonial administration to cede substantial powers to the regional governments, including powers to control lucrative sources of revenue. Colonial policies such as regionalization bolstered the powers of the regional governments. Under the policy of regionalization, the important and expensive task of promoting economic and social development was assigned to the regions together with the control of rich development corporations and agricultural marketing boards. This transformed the regions and positioned them as the main locus of power, with the leaders of the three dominant ethno-regional groups preferring to serve as premier of each of the regional governments while deploying their lieutenants to serve in the national government (Riker 1964:131, Ademolekun and Ayo 1989:158).

The power of the regional governments over the federal government was also bolstered by the fact that national party organizations had little or no influence over the regional organizations. The party organizations at the national level, particularly in the case of the NPC, were inferior to the regional party organizations. The NPC did not make meaningful effort to build a national organization rather the party channeled its effort toward establishing strong regional support base. According to Smith (1981:373) the dominant party at the national level [the NPC] did not obtain its dominance by appeal to a wide and varied electorate, “but by control of a region in which its supporting interests were dominant, a control which guaranteed the necessary majority of national legislative seats”. The other major parties also concentrated at the regional level. Thus, the three regions were governed by three different regional parties, who were in competition with each other and were

expanding their regional organization to secure regional hegemony. In the context of the inter-regional competition, the regional party organizations gained superiority over the national party organization. In all, it was the strength of the regional party organizations that was behind the preponderance of the regional governments over the federal government before 1966. However, this state of affairs changed so dramatically after the military intervention of 1966, setting-off a new pattern of federal-state relations in Nigeria.

B. *Federal-state relations since 1966: strong federal and weak state governments*

The year 1966 marked the beginning of the decline in the ascendancy of the regional governments over the federal government. The military coup of 1966 expectedly produced serious centralizing trend in the distribution of powers and resources between the federal and state governments. Though the territorial units of the federation were preserved with the same areas of jurisdiction, their governments were incorporated into a structure of military hierarchy. Few months after the military incursion into politics in 1966, the new military leaders reorganized the structure of Nigerian leadership in a centralized manner. The head of state presided over the Supreme Military Council (SMC), which exercised the highest executive and legislative powers in the country¹⁰⁵. The SMC was constituted by military officers occupying key military and state positions. The military governors of the states were also members of the SMC. There was also a Federal Executive Council (FEC) which administered the day to day business of government. The FEC was made up of mainly civilians who served as ministers in charge of various government portfolios. This arrangement was also replicated at the state level where there were military governors and State Executive Councils (SEC) composed mainly of civilians.

¹⁰⁵ The Supreme Military Council was renamed the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) by the General Babangida regime (1985-1993). Thereafter, the General Abacha regime (1993-1998) named it the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC), a name which it was known until Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999.

The mere fact that the head of state (usually the most senior military officer) is the leader of the federal government and appoints junior military officers to serve as governors in the states showed the increased power of the federal government under the military. Although the military governors were members of the SMC, the extent to which they could disagree on the proposals put forward by the head of state was greatly limited. Under the authority of a military head of state, the federal government subordinated the states and their military governors. Consequently, it was easy for the federal government to push through reform proposals and to get them accepted and implemented. The declining status of the state governments was worsened in 1975 when the military governors were removed from being members of the SMC. From this point, the state military governors were asked to report to the office of the Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters, who was the next in command to the head of state. The military governors were made to receive federal clearance before adopting major policies in their states and the chief of staff could give policy directives to the state governors (Osaghae 1992:186).

In addition, the federal military government took over the power to legislate for the entire country and did not limit itself to the exclusive and concurrent lists of the Nigerian Constitutions. Two major military Decrees widened the power relations between the federal and state governments during the military era. The first was the Constitution (Suspension and Modification) Decree No. 1 of 1966, which bestowed on the federal government, the “power to make laws for the peace, order, and good governance of Nigeria or any part thereof with respect to any matter whatsoever”. All military regimes in Nigeria operated under this Decree, though with minor amendments¹⁰⁶. The second Decree which affected federal-state relations in Nigeria was The Federal Military Government (Supremacy and Enforcement of

¹⁰⁶ The Decree No. 1 of 1966 was slightly amended in Decree No. 8 of 1967 and Decree No. 1 of 1984.

Powers) Decree No. 28 of 1970. This decree suspended Section 164 of the 1963 Republican Constitution, which required the federal government to consult with the regions before reviewing the revenue allocation system. Based on this Decree, the federal military government unilaterally reviewed the revenue allocation formula in 1970, to give the federal government substantial fiscal capacity at the expense of the states. Between the 1980s and 1990s when temporary austerity measures and later the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) were introduced to address the global economic recession, the federal military government made use of these laws to circumvent the financial autonomy of the states (Osaghae 1992:186). These economic adjustment programs encouraged the reduction of government expenditures, as such the federal military government capitalized on them to exercise strict fiscal controls on the financial operations of the state governments

The state of emergency imposed during the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970) further widened the powers of the federal government, allowing the addition of more functions to the federal expenditure responsibility and a corresponding increase in federal spending. Thus by 1972, the federal government's share of public expenditure had increased by seventy percent while that of the state governments fell to twenty-six percent (Smith 1981:364). The civil war also changed the structure of conflict and consensus in Nigerian politics. Before the civil war, political issues at the federal level were usually resolved by the power play and negotiations among the regional political elite. However, the ability to mobilize the whole country during the war years and the victory for the federal forces made the federal government more autonomous and assertive. After the war, the federal government maintained this leading position in national politics, mobilizing the citizenry through the program of national reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation. Increasingly, the old regional mentality of self-sufficiency and self-determination waned with the defeat of the separatist Biafra, while

the federal government became increasingly assertive. Thus, after the civil war, the federal government used its new leverage to intervene, arbitrate, and provide leadership in intergovernmental matters.

Another factor that contributed to the political ascendancy of the federal government over the state governments is the transformations in the post-1970 party system. Beginning from 1979, the ethno-regional structure of Nigeria's party system was considerably altered. The 1979, 1989, and 1999 Constitutions prohibited the formation of ethnic parties, stipulating that political parties should be national at least in their organizational structure by having their headquarters at the Federal Capital Territory and choosing the members of their executive committees from at least two-thirds of the states. Based on these rules, political parties have to demonstrate, at least in their organizational structure and officers that they have a national base which clearly exceeds the boundaries of a particular state or ethnic group, and this means that they have to draw support from different parts of Nigeria. These rules made it difficult for particular ethno-regional elite groups to form their own political parties, although parties like United Party of Nigeria (UPN) and Nigerian People's Party (NPP) in the Second Republic as well as the Alliance for Democracy (AD) in the Fourth Republic, still had an ethno-regional base. However, political party engineering since the 1970s have strengthened national party organizations ensuring that the parties operate at the national rather than the regional levels.

Finally, the proliferation of states since 1967 has increased the power of the federal government over the states. As Adamolekun and Ayo (1989:161) rightly observed, "the fact that the creation of twelve states was unilaterally decided upon by the federal government was a most revealing indicator of the new power relations between the federal government

and the states”. Although the states were created with the same powers as the former regions, some functions of the old regions such as housing and development corporations were transferred to the federal government (Smith 1981:365). The federal government also assumed the responsibility of co-coordinating the policies of the state governments, particularly the interstate projects. The shift in the rationale for the creation of states has also had visible impacts on the status of the state governments. During the 1950s and 1960s, creation of states was conceived as a strategy of minority accommodation and nation-building. However, since the 1970s, creation of states is perceived as a way of providing outlets for coordinated development by the federal government (Osaghae 1992:184). Based on this perception, the federal government has tended to centralized policy making and implementation in areas such as health, education, housing, and even agriculture. There is also a corresponding centralization of fiscal power at the federal level. In all, it can be argued that the continuity of the principle of fiscal centralization depends largely on the primacy of the federal government over the state governments. The following sub-section will explain the continuity of the fiscal equity principle.

II. Convergence of the interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of fiscal equity

The main explanation for the continuity of the principle of fiscal equity lies in the convergence of the interests of the dominant ethno-regional elite groups in favor of the principle. During the 1950s and 1960s, the adoption of appropriate principles of revenue allocation in Nigeria was a major source of conflict among the three dominant elite groups. At the 1950 Ibadan General Conference on the review of the 1946 Constitution, delegates from the Northern Region proposed a horizontal revenue allocation on per capita basis, so that the population of a region might determine its share of revenue. The Northern delegates maintained that the non-application of this “democratic principle” of revenue allocation

would give out disproportionate social benefits to the smaller populations of the Eastern and Western Regions at the expense of the North (Awa 1964:32). In opposition, delegates from the Eastern Region advocated a revenue allocation formula based on the principles of need and even progress. The disagreement over the appropriate revenue allocation formula continued after the 1950 Conference.

At the London Constitutional Conference in 1953-1954, the disagreement over the principles of revenue allocation re-emerged. The Northern delegates demanded that “all revenues except customs duties should be levied and collected by the regions; the administration of the customs should be organized so as to ensure that goods consigned to regions were separately cleared and charged to duty” (Awa 1964:45). This proposal for extreme fiscal decentralization was resisted by the elite from the minority ethnic groups, who preferred a more centralized fiscal structure that would secure them from majority domination. But because the three dominant groups were keen on consolidating their stronghold on the regions, they all opposed the proposal for fiscal centralization. According to Udo Udoma, a leading member of a minority party from the Eastern Region, the United National Independence Party (UNIP):

In vain was it argued [at the conference] that in the present circumstances of Nigeria, with its multiplicity and diversity of cultural and ethnic groupings, it was necessary to have a strong and independent central government whose authority and prestige would give confidence and guarantee security to minority groups within the Federation and at the same time command international respect (cited in Awa 1964:46-47).

Eventually, the dominant groups, agreed on a more moderated formula based the principles of derivation and fiscal decentralization.

The London Conference marked the beginning of disagreement between the dominant and minority elites over the issue of revenue allocation. The creation of states exercise in 1967, which composed the minority groups into separate states, also emboldened these groups to demand for a better deal in the sharing of national revenue. But more importantly, the rise of oil as the mainstay of Nigerian economy bolstered the resolve of the minority groups to get a fair share of national revenue. Notice in Table 4.8 below that the share of oil revenue in Nigeria's total revenue profile increased from twenty-six percent in 1970 to eighty-one percent in 1980. This figure, however, reduced marginally to seventy-six percent in 2001. The fact that oil is located within the region of the minority groups and that enormous "economic power" is associated with oil was a major boost to the minorities' struggle for a greater share of national revenue in Nigeria. Consequently, the minority groups adopted an oil-owning identity to support their claim to special rights, including rights over oil revenue (Obi 2001, Uche and Uche 2004). The claim to "oil minority rights" tended to reverse the perceived political and economic insignificance of the minority groups, positioning them as Nigeria's "economic majorities" (Ikporukpo 2001:120).

Table 4.8
Structure of federal government revenue, 1970-2001

Year	Oil revenue		Non-oil revenue		Total
	N billion	% Share of total	N billion	% Share of total	N billion
1970	0.17	26.98	0.47	73.02	0.63
1980	12.35	81.09	2.88	18.91	15.23
1990	71.89	73.28	26.21	23.71	98.10
1997	416.81	70.51	174.34	29.49	591.15
1998	324.43	68.30	150.73	31.70	475.04
1999	724.42	76.32	224.76	23.68	949.19
2000	1,591.70	83.47	314.48	16.53	1,906.16
2001	1,707.56	76.52	523.97	23.48	2,231.53

Source: CBN (Central Bank of Nigeria) *Statistical Bulletin*, 10: June 1999, & 12: December 2001.

Realizing the changing structure of majority-minority relations and their privileged economic position in Nigeria, the oil producing communities in the Niger Delta intensified their

demands for greater political and economic inclusion. They have also rejected the use of fiscal equity principle in revenue allocation. These communities feared that considering the dominant groups' hegemony in national politics as well as their control of greater number of states, a centralized and equity based fiscal arrangement would further extend the historical marginalization of the minority groups – deepening a phenomenon some of them refer to as “internal colonialism” (Naanen 1995:48). In view of their continued alienation from the control of oil wealth and in the context of their resistance to majority domination, the minority communities in the Niger Delta have insisted that their security lies only in a decentralized revenue allocation system that assigns greater weight to the principles of derivation.

Over the years, the Niger Delta elite have used civic and constitutional steps to express their position. These measures include petitions to the political authorities, sponsoring of motions in the legislative houses during civilian administrations, and media publicity (Naanen 2001:221). There have also been attempts to convince and co-opt elites from the non-oil producing states, especially from the South-east and South-west zones, who appear sympathetic to their cause, through platforms such as the Southern Solidarity Forum (Nwala 1997:141). Through organizations such as the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Association of Minority Oil States (AMOS), the Ijaw National Congress (INC), and the South-south Governors Forum, the Niger Delta elite have made arguments for environmental justice. To the oil producing communities, environmental justice means that “areas or parties which suffer from the polluting effects of an activity should, if there are benefits from the activity, should enjoy rewards proportionate to the degree of pollution” (Ikporukpo 2004:324).

The peoples and governments of the oil producing states hold three different subsets of environmental justice perspectives – the conservative, moderate, and radical perspectives. The conservative perspective, which is anchored on the 1960 and 1963 Constitutions, wants fifty percent of all proceeds from mining royalties and rents to be paid to the state from where they are derived (Ikporukpo 2004:343). This view is promoted particularly by the South-south Governors Forum and elites such as G. B. Leton, a former Federal Minister and the first president of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). To Leton, the oil producing states “have not demanded the total proceeds from rents and royalties...An equitable portion of the proceeds is what they have always asked for...To deny them everything in the face of the massive pollution and degradation of their environment is totally inhuman” (cited in Ebeku 2003:293). The moderate perspective on the other hand wants Nigerian state to pay reparation to the oil producing states for many years of environmental decimation. This view is popular among the ethnic based organizations in the Niger Delta. Finally, the radical perspective, espoused by youths, environmental and minority rights activists, wants Nigeria to return to the pre-independence fiscal allocation arrangement where the states retained all mining rents and royalties leaving only the mining taxes to the Federation Account (Ikporukpo 2004:343).

The elite from the dominant ethno-regional groups have suppressed the demands of the minorities, blocking constitutional and legislative channels for modifying the principles of revenue allocation. In all the Constitutional Conferences since 1979, the dominant elite groups used their numerical strength and political influence to scuttle efforts by the minority groups to change the revenue allocation principles (see Nwala 1997:142-143). Here is how one analyst reported his observations during the 1994/95 Constitutional Conference:

In 1994, the mineral producing states at the so called Constitutional Conference, convened by the Federal Military Government requested that the allocation of

revenues derived from their areas be restored to what it was in 1957, namely, 65 percent thereof. Despite numerous discussions at several committee meetings and at plenary sessions, no agreement was reached. Eventually, it transpired that the powers that be had agreed to allocate 13 percent of the revenues derived from mineral producing areas to the affected state governments (Vincent 2001:18).

The “powers that be” mention above apparently refers to delegates from the dominant groups, judging from the role played by politicians such as Shehu Yar’Adua in the negotiations.

At the 2005 National Political Reform Conference, the issue of revenue allocation (now referred to as resource control) re-emerged. The opposition to the demands by oil producing states for a revenue allocation based on fifty percent derivation was led by the delegates from the North. A renowned social commentator, Odia Ofeimun (2005:8-9), observed that “the concerted position of the northern delegations was decidedly united against the advocacy of resource control. This proved, if any proof was needed, that the battle was always between the people of the South-south and a Northern power implicated in the control of Federal Might”. Northern elites such as Umaru Dikko, leader of the Northern delegation to the National Political Reform Conference, did not conceal their opposition to the demands for the application of the derivation principle. Dikko told a news magazine in July 2005 that “in any arrangement there will always be a senior partner. The North is the senior partner and it will continue to be”; he vowed that the North would use its political might to block any proposed change in the revenue allocation formula (Tell, 18 July 2005:20-24). To reaffirm their position on the issue of revenue allocation, some Northern elites signed and submitted a document to the Conference opposing demands for resource control. In the document, they stated that: “we stand by the constitutional provision that the federal government should hold in trust, control and facilitate the exploration and exploitation of all mineral resources in the country as enshrined in section 44(1:3) of the 1999 constitution” (Newswatch, 13 June

2005:24). This comment encapsulates the position of the Northern elite on the issue of revenue allocation.

The battle against changes in the revenue allocation formula is not waged by the Northern elite alone. Elites from the other dominant ethno-regional groups (Igbo and Yoruba) have also been implicated. The main case against the Igbo elite is their failure to take a public stand in support of the minorities' struggle to change the revenue allocation principles. The lukewarm attitude of Igbo elite is illustrated by an incident during the 2005 National Political Reform Conference. The Conference Committee on Environment and Natural Resources could not reach consensus on the issue of resource control. When the issue was eventually put to vote, the voting reflected geographical leanings. Four delegates from the Niger Delta and two Yoruba delegates (the South-west) voted in support of resource control while the ten Northern delegates voted against it. Surprisingly, the only Igbo delegate (South-east) abstained from voting (The Guardian, 15 May 2005:1-2). No explanation was given for the delegate's action. This sort of behavior supports the perception in the Niger Delta that Igbo elite are opposed to the struggle for resource control.

The case against the Yoruba elite is even more forceful. At the heat of the resource control debate during the 2005 National Political Reform Conference, Omajuwa Natufe (2005:9) alleged that there has been a surprising shift in the position of the Yoruba elite, who were formerly in favor of a more decentralized federalism particularly during the regime of General Abacha and before their kinsman Olusegun Obasanjo became the President in 1999. According to him, "this is buttressed by the posture of the South-west delegation at the National Political Reform Conference, which has aligned itself with the North against the South-south on this crucial matter". Natufe (2005:9) maintained that "what is at play here [at

the National Political Reform Conference] is a gross abuse of the power of the majority in denying the minority its rights over control of its resources, the same rights that the majority accorded themselves in pre-January 15, 1966 Nigeria”.

There is an additional allegation against the Yoruba. The Yoruba elite is accused of stepping down the tempo of its pressures for resource control and regional autonomy; their struggles being largely satisfied with the emergence of Olusegun Obasanjo, a Yoruba man, as the president in 1999 (Maier 2000). This shift in attitude is illustrated by statements attributed to some Yoruba elites. Frederick Fasehun, leader of a Yoruba nationalist movement, the *Oodua People's Congress* (OPC), was reportedly quoted as urging Yorubas to “learn to play a safe politics such that if there is any of their own they would not support, they should for God’s sake let the sleeping dog lie, and should not do anything to injure the interest of their brother” (Maier 2000:234). Although the Yoruba political class was initially opposed to Obasanjo’s presidency¹⁰⁷, as it appeared later, Obasanjo was able to woo the Yoruba elite, and thus, garnered their support to the federal government. In spite of this, the extent to which Yoruba support to Obasanjo government worked against the struggles to modify the principles of revenue allocation is not yet entirely clear.

However, because of the historical struggle between elite from the dominant and minority groups, there is a tendency in the Niger Delta to attribute the deplorable socio-economic and environmental conditions in the area to the machinations of the three dominant ethno-regional groups on one hand and the oil companies on the other hand. This tendency is illustrated by the comments such as those of renowned writer and environmental activist, Saro- Wiwa (1992:7) who wrote:

¹⁰⁷ In 1999 election both candidates for the presidency were Yoruba, but the majority of Yoruba politicians and voters preferred Olu Falae instead of the eventual winner Obasanjo, while the dominant power brokers in the North and elsewhere supported Obasanjo.

I have watched helplessly as they [the inhabitants of Niger Delta] have been gradually ground to dust by the combined efforts of multinational oil companies, the murderous ethnic majority in Nigeria, and the country's military dictatorship. Not the pleas, not the writings over the years have convinced the Nigerian elite that something special ought to be done to relieve the distress...

Also, former Governor of Rivers state, Melford Okilo, claimed that the application of derivation as a principle of revenue allocation has continued to be deliberately suppressed since 1970 "simply because the main contributors of the oil wealth are minorities" (see Suberu 2001:65). The thinking in the Niger Delta is that the dominant groups' opposition to the principles of fiscal decentralization and derivation is borne out of the benefits they derive from the use of the principle of fiscal equity; benefits which these groups have expanded through creation of states.

In order to compel the dominant ethno-regional groups to accept demands for fiscal decentralization and derivation, the masses in the Niger Delta (especially the Youths) have been mobilized into the struggle. From mild civic agitation articulated by the elite, the struggles of the oil producing minorities' were transformed in the 1980s into a widespread community based protest. Through the activities of a vibrant local civil society, the entire oil producing states have witnessed intense identity mobilization, ethnic nationalism, community activism and youth mobilization (Ikelegbe 2006:32). The mass mobilization in the oil producing areas focused on demands for not only the revision of Nigeria's revenue allocation system, but also for the right to local autonomy, adequate representation in the federal government, payment of oil royalties to the communities, protection of the environment, and payment of compensation for land acquisition and environmental damage.

Since the late 1990s, radical youth militancy has emerged parallel to and perhaps, surpassed the initial civic struggle by the Niger Delta elite. Osaghae (2001:14) characterized the shift in strategy in the following way:

There was a movement away from the petitioning, night vigils, fasting and praying, peaceful demonstrations, and electoral boycotting...to sabotage, seizures and lockouts; vandalization of oil wells, pipelines and other installations; hostage-taking and kidnapping of workers of multinationals...and direct confrontation with agents of the state – soldiers, police and other security agencies.

The radical youth militancy approach differed in two ways from the initial strategy. First, there was a shift from the initial culture of elite bargaining and political accommodation to that of communal confrontation. Secondly, the methods of the struggle were enlarged to include extra-constitutional, extra-legal and extra-cultural actions such as kidnapping of foreign oil workers and destruction of oil installations (Ikelegbe 2006:33). The new approach has resulted to a fall out between the militant youths and some elites suspected to be collaborating with the ruling elite¹⁰⁸. It has also led to several violent confrontations between the local people and Nigerian security forces, threatened oil production and embarrassed Nigeria in the international arena (Omeje 2005). The radical mass struggles in the Niger Delta have forced dominant elite to consider the demands for fiscal decentralization and derivation. But instead of granting far-reaching concessions to the Niger Delta, the dominant elite have tried to pacify the Niger Delta with limited concessions. These concessions have ensured the continuity of the revenue allocation system by blocking the possibilities of structural change in the system.

¹⁰⁸ This is illustrated by the Ogoni case in which the youths murdered some Ogoni elders suspected to be cooperation with the federal government.

III. Fiscal concessions to the Niger Delta

There are two major forms of fiscal concessions to the oil producing communities in the Niger Delta. The first is the establishment and sponsorship of special development agencies in the area, while the second is the marginal increase in the weight attached to the principle of derivation.

A. *Special development agencies*

Following the radicalization of the struggles by the Niger Delta elite to modify the revenue allocation formula, the 1990s witnessed the most wide-ranging concessions ever made to the oil producing areas since 1970. These concessions came partly in form of a special development agency named, Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), established in 1992 to manage a special fund devoted to the development of the oil producing areas. OMPADEC brings to memory the defunct Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB), which was set up in 1960 following the recommendations of the Willink Commission of 1957. The NDDB went into coma after the military intervention of 1966. Like the NDDB, OMPADEC was mandated to undertake development projects in oil producing areas¹⁰⁹.

Although OMPADEC provided a number of communities in oil producing states with infrastructures such as electricity and pipe-borne water, a substantial proportion of the funds allocated to OMPADEC was misappropriated or mismanaged. Frynas (2001:38) noted that OMPADEC lacked clear performance guidelines or controls; resulting to inefficiency and corruption in the organization. Being a federal institution, with employees from different

¹⁰⁹ The main objectives of OMPADEC were: (a) to rehabilitate and develop the oil producing areas, (b) to tackle ecological problems that result from oil exploitation, (c) to embark on development projects, (d) to execute other works and perform such other functions which in the opinion of the commission are necessary for the development of the area.

parts of the country, OMPADEC became a new arena of ethno-regional struggles. The indigenes of oil producing states were locked into competition among themselves and with other Nigerians for jobs and contracts (Oguine 2000:4). The internal struggles in OMPADEC precipitated claims and counter-claims of corruption and inefficiency. The Association of Oil Producing Communities of Nigeria (ASOPCON) accused OMPADEC of embarking on projects without first ascertaining the needs of the people. They also raised the issue of abandonment of projects, arbitrary revocation of on-going projects and re-awarding them to friends or relatives, indiscriminate granting of loans, and preferential treatment to some oil producing states to the detriment of others in the citing of development projects (The Guardian, 28 June 1994:9). These allegations against OMPADEC were investigated by the government and in December 1996 the chairman of OMPADEC, Albert Horsfall was dismissed and replaced with Eric Opia. In 1998, Eric Opia was also removed after he failed to account for 6.7 billion naira allocated to the body (Frynas 2001:38). Thereafter, Preston Omatsola was appointed as the new OMPADEC chairman.

Apart from the corruption and inefficiency that plagued OMPADEC, there were other issues that made the body unacceptable to the people of the oil producing states. Firstly, the oil producing states considered the three percent share of government revenue allocated to them as grossly inadequate compensation for the socio-economic and environmental damages done to the area (Oguine 2000:4). In the words of Benson Lulu Briggs, a leader of Kalabari community in Rivers State, “they are only giving it [OMPADEC] the arrears of what it ought to have got. Suppose the oil was got in Yoruba or Iboland, would things be like this?” (The Guardian, 10 June 1994:11). Secondly, OMPADEC was perceived as not being representative of the oil producing states since members of the Commission were not nominated by the oil producing states, but appointed by the President (Oguine 2000:4). Thus,

many people in the Niger Delta perceived OMPADEC as another arm of the federal bureaucracy. Being remote from the oil producing communities, OMPADEC became engulfed in a crisis of confidence. As G. A. Amuta, chairman of the Association of Oil Producing Communities of Nigeria (ASOPCON) puts it, OMPADEC is “an agent of government which some oil producing communities look at with misty eyes, rightly or wrongly, and with concomitant crisis of confidence” (The Guardian, 28 June 1994:9). To save OMPADEC from an imminent failure, J. K. Onoh, a professor of Economics, suggested that “to allay the fears of those communities, it may be useful to decentralize its [OMPADEC’s] operations, so that its sub-offices are established in each state to take care of the demands of the benefiting communities of each state” (The Guardian, 28 June 1994:9). This was not done, and OMPADEC eventually collapsed.

After the demise of OMPADEC, the body was replaced by a new agency known as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), established in 2000. The basic functions of the NDDC are similar to those of OMPADEC. However, the NDDC is different in terms of the huge amounts of resources that have been channeled into it. For instance, in 2004, the government allocated a budget of nearly 300 million dollars to the NDDC (Ibeanu 2004:17). The NDDC receives funds from several sources¹¹⁰. First, the federal government allocates fifteen percent of monthly statutory sums from the Federation Account to NDDC member states. Second, oil and gas companies contribute three percent of their total annual budget to the organization. Third, fifty percent of proceeds derived from assorted NDDC assets. Fourth, funds from other contributions – gifts, donations, grants, accrued interest from investments, and domestic and international loans.

¹¹⁰ See section 14(2) of the *NDDC Act 2000*.

The enormous funds allocated to it notwithstanding, there are fears that the NDDC may toe the line of OMPADEC. Although Nigerian President claimed that in formulating the NDDC Bill, lessons were drawn from the shortcomings of OMPADEC, critics have pointed out that like OMPADEC, the NDDC “lack discernible performance guidelines or control measures” (Frynas 2001:39). Also, it has been argued that the NDDC Act failed to provide for prior consultation with the oil producing communities on proposed developmental projects, resulting to a situation in which the mistakes of OMPADEC might be repeated (Frynas 2001:39). Although the organizational structure of NDDC is more representative of all stakeholder interests than that of OMPADEC, yet the selection and dismissal process is predominantly controlled by the President. The fact that the Board representatives, Advisory Committee members, or Monitoring Committee members are not elected by the communities undermines the legitimacy of the agency as there are no means of ensuring accountability through elections or impeachment.

B. *Increased emphasis on the derivation principle*

Besides the establishment of OMPADEC and later the NDDC, the weight of the derivation principle as a revenue allocation criterion has also been increased. Funds allocated to the oil producing states based on the principle of derivation were increased from one and half percent of Federation Account to three percent in 1992. During the 1995 Constitutional Conference, the weight of the principle was also raised from three percent to thirteen percent. This amendment in the revenue allocation formula was introduced into law by the 1999 Constitution. This reform marks a remarkable increase in the revenues of the oil producing states and is a clear departure from the situation since 1980 as indicated by Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9
Shares of Proceeds from Oil Revenue

Years	Oil producing states (percent)	Distributable Pool Account/ Federation Account (percent)
1960-67	50	50
1967-69	50	50
1969-71	45	55
1971-75	45 minus offshore proceeds	55 plus offshore proceeds
1975-79	20 minus offshore proceeds	80 plus offshore proceeds
1979-81	-	100
1982-92	1.5	98.5
1992-99	3	97
Since 1999	13	87

Source: United Nations Development Programme 2006. *Niger Delta Human Development Report*. Abuja: UNDP, p. 37

The greater emphasis on the derivation principle has however increased the appetite of the oil producing states for more share of the oil revenue. Since 1999 the governors of the oil producing states have canvassed for a revenue allocation formula that is based on fifty to one hundred percent derivation. At a meeting in Benin City in July 2000, the governors of six Niger Delta states (Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo and Rivers State), called for 100 percent control of the resources in their states out of which they proposed to pay a contribution to the Federation Account (Guardian, 16 July 2000). But still, there are signals that Niger Delta elite are happy with what they have and would not press too hard for further revision of the revenue allocation principles. For instance, while speaking on the issue of revenue allocation, the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Victor Attah stated: “when you look at the big difference between one percent and 13 percent or if you look at the difference between 13 percent with dichotomy and 13 percent without dichotomy, you will know that gradually, the Niger Delta is beginning to get its due” (Newswatch, 8 March 2004:41). This statement portrays the feeling of appeasement among the Niger Delta elite. The gradual increase in the weight of the derivation principle has given the Niger Delta elite some sense accomplishment. As events around the Niger Delta show, the elite are busy competing to take hold of the increased funds coming to the area, rather than seriously contending for more

concessions (Human Rights Watch 2007). However, the lack of real improvements in the well-being of the local people has made youth restiveness and violence to continue to rise.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with three major issues. First, it examined the nature of Nigeria's revenue allocation system. Here, the chapter looked at the assignment of expenditure responsibilities and revenue mobilization powers in Nigeria as well as how the system of intergovernmental revenue sharing has tended to balance the gap between the responsibilities of the different units of government and the revenue available to them. The chapter moved on to explore the continuity and change in Nigeria's revenue allocation system. It was shown that Nigeria moved from a revenue allocation system based on the principles of fiscal decentralization and derivation in the 1950s and 1960s to one dominated by the principle of fiscal centralization and fiscal equity since the 1970s. Although there were efforts to reverse to the principle of decentralization and derivation, yet the principles have maintained their continuity.

Three main explanations for the continuity of the principles were suggested. First, the chapter attributed the continuity of the fiscal centralization principle to the political ascendancy of the federal government over the state governments. This was facilitated by the centralized structure of the military regimes that ruled Nigeria up till 1999, the centralized nature of Nigeria's party system since 1979 as well as the proliferation of states which degraded the status of the states *vis-à-vis* the federal government. The other two explanations concern the continuity of the principle of fiscal equity. In the first place, the chapter argued that there is a convergence of the interest of the dominant ethno-regional elite groups in favor of fiscal equity because of the rise of the oil producing minority areas as the dominant economic base in Nigeria. This is demonstrated by the vigor with which the dominant ethno-regional groups,

particularly the North, opposed pressures for the relegation of fiscal equity and the accordance of greater emphasis to the principle of derivation. The other explanation for the continuity of the principle of fiscal equity relates to the effect of fiscal concessions to the oil producing states in pacifying the elites and reducing pressures for change in the revenue allocation system. In all, the chapter links the politics of revenue allocation to the struggles for power-sharing in Nigeria, arguing that continuity and change in the revenue allocation system reflect the balance of power between the federal and state governments on one hand, and the competing factions of the Nigerian elite on the other hand. The next chapter will examine the third aspect of power-sharing in Nigeria - the office distribution system.

CHAPTER FIVE

Power-sharing in Distribution of Offices

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In contemporary political systems, several political and bureaucratic positions are composed through selection and appointment rather than election. Ordinarily, this would not pose a problem once the recruitment process is based on objective criteria like expertise. But in many multi-ethnic societies it does, because of the danger that one or few groups can dominate the offices to the detriment of others. Referring to the Nigerian case, Ohonbamu (1968:130) contends that:

If merit and merit alone constitutes the yardstick for appointment to all jobs...including board appointments and award of scholarships, one would reach a position in which most jobs would naturally go to the most enterprising of the Nigerian tribes.

At the centre of the politics of office distribution in Nigeria is the need to ensure that one or few groups do not dominate state institutions.

The controversies that underlie office distribution in Nigeria stem largely from the centrality of state offices in elite struggle for power. It is common in Nigeria to assess a group's political influence based on the number of key public officeholders it has. On the other hand, the masses tend to measure their closeness to the government based on the number of people from their group who occupy important public offices. This is probably why a member of the 1979 Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) stressed that:

The holding of public office is coterminous with a sense of belonging. This is a truism to the common man on the state in Nigeria today. Where a section of the country, or of the State, because of the tribal affinity feels or sees itself never having an

opportunity of...forming a government or even participation in the government...such a section will never have a sense of belonging to the country (Osaghae 1988:24).

This chapter analyzes office distribution in Nigeria as a form of power-sharing, focusing on the interests, logic, and circumstances underpinning the conception, implementation, and continuity of office distribution arrangements in the country. The chapter opens with a discussion of the two methods of office distribution in Nigeria – federal character principle and zoning. These office sharing arrangements express the tendency of the Nigerian elite since 1970s to manage ethnic diversity and promote a Nigerian state project by avoiding divisive politics and emphasizing “unity in diversity”. This position shows the basis, contradictions and ambivalence that underlie zoning and federal character as modalities for sharing power, positions and resources between the Nigerian elite, and on the other hand, as frameworks and processes through which the elite seek to realize their interests within non-violent distributive politics. The chapter argues that mutual fear of domination by Northern and Southern elites and the relatively balanced power relations between the two groups explain the adoption and continuity of office distribution arrangements in Nigeria.

5.1 METHODS OF OFFICE DISTRIBUTION IN NIGERIA

There are two major ways of selecting key political and bureaucratic officials in Nigeria. They include the use of the federal character and zoning principles. The office distribution methods work in concert, with the federal character principle applying more to appointive positions while zoning relates mostly to elective positions. But unlike the federal character principle, which legally mandates equal representation of states in federal institutions, zoning is an informal arrangement devised by the Nigerian political elite in the course of their informal political exchanges. This means that there is no legal provision compelling politicians to abide by the zoning arrangement.

I. The federal character principle

The term “federal character” is one of the by-products of the 1979 Constitution. The origin of the term can be traced to an address by the former Head of State, General Murtala Mohammed in October 1975, in which he charged the Constitution Drafting Committee to consider the adoption of a presidential system of government in which the election of the president and the vice president and the selection of members of the cabinet would be done in “such a manner so as to reflect the federal character of the country” (Ekeh 1989:29-30). The members of Constitution Drafting Committee were of the opinion that fears of domination or exclusion were important features of Nigeria politics, and that it was necessary to prevent the predominance of persons from a few states, ethnic or sectional groups in government or its agencies. Consequently, the Committee members adopted the term federal character as the framework for promoting representation in government.

To highlight interests and forces that led to the recommendation and adoption of the federal character principle, I will review the politics of office distribution before 1970. The adoption of the principle of federal character is linked to the fears in the North that the South would capitalize on its head-start in western education to dominate the public service. To circumvent such possibilities, the Northern Regional government adopted the “Northernization” policy to deliberately keep out or displace Southerners in the Region’s civil service (Albert 1998:59-60). The North also demanded that the Federal Civil Service be composed on quota basis¹¹¹ (Gboyega 1989:173). Between 1951 and 1957, the quota principle was applied to the composition of the cabinet¹¹² (Osaghae 1989^a:138). In 1958, it was applied to the recruitment of other ranks in the Nigerian army and extended to the officer

¹¹¹ The North had earlier pushed through a demand for the distribution of parliamentary seat on the basis of regional quota.

¹¹² With each region contributing at least three ministers to the cabinet.

corps in 1961¹¹³ (Adekanye 1989:232). By the early 1970s, the quota system was extended to admission into federal tertiary institutions (Mustapha 2004:37). Then in 1975, the federal character principle was conceived to unify the different quota arrangements in Nigeria.

The Constitution Drafting Committee defined federal character as:

the distinctive desire of the peoples of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish, harness to the enrichment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria¹¹⁴.

In Section 14(3) which outlines the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy, the term was expounded as follows:

The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies.

In several sections of the 1979 Constitution, there were efforts by the Constitution Drafting Committee to operationalize the term federal character¹¹⁵. The following are some of the highlights:

- The president of the Federal Republic shall appoint at least one minister from among the indigenes of each state of the federation (section 135(3)).

¹¹³ The quota arrangement gave the Northern Region fifty percent of new intakes into the Nigerian army while the Eastern and Western Regions got twenty-five percent each.

¹¹⁴ See *Report of the Constitution Drafting Committee Containing the Draft Constitution, vol. 1*. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1976: ix.

¹¹⁵ See *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

- The president shall have regard to the federal character of Nigeria in the appointment of persons to such offices as those of the secretary of the federal government, head of civil service of the federation, ambassadors, high commissioners, permanent secretaries or other chief executives of federal ministries or departments, and any office on the personal staff of the president (section 157).
- The composition of the officer corps and other ranks of the armed forces of the Federation shall reflect the federal character of Nigeria, and the National Assembly shall establish a body which shall have power to enforce this requirement (sections 197-199).
- The members of the executive committee or other governing body of the political party shall be deemed to reflect the federal character of Nigeria only if the members belong to different States not being less than two-thirds of all the States of the Federation (section 203(b)).
- The Federal Electoral Commission and the National Population Commission shall, respectively, have one member from each of the States of the Federation (Third Schedule, Part 1).

The incorporation of the federal character principle in the 1979 Constitution led to an increase of the representation of the minority groups in federal cabinet as Table 5.1 below illustrates (See also Gboyega 1981). In addition, the implementation of the federal character principle led to more even spread of cabinet positions among the ethno-regional groups. The adoption of the federal character principle opened the way for the North to push through a number of measures to improve the number of Northerners in the Federal Civil Service. Among the measures are the *ad hoc* transfer of senior Northern civil servants from the regional/state civil services to the Federal Civil Service as well as the policy requiring that

junior civil servants working in any Federal agency outside the Federal Capital be recruited from the locality served by the agency (Adamolekun, Erero and Oshionebo 1991:44).

Table 5.1
Ethno-regional Composition of Nigerian cabinets,
1960-2004 (in percentages)

Regime	North	Yoruba	Igbo	Niger Delta	Middle Belt
Balewa 1960	60	20	13	6.7	0
Gowon 1967	21	36	0	21	21
Murtala 1975	25	35	0	5	35
Shagari 1983	38	14.7	8.8	17.6	20.5
Buhari 1984	35	20	10	10	25
Obasanjo 2004	30	18	15	18	18

Source: Adapted from Mustapha 2004:26.

The federal character principle was extended in 1989 with the addition of new bodies in the range of agencies that must implement the principle. The bodies affected by this review include the National Revenue Mobilization and Fiscal Commission, the Public Complaints Commission, the boards and governing councils of universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher learning as well as government-owned companies¹¹⁶. In addition, the 1994 National Constitutional Conference further extended the federal character principle by recommending the establishment of the Federal Character Commission to monitor and enforce the application of the federal character principles.

The Federal Character Commission is empowered by Decree No. 34 of 1996 to take legal action against heads of ministries and parastatals that failed to implement its recommendations. The Commission is also given powers to: (a) work out a formula for the redistribution of jobs; and (b) to establish, by administrative fiat, the principle of proportionality within the Federal Civil Service (Mustapha 2007). As part of its mandate to

¹¹⁶ See Section 150, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

establish the proportionality principles in the federal public service, the Federal Character Commission proposed that the indigenes of any State shall not constitute less than 2.5 percent or more than three percent of the total positions available including junior staff at Head office. The Commission also proposed that where there are only two posts, one must go to the north and the second to the south; where there are six posts, one must go to each of the six geo-political zones of the country (Federal Character Commission 1996:33).

II. The principle of zoning

The second method of office distribution in Nigeria is based on the principle of zoning. Zoning, in the Nigerian political context, is the aggregation of states and ethnic groups into smaller number of regional blocs on the basis of which positions are allocated (Suberu 1988:433). There are two important features of zoning - rotation of offices and “power-shift”¹¹⁷. The goal of zoning is to validate a pattern whereby the ethno-regional origin of top political officeholders, including the president, alternates from one election or set of elections to another (Akinola 1996:1).

The practice of zoning in Nigeria has a deep-seated cultural basis. Several scholars have reported the evolution of the idea of representativeness in political governance in various parts of Nigeria before the advent of Islam and colonialism¹¹⁸ (Dent 1966:465, Akinola 1988:445, fn. 19). The quest for inclusive political systems is fuelled by the autonomist tendencies and demands for a voice in the conduct of their own affairs by the local communities (Isichei 1983:178-201). As Uwazurike (1997:335) noted:

¹¹⁷ The concept of power-shift emerged in the late 1990s as an expression of the South’s opposition to Northern domination of executive power.

¹¹⁸ In Tivland, recurrent tension among various subunits of the society led to the evolution of a system in which chieftainship rotate among the subunits based on the principle of “eat and give to your brother” – this way, a balance is kept among the subunits of the Tiv society and agreement is easily reached on how to share political benefits among them. Zoning was also popular in traditional Yoruba society. It was applied in the selection of the traditional rulers.

Historically, no monarch or body of elders made decisions except through procedural consensus building. And among the autonomous communities, notions of numerical supremacy had no bearing: each group, no matter how small, possessed an embedded sovereignty that did not acknowledge the sort of marginalization that might imperil its corporate existence.

In these traditional societies, the “ruling families” or “dynasties” were the platforms for the zoning arrangements (Akinola 1996:18, Abatan 1994).

There have been four attempts to incorporate the principle of zoning in Nigerian Constitution, but all the attempts failed. In 1979 when a sub-committee of the Constitution Drafting Committee proposed the constitutionalization of the zoning principle, some intellectuals within the CDC opposed the proposal, arguing that Nigeria’s Constitution should emphasize “only those ideas and values which render the area or ethnic origin of a person irrelevant in determining his quality as an individual”¹¹⁹ (Panter-Brick 1978:314). In 1986, some individuals¹²⁰ advocated the constitutionalization of zoning in the debates coordinated by the Political Bureau¹²¹, but the Political Bureau rejected the arguments for zoning claiming that “a constitutional provision for rotation...amounts to an acceptance of our inability to grow beyond ethnic or state loyalty”¹²². Attempts at constitutionalizing the zoning principle failed again in 1999¹²³ and 2005¹²⁴ (The Guardian, 23 May 2005:1-2).

¹¹⁹ See *Report of the Constitution Drafting Committee Containing the Draft Constitution, vol. I*. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1976: ix.

¹²⁰ Including ex-Head of State, Olusegun Obasanjo, former Army Chief, Theophilus Y. Danjuma; ex-Governors, Bisi Onabanjo and Abubakar Umar; and politician K. O. Mbadiwe.

¹²¹ A body set up by the Government to collate the views of Nigerians on the political future of the country.

¹²² See *Government’s Views and Comments on the Findings and Recommendations of the Political Bureau*. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1987:23.

¹²³ Although the zoning was included 1995 Constitution prepared by late Head of State, Sani Abacha, the principle was removed when its successor – the 1999 Constitution was eventually enacted; no reason was given for this. On the 1995 Constitution, see *Report of the Constitutional Conference Containing the Resolutions and Recommendations, vol. II*. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1995.

¹²⁴ The principle of zoning came close to being constitutionalised in 2005, but the entire constitutional review process was discarded by the National Assembly after attempts were made to use it as a pretext to elongate the tenure of the president.

Regardless of failure of the attempts to constitutionalize it, zoning has been a historically persistent issue in Nigeria. Since independence, search for inter-ethnic stability has forced Northern and Southern elites to share the most important political positions in Nigeria¹²⁵. The principle of zoning received the greatest attention and action during the Second Republic (1979-1983) following the relatively rigorous implementation of the principle by the ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) (Akinola 1988, Suberu and Diamond 2002). The NPN opted for zoning, first as a strategy of building a national party - allocating top government and party offices to its members from various ethno-regional groups. The adoption of zoning by the NPN also reflects the increasing efforts by the elite to overcome ethno-regional chauvinism in politics. The overthrow of the civilian government in 1983, deflated hopes that the 1987 presidential nomination of the party would rotate to the South, giving way for a consequential adjustment in the zonal allocation of other key offices¹²⁶.

The question of zoning re-emerged after party politics resumed during the Third Republic (1989-1993). The issue of whether a Southerner would be the presidential candidate was keenly contested within the two registered political parties – the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC). At the initial period of the Third Republic, there seemed to be an emerging consensus that it was time to elect a president from the South (Badejo 1997:185). Some leaders of the NRC canvassed for the zoning of the party

¹²⁵ The independence government was led by Nnamdi Azikiwe (Igbo) as the Head of State and Tafawa Balewa (North) as the Prime Minister. There were also the governments of Gen Murtala Mohammed (North) and Gen Olusegun Obasanjo (Yoruba) in 1975-1976; Gen Olusegun Obasanjo (Yoruba) and Gen Shehu Musa Yar'Adua (North) in 1976-1979; Shehu Shagari (North) and Alex Ekwueme (Igbo) in 1979-1983; Gen Muhammadu Buhari (North) and Tunde Idiagbon (Yoruba) in 1983-1985; Gen Ibrahim Babangida (Middle Belt) along with Commodore Ebitu Ukiwe (Igbo) and Admiral Augustus Aikhomu (Niger Delta) between 1985-1993; there was Ernest Shonekan (Yoruba) and Gen Sani Abacha (North) combination in 1993-1994; Gen Sani Abacha (North) and Gen Oladipo Diya (Yoruba) in 1994-1998; Gen Abdulsalami Abubakar (Middle Belt) and Admiral Mike Akhigbe (Niger Delta) in 1998-1999. President Olusegun Obasanjo (Yoruba) and Vice President Atiku Abubakar (North) in 1999-2007, and President Umaru Yar'Adua (North) and Vice President Goodluck Jonathan (Niger Delta) since May 2007.

¹²⁶ The implementation of zoning by the NPN generated a serious controversy during the 1983 elections when Moshood Abiola (South) tried to compete for the party's presidential nomination against the incumbent Shehu Shagari (North) evoking the zoning logic. The party's hierarchy chided Abiola and asked him to allow Shagari complete his maximum term. Abiola was outraged – he later resigned from the party.

presidential ticket to the South. However, the election of Tom Ikimi, (South)¹²⁷, as the NRC Chairman dashed the hopes of many Southern politicians¹²⁸. Consequently, the NRC zoned its presidential ticket to the North, while the South got the vice presidency.

Zoning in the SDP was not as fiercely contested as it was in the NRC, since the SDP allocated its presidential ticket to the South from the onset. Thus, the Chairmanship of the party was zoned to the North. Baba Gana Kingibe, administrator and diplomat from Borno State, was elected as the SDP Chairman. Thereafter, the party nominated Moshood Abiola (South) as its presidential flag bearer; Kingibe (North) left the chairmanship post to become the vice presidential candidate. The hopes of subsequent rotation of the zoning arrangement were again truncated by the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election and the return of military rule in November 1993.

The issue of zoning was again highlighted during transition to civil rule program of 1998-1999. This time, in response to the increasing calls for power-shift from the North to the South, all the three registered political parties – Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the All Peoples Party (APP), and the Alliance for Democracy (AD), zoned their presidential tickets to the South (Newswatch, 26 April 1999:8-15, Ibrahim 1999). Zoning was also applied in the electoral process that produced Umaru Yar'Adua as president in May 2007, with the allocation of its presidential ticket to the North by the ruling PDP. The foregoing analysis shows the continuity of the principles of federal character and zoning. I will now account for the continuity of the office distribution arrangement.

¹²⁷ Ikimi defeated Ibrahim Mantu, from Plateau State (North) in the Chairmanship election.

¹²⁸ Based on the zoning arrangement, if the NRC zones its Chairmanship to the South, the presidential ticket would go to the North.

5.2 EXPLAINING THE CONTINUITY OF THE OFFICE DISTRIBUTION METHODS

The main explanation for the continuity of the office distribution methods in Nigeria can be found in the coalescent interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of such arrangements – the North having a keen interest in the sustenance of the federal character principle while the South (Yoruba and Igbo) have an embedded interest in the continuity of zoning. There are two major factors that propel the interests of the major groups in favor of these arrangements. The first is that for historical reasons the South is relatively more advanced in western education, manpower development, and urbanization than the North. As a result, there were fears in the North that the more advanced South would dominate federal institutions and agencies. The second factor is that the North is geographically and demographically larger than the two major Southern groups (Yoruba and Igbo) combined. As a result, the Yoruba and Igbo elites fear that they are bound to lose out in any unregulated or winner-takes-all contest for federal power. These factors have complicated Nigeria's political process, leading to intense rivalry among the three dominant elite groups as well as what is popularly known as the "North-South" dichotomy (Ibrahim 2002:185). Thus, the reason for the convergence of the interests of the dominant groups in favor of proportional office distribution can be summarized in terms of the mutual fear of domination by the dominant elite groups.

I. The North and the continuity of the federal character principle

The fear of Southern domination by the Northern elite is the major factor behind the evolution and continuity of the federal character principle. This fear originates from educational disparities between the two areas. As the data in Table 5.2 below indicate, the North lagged behind the South in establishment and enrolment into schools beginning from the colonial era. In 1947, for example, only 251 Northerners were in secondary schools; this figure represents just two percent of the total secondary school enrolment in Nigeria. In 1965,

secondary school enrolment in the North increased to 15,276; this is a marginal increase compared to 180,907 pupils enrolled in secondary schools in the South.

Table 5.2
Ethno-regional Imbalance in Education

Year	Southern Nigeria Pop. 13.2 Million (1952 Census)				Northern Nigeria Pop. 16.8 Million (1952 Census)			
	No. of Schools		Pupils in attendance		No. of Schools		Pupils in attendance	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
1906	126	1	11,872	20	1	0	A	0
1912	150	10	35,716	67	34	0	954	0
1926	3,828	18	138,249	518	125	0	5,210	0
1937	3,533	26	218,610	4,285	539	1	20,269	65
1947	4,984	43	538,391	9,657	1,110	3	70,962	251
1957	13,473	176	2,343,317	28,208	2,080	18	185,484	3,643
1965		1,305		180,907		77		15,276

Source: Coleman 1958:134, Mustapha 2004:12.

The educational imbalance between the North and the South continued after independence. For instance, in the 1969/70 academic session, only nineteen percent of the students in Nigerian universities were from Northern states; the Western State alone had forty-eight percent of the students (New Nigeria, 2 February 1974). In the 1974/75 academic session, the Northern States had twenty-four percent enrolments in Nigerian universities while the Southern States had seventy-four percent (National Universities Commission 1978:14). In the 2000/2001 session, the North accounted for only twenty percent of the candidates admitted into Nigerian universities (see Table 5.3 below).

Table 5.3
Admission into Nigerian Universities by Region, 2000/2001 Session

Region	No of Candidates Admitted	% of Total Admission
Northern Region	9,917	19.7
North	4,320	8.6
Middle Belt	5,597	11.1
Southern Region	40,317	80.1
Yoruba	8,763	17.4
Igbo	19,820	39.4
Niger Delta	11,734	23.3

Source: adapted from Mustapha (2004:12)

The uneven educational development in Nigeria is largely a result of colonial educational policy. While the Christian missions, which were the major agency for the advancement of western education, were allowed to establish schools in the South, the colonial government restrained them from penetrating much of the North under the pretext of protecting Islam in the North (Kastfelt 1994, Abubakar 1998, Mustapha 2004). Instead, considerable effort was channeled at a cultural engineering project which sought to inculcate the aristocratic values of the British Public School system on the Northerners, with the hope of creating “a modern and aristocratic Anglo-Muslim civilization” (Barnes 1997:198). The colonial government made no efforts to rationalize or modernize the Koranic schools which had formed the basis of the pre-colonial educational system in the North. To worsen matters, the education system that was introduced in North was very expensive and inefficient (Mustapha 2004:11).

The Southern head start in education had a subsidiary effect on the ethno-regional formation of human capital. The North lagged behind the South in the production of skilled manpower that took over the public service after independence. For instance, in the mid-1960s, the North had only seven percent, four percent, and three percent of the engineers, doctors, and accountants in Nigeria, respectively (Osemwota 1994:86). This translated into Southern predominance in the public service. The data in Table 5.4 below show that the Southern states have more than two-thirds (sixty-two percent) of the officials in the federal civil service while the Northern states have thirty-seven percent. The figure for the more northerly Islamic areas is even smaller - only nineteen percent of the federal civil service. The two dominant ethnic groups in the South - the Yoruba and Igbo have twenty-five percent and sixteen percent, respectively. This analysis shows the link between the South’s advantage in education, human capital formation, and staffing of federal institutions.

Table 5.4
Composition of Federal Civil Service by Regions as at 2000
(Consolidated Statistics)

Region	No. of Staff	% of Total Staff
Northern Region	70,966	37.7
North	35,977	19.1
Middle Belt	34,989	18.6
Southern Region	116,992	62.2
Yoruba	47,349	25.2
Igbo	30,490	16.2
Niger Delta	39,153	20.8
Total	187,958	99.9

Source: adapted from Federal Character Commission 2000:2.

There has been a long-standing effort by the Northern elite to under-cut possibilities of Southern domination of federal institutions. For instance, at the 1950 Ibadan Constitutional Conference, the Northern elite demanded for the application of a quota system in military recruitment. Later, demands for regional equilibrium in office distribution spread to areas like the police force, federal civil service, and higher educational institutions. The Northern elite used establishments such the media to mobilize support for the federal character principle. Agbaje (1989) shows the involvement of Northern media organizations such as the New Nigerian Newspapers in the struggle for codification and implementation of the federal character principle. In 1985, for instance, the then Managing Director of the New Nigerian Newspapers, Mohammed Haruna, vowed that the newspaper “would continue to fight for the introduction of Sharia, the application of quota system or federal character in all spheres of national life” (Kukah 1993:78). The New Nigerian promoted the federal character principle in its editorials and comments.

The Northern elite have justified their support for the implementation and continuity of the federal character principle on a number of grounds. First, they claimed that no lasting unity can be expected from a situation where the South has a large, disproportionate representation in the federal bureaucracy. Again, they argued that recruitment into the federal public service

in a diverse country like Nigeria cannot be left to the spontaneity of merit and expertise. Finally, they suggested that in the interest of national development, the Southern elite that dominate the federal institutions should make personal and collective sacrifices by way of foregone opportunities (Mustapha 1986:89).

II. The South and the continuity of zoning

The Northern elites' support for the federal character principle has been paralleled by struggles in the South to counteract Northern control of executive power through zoning. Much of the dynamics of Nigerian politics in the first three decades after independence is informed by the unwillingness of the Southern elite to accept Northern political primacy. The Southern opposition to Northern rule is linked to the early 19th century Islamic revolution and the establishment of Fulani hegemony over a vast area under the Sokoto Caliphate. The close collaboration which developed between British colonial administration and the ruling Hausa-Fulani aristocracies engendered a fear in South that the Sokoto Caliphate would extend its hegemony to the whole federation. This fear was fuelled by tensions between the Southern elite and the colonial administration, which contrasted with the more cordial relations between the Northern elite and the colonial government.

Anti-Northern sentiments date back to the period before the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates into Nigeria. Nwabughuogu (1996:42) reported that between March and April, 1914, Lagos newspapers were filled with anti-Northern articles, letters, editorials and reports, highlighting the differences between the North and the South, reasons why the two areas should not be merged, and even allegations of foul-play on the side of the colonial administration. For instance, the *Nigerian Times* of 4 May 1914 alleged that the "hidden meaning of the 1914 amalgamation" was "broadly speaking the conquest and

subjugation of Southern Nigeria by Northern Nigeria; Northern Nigeria administration must be made to supersede every system of Southern Nigeria”. Such anti-Northern sentiments also aroused in the North strong ill-feelings against the South.

Threats of Northern domination manifested most visibly during the late colonial and early independence period. For instance, during the 1950 Ibadan Constitutional Conference, Northern delegates proposed that the North would hold fifty percent of the seats in the federal legislature based on regional per capita representation. After a protracted debate, the North refused to compromise and forced the Southern elite to capitulate. The principle of regional per capita representation in parliament meant that seats were decided, not necessarily by the total number of actual votes cast, but by an initial allocation of seats on regional basis – this gave the North an in-built advantage in the federal legislature. In 1959, the Northern elite used this representational advantage to secure the position of Prime Minister. As Table 5.5 below shows, though the Northern party - the NPC, got less votes than the Southern parties - NCNC and AG, the NPC still went ahead to form the government.

Table 5.5
Results of the 1959 General Elections

Parties	North		West		East		Nigeria		
	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Votes	Seats	%
NPC	134	77	-	-	-	-	1,922,179	134	42.9
NCNC	-	-	23	35	58	80	2,594,577	89	28.9
NEPU	8	5	-	-	-	-	509,050	8	2.5
AG	25	14	34	52	14	19	1,992,364	73	23.4
Others	7	4	8	12	1	1	610,677	16	5.1
Total	174	100	65	100	73	100	7,189,797	312	100

Source: Kurfi 1983:173.

Since 1959, a broad pattern of government composition has emerged in which Northern elite dominated most civilian and military regimes. The Buhari regime (1983-1985) is regarded as one of the most narrowly-based Northern leadership. According to Ibrahim (1999:13) “many within the Southern political elite read the Buhari coup as a further narrowing of the base of

political power to a core Hausa-Fulani oligarchy". Ekwe-Ekwe (1985:621) alleged that under Buhari:

Thirteen of the nineteen members of the ruling Supreme Military Council (SMC) [were] northern Muslims, most of whose families are closely related to powerful local emirs. Apart from the head of navy, all service chiefs and commanders of the principal military divisions come from the north. Recent appointments and promotions in the armed forces, parastatals, the Central Bank and diplomatic services also reinforce this pro-northern trend. Buhari's principal adviser, Mamman Daura, is not just the head of state's uncle, but also the brother of the powerful Emir of Daura in northern Nigeria.

The successive regimes of Generals Babangida and Abacha were also labeled as Northern governments, even though the regimes tried hard to portray themselves as having national outlook (The News, 8 April 1996:17).

The complaints of Northern primacy seem loudest among the Igbo. The Igbo factor in Nigerian politics can be summarized as one of "lost privileges" (Ibelema 2000:213). The Igbo elite were about the most privileged group in Nigeria before the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war. However, the Igbo defeat in the civil war by the "North led national forces" changed everything. The loss of former privileges has precipitated strong sense of failure and frustration among the Igbo. Within the Igbo elite, there are those who feel that "Nigerians of all other ethnic group will probably achieve consensus on no other matter than their common resentment of the Igbo" (Nwankwo 1985:9). This sense of collective resentment of the Igbo is what the Igbo elite has labeled "the Igbo problem" in Nigerian politics (Ibrahim 2003:61). This purported attitude of other Nigerians toward the Igbo, it is argued, has led to the marginalization of the Igbo since the end of the civil war. The acts of marginalization manifest, particularly in the refusal by the federal government led by the North to reabsorb

most Igbo who had high positions in the armed forces and civil service after the end of the civil war (Harneit-sievers 2006).

Like the Igbo, the Yoruba also feel marginalized as a result of Northern control of executive power. The failure of the Yoruba elite, especially Obafemi Awolowo and Moshood Abiola, to win Nigeria's presidency has generated resentment against the Northern elite. The Yoruba elite hold several grievances against the Northern political elements, including allegations of rigging in all of the elections that Awolowo lost; the NPC meddling in the AG crises that led to the imposition of a state of emergency in the Western Region in 1962; the carving out of the Mid-West from the Western Region – reducing the domain of the Yoruba elite; and the annulment of the June 12 presidential election, presumably won by Moshood Abiola (Ibrahim 1999:14). The annulment of the June 12 election created strong fears that the North was not ready to allow a Southerner to rule, even if he wins a democratic election.

During the 1990s, the Southern elite intensified demands for the application of zoning in office distribution¹²⁹. The main thrust of the demand is that since the Northern elite have ruled Nigeria for most parts of the post-colonial era, only a power-shift from North to South can assuage the agitations of the Southern elite. Figures like the one in Table 5.6 below were often presented to justify the demands for power-shift. Notice in the table that the North has dominated executive power since independence, having sixty-six percent of Nigerian heads of state between 1960 and 2007, while the South has thirty-three percent. The gap becomes even wider when one considers the number of months the heads of state spent in office. The heads of state from the North have spent 412 months in office, representing seventy-three

¹²⁹ For instance, a meeting of Igbo Elders at Enugu on July 24, 1998, resolved that “the basis on which the Igbo shall partake meaningfully in the present political transition would be the promotion of a true federation with six regions based on the current six geo-political zones in the country” (Newswatch, August 10, 1998:8).

percent of the period 1960-2007 while the heads of state from the South have spent 148 months in office (twenty-six percent).

Table 5.6
Number of Heads of State/Government by
Region and Length of Time in Office (Oct. 1960-May 2007)

Region/ Ethnic Group	No. of Heads of State/Govt.	%	No. of Months in Office	%
North	5	41.6	197	35.1
Middle Belt	3	25	215	38.3
Igbo	1	8.3	6	0.8
Yoruba	3	25	142	25.3
Niger Delta	-	-	-	-
North	8	66.6	412	73.4
South	4	33.3	148	26.1
Total	12	100	560	100

Source: Adapted from Nwala 1997: 153.

On the eve of Nigeria's transition to civil rule in 1999, the Southern elite became more dogged in their demand for power-shift, threatening that "unless the South produces the next president, it is not likely that this country will continue to be one" (Newswatch, 10 August 1998:7-8). The tone of the agitation for power-shift forced the Northern elite to concede. Northern politicians like the former petroleum resources minister, Jubril Aminu, supported the idea of power-shift on the grounds that "a shift in power from the North to the South is compulsory" in order to bring about a lasting peace in Nigeria (Newswatch, 10 August 1998:11). In 1999, there was a significant decision by the Northern elite not to contest the presidency so that it can be rotated to the South. Consequently, the three registered political parties nominated two Yoruba candidates to run for the presidency¹³⁰. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) chose Olusegun Obasanjo while the coalition of Alliance for Democracy (AD) and the All People's Party (APP) nominated Olu Falae. The power-shift to the South was reciprocated in 2007, when the three major parties, the People's Democratic

¹³⁰ This was to pacify the Yoruba elite after the annulment of the June 12 election won by Moshood Abiola (a Yoruba).

Party (PDP), the All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP), and the Action Congress (AC), selected their candidates from the North¹³¹

5.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter analyzed the office distribution in Nigeria as a form of power-sharing, examining the interests and circumstances that informed the conception, implementation, and continuity of zoning and federal character principle. It identified the mutual fear of domination by the Northern and Southern elite and the relatively balanced power relations between the two arms of the Nigerian elite as the main reasons for the operation of parallel systems of office distribution in the country. The chapter discussed the relationship between the Northern and Southern elite and argues that the equilibrium of power between the two regional elite groups is based on the inability of any of the groups to dominate the entire political system – the North having supremacy over executive power while the South dominates the public service. The adoption and implementation of zoning and federal character principle is essentially to ensure stable and proportionate distribution power, offices and resources. The continuity of the office distribution arrangements depends on a balance of power between Nigeria's regional elite groups. A shift in the balance of power may lead to changes in the methods of office distribution.

¹³¹ Umaru Yar'Adua was the PDP flag-bearer, Muhammadu Buhari was the ANPP candidate, while the Action Congress (AC) nominated Atiku Abubakar.

CHAPTER SIX

The Dynamics of the Party System in the Context of Power-sharing

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Intense elite struggle for power is a striking feature of party politics in Nigeria. During the First Republic, this situation was exacerbated by the existence of three dominant parties, which pursued purely the interests of the ethno-regional elite. It was the competition for offices, and hence for the resources controlled by incumbents of the offices, by these ethno-regional parties that contributed largely to the collapse of the First Republic and the outbreak of a bloody civil war between 1967 and 1970. An aftermath of the civil war was the search for elite consensus on how Nigeria should be governed to ensure political stability and equity in distribution of resources. Power-sharing featured as the key modality for moderating elite struggles for power. The elite consensus underlying politics in the post-war Nigeria reflected on the adoption and implementation of various power-sharing arrangements as well as on the reform of political parties in Nigeria.

This chapter analyzes the way in which the adoption of power-sharing has shaped Nigeria party system. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first deals with the nature and dynamics of party politics in Nigeria, highlighting the role of ethno-regionalism in setting the political and institutional context for political party reforms in the country. The second section analyzes the political party reform package in Nigeria, while the third section examines the impact of the reforms on Nigerian parties since 1970. This chapter ends in the fourth section with concluding remarks.

6.1 POLITICAL PARTY REFORM IN NIGERIA: A BACKGROUND

A dominant feature of Nigerian political parties in the 1950s and 1960s was their ethno-regional orientation. As Akinola (1989:114) puts it, the parties were:

Severely limited in their capabilities to integrate the components of that great diversity of societies known as Nigeria. The NPC was the party of the Hausa-Fulani-Kanuri in the North, and did not extend its membership to the South; the AG more or less represented the Yorubas in the West; while the NCNC drew its support largely from the Ibos in the East.

The data in Table 6.1 below shows that politicians from specific ethnic groups dominated the leadership of the parties.

Table 6.1
Ethnic distribution of leaders of the First Republic parties
(Percentage of Total)

Party	Igbo	Other eastern groups	Yoruba	Other western group	Hausa Fulani	Other northern group	Others
NPC			6.8		51.3	32.4	9.4
NCNC	49.3	9.9	26.7	5.6	2.8		5.6
AG	4.5	15.2	68.2	7.6	3.0		1.5

Sources: Sklar and Whitaker (1966:612, Table 1)

The root of the ethno-regional parties in Nigeria can be traced to the rise of ethno-communal associations in many urban centers during the 1940s and 1950s. Although these associations contributed positively to the awakening of Nigerian civil society (see Coleman 1958, Ihonvbere and Shaw 1998), they provided rich grounds for sectional political mobilization and competition in the early years of Nigeria's political development (Nnoli 1978). The importance of ethno-communal associations in colonial Nigeria was heightened by the apparent inadequacy of social amenities and employment. During that period, the associations served as channels through which various ethnic groups mobilized their indigenes to address social and economic problems. Due to their central role in socio-

economic mobilization, ethno-communal associations acquired high salience in many communities.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the three dominant parties in Nigeria associated themselves closely with various ethno-communal associations. The Action Group (AG) is the party known mostly for spearheading sectional political mobilization. The party is largely seen as a political protrusion of the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* (Society of the Descendants of Oduduwa), a Pan-Yoruba cultural association inaugurated in 1948¹³² (Nnoli 1978:152, fn 15; Anifowose 1982:196, fn 52). Because the AG pursued a predominantly ethnic ideology, it sought the membership of non-Yoruba groups only for cosmetic purposes¹³³. The aim of the AG was essentially to mobilize Yoruba support in the inter-elite competition for power.

The ethno-regional character of the Action Group forced the National Council for Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), which started as a nationalist party, to seek ethno-regional support. Beginning from the 1950s, the NCNC moved closer to Eastern Region especially to the Igbo area - the homeland of its leader, where support is greatly assured. The party established ties with the Igbo State Union and used the union to mobilize Igbo support and solidarity. The Igbo State Union worked tirelessly to identify the NCNC and its leader, Nnamdi Azikiwe, with the struggle for the wellbeing and development of Igboland. The village, clan, town, and district unions affiliated with the Igbo State Union were all mobilized to fill the gaps left in the official party organization of the NCNC (Nnoli 1978).

¹³² The leadership of the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* coincided largely with that of the AG. Among the founding members of the AG who were also leading members of *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* include Obafemi Awolowo, Bode Thomas, Abiodun Akerele, S.O. Shonibare, Ade Akinsanya, J.O. Adigun, Olatunji Docemo, B.A. Akinsanya, and S.O. Oredein.

¹³³ This is illustrated by a statement at the formative meeting of the AG: “we should ensure that the Yorubas were first strongly organized”, then “the Benins and Warri and other non-Yorubas could be drawn in later” (cited in Sklar 1963:104).

The ethno-regionalist orientation of the AG and NCNC stimulated the Northern elite to form a Northern party¹³⁴, and in December 1949 the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) was inaugurated in Kano (Olusanya 1967, Dudley 1968). The NPC restricted its membership and electoral appeal to the North and sought to pursue objectives limited to the North and Northerners¹³⁵ (Nnoli 1978:162). As part of its mobilization strategy, the party fomented and made extensive use of the widespread fear that the Northern elite would be dominated by the more educated Southern elite (Coleman 1958:362). The party maintained that the North can only avert Southern domination through the control of political power. In all, the emergence of the NPC completed the formative process of the three ethno-regional parties in Nigeria.

The rise of three ethno-regional parties and the hostility between them contributed to the fall of Nigeria's First Republic. The NPC had an upper hand in the bitter inter-party rivalry. NPC's political fortunes were enhanced by the large population of the Northern Region, which gave it a guaranteed advantage in the Federal Legislature on the basis of regional per capita representation in parliament¹³⁶. In this situation, the AG and the NCNC realized that the only way they could win power at the federal level is to capture seats in the other regions. As a result, each of the parties helped to organize and sponsor minority parties in the North. The NPC reacted by forming alliances with minority parties in Western and Eastern Regions. To avoid losing their local base, each party tightened control of its Region and made sure that it secured all the seats in the Region. In the "do or die" electoral contest that ensued, the three parties resorted to various forms of electoral malpractices¹³⁷ and the incitement of one ethnic group against another (Mackintosh 1965:22). In November 1965, allegations of electoral

¹³⁴ The move to organize a pan-Northern party was championed by individuals such as Aminu Kano, A.E.B. Dikko, Tafawa Belewa, and Yahaya Gusau.

¹³⁵ The motto of the party exemplifies this statement. It reads: "One North, One People, irrespective of religion, tribe, or rank".

¹³⁶ In 1959, the Northern Region was allocated 174 out of the 312 seats in the Federal House of Representatives.

¹³⁷ The malpractices include false imprisonment, malicious prosecution, refusal of permits to hold campaigns, beating of political opponents, and snatching of ballot boxes.

malpractices in the Western Regional Election triggered violent protests and breakdown of law and order in the Region (Osaghae 1998). In January 1966, the military took over the government alleging that the politicians failed to maintain law and order in the country (see Panter-Brick 1970, Kirk-Greene 1971, Post and Vickers 1973, Ikime 1980). This terminated Nigeria's First Republic and ushered in long years of military rule that ended in 1979.

6.2 CONSTRAINING ETHNIC PARTIES: THE POLITICAL PARTY REFORM PACKAGE

Despite the fact that political parties were largely responsible for shaping political developments in Nigeria between 1940s and 1960s, the negative impact of their ethnicization and measures to remedy the problem were hardly discussed at the various constitutional conferences held during the period (Ezera 1960, Odumosu 1963, Price 1967, Adigwe 1979 and Nwabueze 1982). However, the issue of political party reform was introduced into the political agenda during the making of the 1979 Constitution. Addressing the inaugural meeting of the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC), the then Head of State, Murtala Mohammed, specifically urged the Committee to make clear recommendations on how Nigeria could engineer "genuine and truly national parties" (Oyovbaire 1983:22). Within the military government, there was a consensus that the ethno-regionalist orientation of Nigerian parties was largely responsible for the failure of the First Republic (Dudley 1982). The military government felt that deliberate engineering of national parties in Nigeria would promote inter-elite accommodation and political stability. Thus, the government sponsored the idea of nationalization of parties in the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) and the Constituent Assembly (CA).

The social position and preferences of members of the CDC and CA explain why the government's view on the prohibition of ethno-regionalist parties sailed through. The

Constitution Drafting Committee was comprised of fifty members selected by the military government. Majority of these individuals “belong to the broad ‘class’ of intelligentsia” – there were about twenty-six serving and retired university lecturers and administrators, twelve lawyers, journalists, and doctors (Dudley 1982:159). The Constituent Assembly members were elected – majority of them were businessmen and contractors, former politicians, retired military and police officers, lawyers, and doctors. In other words, the elite group that produced the 1979 Constitution was largely the intelligentsia in the CDC and the business cum commercial elite in the CA (Dudley 1982, see also Panter-Brick 1978, Gboyega 1979).

The structure of the CDC and CA made it easy for the military government to push through its proposal for the prohibition of ethno-regional parties, especially since the CDC and CA members appeared less interested in preserving ethno-regional parties. Perhaps, it may have been a different scenario if politicians, who needed to mobilize ethnicity to advance their career, dominated the constitution making bodies. Thus, contrary to the pre-1970 constitution making exercises that were dominated by politicians, the prominence of the intelligentsia and business elite in the 1979 constitution making provided the consensual basis for the nationalization of political parties in Nigeria. Moreover, the proposal for nationalization of parties fitted into a broader consensus in favor of power-sharing by the CDC and CA members.

Since 1979, efforts to constrain ethnic parties have manifested in three major ways, namely: (1) regulation of the formation and behavior of parties; (2) changes in the electoral system; and (3) the “top-down” approach to party formation.

I. Regulation of political parties

Political party reform in Nigeria has manifested most visibly in the establishment of new regulations to guide the formation and behavior of political parties. These regulations restrained the formation of ethnic parties; made it difficult for regionally-based parties to be registered; and required parties to demonstrate a cross-ethnic/regional composition as a precondition for their registration and participation in national elections¹³⁸ (Phillips 1980, Whitaker 1981, Sklar 1981, Diamond 1982). The highpoint of this package is the provision requiring parties to display a “federal character” by including members from two-thirds of all states of Nigeria in their executive council¹³⁹. These regulations were part of the overall effort by the government to develop national parties in Nigeria. The effect of the regulations and the response of the elite to them will be discussed in section 6.3 below.

II. Reforms in the electoral system

The post-1970 Nigerian Constitutions have also tried to recreate the country’s political parties through reforms in the electoral system. The most important strategy here is the introduction of distribution requirements in the election of the chief executive at federal and state levels – the President and the Governors. This requirement compels the parties or individual

¹³⁸ In specific terms, the Nigerian Constitution states as follows: (1) no association by whatever name shall function as a political party unless it is registered as a political party by the Independent National Electoral Commission¹³⁸ (INEC); (2) that associations wishing to be registered as a political party by Independent National Electoral Commission must: (a) register the names and addresses of its national officers with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC); (b) make its membership open to every Nigerian, irrespective of his place of origin, sex, religion, or ethnic grouping; (c) register a copy of the association’s constitution in the principal office (that is, the headquarters) of the Commission; (d) register every alteration in the Association’s registered constitution in the principal office of the Commission within thirty days of such alteration being made; (e) ensure that the name, emblem or motto has no ethnic or religious connotation, and does not give the appearance that the activities of the association are confined to a part only of the geographical area of Nigeria; (f) situate their headquarters in the federal capital territory; (g) satisfy the Independent National Electoral Commission that it has a properly established office in each of at least two-thirds of the States in the Federation and that officers have been duly elected or, as the case may be, appointed to run the affairs of such branch office (Sections 227-228, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1999; see also sections 219-224, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1989; and sections 201-204, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1979).

¹³⁹ See Chapter II, Section 15(3) (d), *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1979. Lagos: Federal Government Press, and Section 229 (1) (b), *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1999. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

candidates seeking executive positions at the federal or state level to garner specified support threshold at the states and local governments to ensure that only candidates that enjoy widespread support are elected¹⁴⁰. During the 1979 election, this regulation was the source of a serious legal dispute over what constitutes “one quarter of the vote in each of at least two-thirds of all the [Nigeria’s nineteen] States” as at then¹⁴¹. To avoid the controversy that trailed the “two-thirds” issue in 1979, states were created in such a way that it is easy to determine two-thirds of all States¹⁴².

III. The “top-down” approach to party formation

A final strategy of political party reform in Nigeria is the “top-down” approach to party formation. This approach is based on the expectation that parties can be built not from below (as is usually the case) but from above, and that these parties would be founded on a new national orientation rather than on the ethnic and regional cleavages that are deeply rooted in the society (Reilly 2006:821). In 1989, the Nigerian government restricted the number of political parties that would exist in the country to only two and went ahead to establish the two parties by fiat - the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). It rejected requests for registration as parties by political groups and associations in a bid to further control the formation and operation of the political parties. The government not only supervised the erection of the necessary administrative and

¹⁴⁰ This regulation stipulates that candidates for an election to the office of President or Governor shall be deemed to have been duly elected, only where: (a) he/she has the highest number of votes cast at the election; and (b) he/she has not less than one-quarter of the votes cast at the election in each of at least two-thirds of all the States in the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja in the case of President, and not less than one-quarter of all the votes cast in each of at least two-thirds of all the Local Government Areas in the State in the case of Governor. In the event that a single candidate does not meet this requirement, a runoff election is required. See Sections 141-142 and 186, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999*. Lagos: Federal Government Press; see also Sections 124-126 and 164, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

¹⁴¹ The Supreme Court ruled that it meant “twelve and two-thirds” States, namely: a quarter of the vote in 12 States, plus two-thirds of a quarter, or one-sixth in the thirteenth State.

¹⁴² Nigerian states were rounded up to thirty in 1991 and thirty-six in 1996.

programmatic infrastructure for the two parties, it also financed the two parties beginning from October 1989 to December 1990 to prevent rich Nigerians from hijacking the parties.

The feeling in the government circles was that the decision to form to national parties would among other things give equal rights and opportunities to all Nigerians to participate in the political process, prevent the recreation of political alliances that characterized the First Republic and to some extent the Second Republic, and promote a new pattern of political recruitment and participation that would enhance stability in Nigeria (Oyediran and Agbaje 1991:227). It was argued that the two-party system will “set the stage for the gradual clarification of our choice or locus in accordance with the two great historical systems of capitalism and socialism” instead of ethnicity and region (Akinola 1989:109, fn 2). Besides throwing up chances for ideological politics, the adoption of a two-party system was seen as a way of altering the tri-polar structure of party politics in Nigeria, which revolves around the three dominant groups – the North, Yoruba, and Igbo.

Although there were fears that the two-party system would exacerbate one of the most important cleavages in Nigeria – the division between the North and South and that it could aggravate perennial tensions between the two biggest religious groups in Nigeria – Christians and Moslems, reports of the practice of the new arrangement showed that the fears were unfounded (Oyediran and Agbaje 1991). As would be shown later in section 6.3, the two-party arrangement contributed to the development of national parties, encouraged inter-ethnic voting behavior and forced the politicians to cultivate inter-group alliances.

6.3 FROM ETHNIC TO NATIONAL PARTIES: NIGERIAN PARTIES SINCE 1979

The series of political party reforms introduced since the 1970s have had serious impacts on Nigerian parties. These impacts are most visible in three areas - the structure of party leadership and membership, party ideologies and strategies, and party finance.

I. The structure of party leadership and membership

The post-1979 era presents a good context for assessing the adjustments and responses that have occurred following the political party reform in Nigeria. The Second Republic (1979-1983) is the first major testing ground for the impact of political engineering on Nigerian parties. Many analysts see the five political parties registered¹⁴³ in 1978 as essentially ethno-regionalist, stressing that significant similarities exist between the parties and those of the First Republic¹⁴⁴ (Diamond 1982; see also Joseph 1991). Despite the popularity of this perspective, empirical evidence shows that by measure of their structure, Nigerian parties have acquired significant national character. The broad-based leadership and membership structure of the parties as well as the trans-ethnic routes that the elite followed in forming the parties point to the national character of the Second Republic parties. Officially, the thirty-four national officers of the NPN hailed from seventeen out of the then nineteen States, while the twenty-four UPN national officers and the twenty-nine NPP officers were each drawn from thirteen States. Table 6.2 below contains the precise ethnic distribution of the leadership of the Second Republic parties as at June 1981. It shows a substantial reduction in the number of Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo officials in the Second Republic parties compared to First Republic parties (see Table 6.1 above). Some might argue that there was the prominence of

¹⁴³ These are the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the United Party of Nigeria (UPN), the Nigerian Peoples' Party (NPP), the Great Nigerian Peoples' Party (GNPP), and the Peoples' Redemption Party (PRP).

¹⁴⁴ These analysts claim that NPN is a reconstruction of NPC – with its base in the North. They regard UPN as AG reborn, with its base among the Yoruba and led by Obafemi Awolowo. The NPP is seen as a reproduction of the NCNC, the party of the Igbo, which was again led by Nnamdi Azikiwe; while the PRP is regarded as the reincarnation of the radical Hausa party, NEPU and again dominated by Aminu Kano.

some Northern politicians who were not part of the NPN's official leadership in the party, but this must be balanced against the leading role played in the formation, governance, and command of the party by political and business elites from Igbo, Yoruba and minority ethnic groups¹⁴⁵.

Table 6.2
Ethnic distribution of the leaders of the Second Republic parties

	NPN	%	UPN	%	NPP	%
Hausa-Fulani	7	20.6	2	8	3	10.3
Yoruba	6	17.6	6	25	6	20.7
Igbo	6	17.6	6	25	10	34.5
Minority	15	44.1	10	42	10	34.5
	34	100.0	24	100.0	29	100.0

Source: Diamond (1982:633).

Comparable data were not available for GNPP and PRP.

Though the other Second Republic parties were less national than the NPN in their origins and structure, they were nevertheless not sectional (Diamond 1982:634). The NPP, before the GNPP pulled out¹⁴⁶, appeared to be as broad-based as the NPN. Even after their split, NPP and GNPP “each still significantly crosses sectional lines, with the supposedly ‘Igbo’ NPP containing numerous prominent politicians from Christian minority groups in the North that had never been associated with the old NCNC” (Diamond 1982:635). The UPN and PRP were less broadly based in their origins and structure than the NPN and NPP, however they were by no means ethno-regional. As we shall see afterward, both parties distinguished themselves as national parties most clearly in the explicit definition of their ideology. The two parties presented clearly articulated political platforms and boldly sought to construct national constituencies around social democratic ideologies (Joseph 1991).

¹⁴⁵ Non Hausa-Fulani political and business elites who were at the top echelon of NPN leadership at its inception include personalities such as Joseph Tarka, Anthony Enahoro, Joseph Wayas, Olusola Sarki, Alex Ekweme, K.O. Mbadiwe, Chuba Okadigbo, A.M.A Akinloye, Richard Akinjide and M.K.O. Abiola.

¹⁴⁶ See Joseph 1978 and 1991 for a discussion of circumstances leading to the split in the NPP.

By measure of leadership and membership structure, the two registered political parties during the Third Republic (1992-1993) – the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP), exhibited national character. A look at the distribution of the parties' national officers and membership in Table 6.3 below shows that they were relatively spread across the country. Some may insist that the legislation of a two-party system and subsequent establishment of the parties by the government offered the elite and the masses no other option than to distribute themselves between the parties. But it is important to note that the elite in particular did not randomly share themselves between the parties. The rules on party registration and elections forced the elite to form inter-group alliances. In the absence of these rules, the parties could have probably formed along regional or religious lines - following North-South or Christian-Muslim dichotomy.

Table 6.3
Ethnic distribution of leadership and membership of Third Republic parties
(Percentage of Total)

Leadership ¹⁴⁷				
	NRC	%	SDP	%
	North	Yoruba	Igbo	Minorities
NRC	27.2	13.6	22.7	36.3
SDP	28.5	14.2	19.0	38.0
Membership ¹⁴⁸				
	North	Yoruba	Igbo	Minority ¹⁴⁹
NRC	36.9	21.9	18.8	22.2
SDP	33.0	25.0	19.7	22.2

Source: Compiled from NEC News, May 1993:3; Oyediran and Agbaje (1991:215, Table 1)

Civil society pressures for expanded political space led to the abrogation of the two-party system and the adoption a multi-party system in 1999. Since 1999, over fifty political parties have been registered in Nigeria. Of all the parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP)

¹⁴⁷ Figures as at May 1993

¹⁴⁸ Figures as at August 1990

¹⁴⁹ If the party members from the minority states are disaggregated into Southern and Northern minorities, NRC had more members from the Southern minorities, while SDP had more members from the Northern minorities. To be more specific, 55.5 percent of Southern minority members in political parties belong to NRC, while 50.9 percent registered in SDP. On the other hand, 49.0 percent of the party members from the Northern minorities were in SDP while 44.4 percent were NRC members.

appears to have the widest social and structural base. Like the NPN in the Second Republic, the PDP began as a conglomerate of political and business elite, which emerged from a pan-Nigerian coalition that fought for the end of military rule in Nigeria. Based on the experience of the Second Republic, the PDP was established to congregate diverse interests (ethnic and class) for electoral advantage. In the 1999 election, in which the PDP was confronted by a coalition of the All Peoples Party¹⁵⁰ (APP) and Alliance for Democracy (AD), the party took advantage of its broad-based mobilization to win the election (Obiyan 1999, see also Onu and Momoh 2005).

The other Fourth Republic parties, though less broadly based than the PDP, also have national character. As shown in Table 6.4 below, the principal positions the major Fourth Republic parties spread across the major elite groups in Nigeria. The Northern and Igbo elites are represented in the executive committee of all the parties, while elites from Yoruba and minority areas are represented in the executive committee of all the parties, except the ANPP, LP, and PPA, respectively. On the whole, the foregoing analysis shows that the party reform in Nigeria has forced the political parties to broaden the scope of their leadership and membership to accommodate elites from different parts of the country.

Table 6.4
Ethnic distribution of the leaders of the Fourth Republic parties

	AC	ANPP	APGA	PDP	PPA	LP
Igbo	1	1	1	1	1	2
Yoruba	2	-	1	1	1	-
North	1	2	1	1	3	1
Minority	1	2	2	2	-	2
	5	5	5	5	5	5

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission 2006: *List of National Executives of Registered Political Parties and National Headquarters Addresses*. Abuja: INEC

¹⁵⁰ The APP was later renamed the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP).

II. Ideology and strategy of the parties

The political party reforms in Nigeria have also induced changes in the ideology, programs and strategies of the parties. The ideology, programs and strategies of the First Republic parties were essentially ethno-regional – focusing on protecting and advancing the interests of elites from specific groups. Some strategies of mobilizing support were common among the First Republic parties. First, the parties engaged in intensive mobilization of the ethnic homeland to ensure its monolithic support at times of elections. Second, the parties tried to widen their political base from the ethnic homeland to include the whole region. Third, the parties ensured that they won all the seats in their region of ethnic supremacy and consequently controlling the region's governmental power. Fourth, the parties used governmental power in the region of their control to eliminate all forms of opposition and to ensure maximum support of the region's population for the party during federal elections. The parties used the pattern of distributing government patronage at their disposal to discourage the constituencies within their regions from voting for the rival parties. Fifth, each of the parties encouraged agitation by minority ethnic groups in regions under the rival political parties against their governments and in support of regional status. This was to weaken the competing parties in their regional spheres of influence, and to ensure electoral support during federal elections (Nnoli 1978:159-164).

Since 1979, there has been gradual, but steady progress towards ensuring that the parties are discouraged from pursuing merely ethno-regional goals. Significant adjustments in the ideology and strategy of the post-1979 parties can be identified. During the Second Republic, the UPN and the PRP distinguished themselves as parties with clearly articulated and nationally focused ideology (Joseph 1978, Diamond 1982). The UPN in particular, unequivocally committed itself to four “cardinal programs”, namely: (1) free education at all

levels, (2) free medical care for all, (3) integrated rural development, and (4) full employment. The PRP explicitly called for public ownership of key economic sectors in Nigeria – specifically, finance and banking, insurance, oil exporting, and capital goods. The PRP also advocated the closure of most economic sectors to foreign investment and participation, and federally administered rent control.

The strategies of the Second Republic parties were also different from those of the First Republic. For example, the UPN's strategy is anchored on three basic elements. Firstly, as a result of the new party regulation requiring the political parties to develop a nationwide base, the UPN leader Chief Obafemi Awolowo, made personal efforts to reach out and recruit top politicians from other ethnic groups to the party. Secondly, the UPN made an unequivocal nationwide class appeal. This strategy is reflected in the party's commitment to the progressive ideology of democratic socialism. Finally, the UPN undertook rigorous research and planning, which took place on a number of fronts – particularly in sponsoring writing of research papers. The party commissioned several intellectuals who engaged in series of research, writing and theoretical planning that sought to give content to the party's adoption of democratic socialism as its philosophy (Joseph 1991:121-122).

While the UPN's strategy focused on effective personal leadership of Obafemi Awolowo, organizational cohesion, research and planning, and a progressive ideological commitment, NPN's strategy was directed towards converging diverse ethno-regional interests for electoral purposes¹⁵¹. Based on experience with party politics in the First Republic and considering the institutional arrangement introduced in 1979, the leaders of NPN recognized that it would be difficult garner the nationwide support necessary to rule Nigeria, without giving elites from

¹⁵¹ This strategy is appropriately reflected in the comments by many NPN bigwigs. Shehu Shagari and Joseph Tarka believe NPN is a “mixed-bag party”, while K.O. Mbadiwe characterized the party's strategy as “combining the combinable” (Joseph 1991:137-138).

various ethnic groups the opportunity to participate in the party's leadership. Consequently, states rather than individuals were adopted as the primary source of founding negotiating groups. Each state negotiating group was asked to work out an ideal party constitution and manifesto acceptable to its own state; these formed the materials for the final forms of the party constitution and manifesto (Oyediran 1981:56). Also, each state was authorized to send five delegates to meetings of the party's national executive committee. This practice gave the NPN the appearance of complying with the provisions concerning party leadership in the 1979 Constitution and also created the impression, especially among the Niger Delta elite, that the party would accommodate the interests of all the elite groups (Joseph 1991:132).

The NPN recreated the above practice and extended it to the sphere of office distribution under a new label "zoning"¹⁵². At its inception, zoning served to legitimize the practice that facilitated the creation of the NPN as a national party with each of its major ethno-regional elite group having a specific allocation of the top party offices. The party adopted a model of zoning designed to rotate the geo-ethnic origin of the party's national executive and flag bearers from one election to the other, a purpose for which the nation was divided into four zones: North, West, East, and the "Minorities". The highlight of NPN's zoning package is the provision that in 1979, the Northern zone would chose the party's presidential candidate, the West the party Chairman, and the East the vice-presidential candidate, and the "Minorities" the president of the Senate. In applying the principle, NPN ensured that all the nominees short-listed for the presidential primaries came from the North¹⁵³.

The ideology and strategy of the Third Republic political parties were similar to those of the Second Republic, although there are a few divergences. The most important variation is the

¹⁵² This implies the division of the country into parts for the purpose of allocating and rotating political offices.

¹⁵³ They include Shehu Shagari, Adamu Ciroma, Olusola Saraki, Maitama Sule, Iya Abubakar, Ibrahim Tahir, and Joseph Tarka.

fact that the two Third Republic parties – the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC), were created and sponsored by the military government. The formation of the two parties involved “a step-wise progression”, beginning from the ward level upwards to the national level (Oyediran and Agbaje 1991:227). The target of this process according to the government was to encourage community spirit and to build national parties with broad-based organizational structure. The military government created all the necessary administrative, ideological and programmatic infrastructures of the parties. In consultation with the National Electoral Commission and a number of political scientists within and outside the government’s Presidential Advisory Council (an extra-ministerial think-tank), the military designed the outline of the constitutions and programs of the two parties, albeit with the proviso that they would later be free, at least within limits, to add flesh to the documents.

The ideology and programs of the SDP and NRC were designed in such a way that they might set the stage for Nigerians to gradually choose between the two great ideological systems - capitalism and socialism (Akinola 1989:109). As a result, the manifesto of the SDP was crafted to tilt “a little to the left” while that of the NRC tended “a little to the right”. Both parties were however situated within the centrist position – generally endorsing economic liberalization, including the structural adjustment program (SAP), in line with the overall policy environment of the Babangida regime – the regime under which the formation of the two parties took place. The return to the multi-party politics in 1999 has brought Nigeria back more or less to the Second Republic. Like the NPN, the PDP emerged as a national party committed to power-sharing and ready to accommodate various ethno-regional elite groups. This posture encapsulates the party’s clientelistic ideology and strategy. The opposition parties, particularly the AD, ANPP, and lately the AC and LP, offered different packages

from the ruling PDP's catch-all package. The AD and ANPP in particular made ethnic/regional-cum-charismatic appeals, but these appeals could not match the PDP's national-cum-clientelistic appeals, because Nigerians failed to embrace the idea of ethnic-based political parties (Irukwu 2007:231).

III. Party finance

The First Republic parties had five regular sources of funds. The first major source was the fees, levies, and dues that the parties imposed on their members and affiliate organizations. In 1958, for example, the NCNC opened a central registry of members who contributed one pound each to the national treasury. Also, the party charged affiliation fee on local branches and member unions (Sklar and Whitaker 1966: 632). The sale of party constitutions, literature, emblems, flags, etc., was the second regular source of funds to the First Republic parties. The third regular source of funds to the First Republic parties was the levies that parties imposed on the salaries of party leaders and political office holders including parliamentarians, members of statutory boards, and government owned corporations. The NCNC for instance, levied ten percent of the salaries of ministers, parliamentary secretaries, ordinary parliamentarians, and political appointees to statutory boards and corporations. The NPC and the AG also imposed ten percent levy on parliamentary emolument, but the AG exempted ministerial salaries on the grounds that they are professional rather than political stipends. However, ministers in the party are expected to settle considerable part of the expenses of their constituency or divisional organizations (Sklar and Whitaker 1966: 632). Furthermore, the First Republic parties funded their activities with donations by supporters. The AG is noted as the party that made most use of this source. The party had as its founding members, a group of intelligentsia and commercial "middle class" from the western region. These men who were among the most affluent African businessmen donated generously to

the party. The First Republic parties also received credit facilities from various banks that were allied to them (Sklar and Whitaker 1966: 635-636). Finally, the First Republic parties received income from social events such as public lectures, dances, and clubs.

The sources of party funds in Nigeria have not fundamentally changed, except that the nationalization of parties since 1970s has led to greater emphasis on public funding of parties (that is, payment of government grants to the parties) as well as stricter regulation of private funding of parties. The Third Republic is most illustrative of this new party-funding regime. During this period, the Federal Government took over the funding of political parties. However, with the return of multi-party politics in 1999, political parties were allowed to obtain funds from membership fees, income generated by property owned by the parties, profit from the income of the enterprises owned by the parties, contributions from legal entities and natural persons (INEC 2005:28); this is in addition to public funding, which has become a traditional source of party funding since 1979. Regarding public funding of parties, the *2006 Electoral Act* stipulates that, “[N]otwithstanding the provisions of this Act, the National Assembly may make an annual grant to the [Electoral] Commission for distribution to the registered political parties to assist them in their operation”¹⁵⁴. The following is the formula for sharing of such funds: (a) ten percent of the grant shall be shared equally among all the registered political parties, (b) The remaining ninety percent of the grant shall be shared among the registered political parties in proportion to the number of seats won by each party in the National Assembly.

In order to ensure that parties do not receive funding from ethnic, regional or religious organizations, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is empowered to

¹⁵⁴ See Section 91, *Electoral Act 2006, Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette, 42(93)*. Lagos: The Federal Government Printer, 2006.

place limitation on the sources and amount of money or other assets, which an individual or a group can contribute to a political party. In this regards, the *2006 Electoral Act* requires every political party to maintain a record of all contributors and the amount contributed to its funds¹⁵⁵. This contrasts the situation during the First Republic when parties freely received financial support from affiliate organizations some of which were ethnic, regional or religious organizations.

6.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter argues that the quest for power-sharing has led to the conception and implementation of different forms of political party reforms in Nigeria. Central to political party reforms in Nigeria is the efforts to change the orientation and character of the parties from ethno-regional to national. The logic behind these efforts is that nationally orientated parties offer the framework for inter-elite accommodation, to curb elite conflicts, and promote political stability. These ideals and the idea of party reforms fit into the broader horizon of power-sharing, which has emerged as the elites' consensus formula for governing Nigeria.

This chapter examines the impact of political party reforms since 1979. It shows that the reforms have led to striking changes in the structure of leadership and membership, ideologies and strategies as well as the funding of the post-1979 political parties. The reforms forced the parties to demonstrate that they have a national character, at least in their organizational structure and behavior. The reforms also compelled the parties and politicians as well, to make deliberate efforts to form inter-group alliances and to make nationwide appeals for support. Finally, unlike the First Republic parties that were free to source funds

¹⁵⁵ See Ibid, Section 92(2)

from different avenues including ethnic, religious, and regional organizations, the post-1979 parties operated under a strict funding regime. This forced the parties to depend largely on public funding in order to preserve their national outlook. The foregoing analysis suggests that the conception and implementation of power-sharing in Nigeria has far reaching implications for party politics. As the chapter shows, the effects of the adoption of power-sharing clearly transcend the spheres of states creation, revenue allocation, and office distribution. In other words, the quest for power-sharing has been largely responsible for the changes in the structure and behavior of Nigerian parties since 1979.

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation presents a new perspective to Nigerian politics. It challenges the “discontinuity perspective” which dominated the literature on Nigerian politics. The discontinuity perspective presents Nigerian politics as largely unstable without considering the deeper structures of continuity that exist in the country. Although there are some students of Nigerian politics that have hinted or acknowledged the existence of stable political arrangements and practices, these scholars failed to elaborate the nature of these arrangements, especially why and how they emerge, gain and preserve stability in an otherwise volatile political and social context. This dissertation seeks to fill this gap. The major objective of the dissertation was therefore to analyze political continuity in Nigeria, focusing specifically on power-sharing. The study presents an exhaustive and systematic analysis of power-sharing in Nigeria, highlighting the historical context within which it was conceived and implemented. The dissertation also presents explanations for continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria.

This dissertation begins by providing an understanding of the concept of power-sharing. It examines the three models of power-sharing – the consociational, incentivist, and tri-polar models, based on a critical review of the works of scholars such as Arend Lijphart and Donald Horowitz. The three models of power-sharing address the question of the nature of the power being shared and defined the structure and processes of power-sharing. It was shown that in Nigeria three forms of power are being shared – the territorial, economic, and political, through three specific arrangements. The arrangements include creation of states, revenue allocation, and office distribution. Each of these arrangements is dominated by particular principles. For instance, creation of states focused on the formation of federal units that are considerably equivalent in population; the revenue allocation system is dominated by

the principle of fiscal centralization and equality of states; while the office distribution system is dominated by the principles of federal character and zoning. Having shown how power-sharing operates in Nigeria, the study proceeded to frame the explanations for the continuity of power-sharing in the country.

Drawing from the path dependence approach, the study proposes two analytical premises that explain the continuity of power-sharing in Nigeria. The first premise is that there is a convergence of interests of the dominant elite groups in favor of power-sharing, while the second premise is that power-sharing provides the context for the pacification of the marginal groups in the course elite struggle for power. Because the continuity of power-sharing is framed as a product of elite power relations, the five elite groups involved in the politics of power-sharing in Nigeria were analyzed - these elites groups emerged from the five ethno-regional groups in the country¹⁵⁶. It was shown that the elite groups tended to regroup into North-South and Majority-Minority divisions due to the historical and political linkages that exist between them¹⁵⁷. The interactions between these groups are shaped by historical struggles like the one between the Northern and Southern elites over office distribution or the struggle between the dominant and minority groups over creation of states and revenue allocation.

As the analysis in this study demonstrates, power-sharing in Nigeria is not a partnership of equals. It operates based on a hierarchy of power among the different ethno-regional elite groups. The Northern elites are apparently the leading elite group because of the

¹⁵⁶ The North, Yoruba, Igbo, Niger Delta, and Middle Belt

¹⁵⁷ The longstanding political ties which developed during the colonial era under the Northern Protectorate still hold together elites from the North and Middle Belt. The same applies to elites from Yoruba, Igbo, and Niger Delta areas which constituted the Southern Protectorate. But in the case of majority-minority differences, the dominance of the three initial regions (Northern, Western, and Eastern) by Northern, Yoruba, and Igbo elites respectively, and the opposition by the minorities of Niger Delta and Middle Belt, created the dichotomy.

demographical and geographical superiority of the Northern region as well as the relative political cohesiveness of the group. They are followed by the Yoruba, Igbo, Niger Delta, and Middle Belt, respectively. As was shown in the dissertation, power-sharing in Nigeria follows a pattern in which the hierarchy of power among the ethno-regional elite groups is reflected particularly in creation of states and office distribution. A look at the states creation exercises since 1976 shows a distribution scheme in which the North gets the highest number of states followed by the Yoruba, Igbo, Niger Delta, and Middle Belt, respectively. This pattern of states creation also produces a similar effect on the formula for distributing political offices and federal revenue, since offices and revenue are distributed on the basis of equality of states.

The tendency to reflect the hierarchy of power among the groups in resource distribution is a serious challenge to power-sharing in Nigeria. Many observers believe that power-sharing as it is being practiced in Nigeria widens the “asymmetrical, oligarchic power” of the dominant groups (Agbaje 1998:132). This view has received the most vocal expression by the minority elite groups; especially those of the Niger Delta, with many individuals in the Niger Delta framing the hegemony of the dominant groups as “internal colonialism” (Naanen 1995:50). The reflection of inter-elite hierarchy of power in power-sharing is seen as a strategy by the dominant elite groups, especially the powerful Northern elite, to maintain their leading position. This strategy also includes the cooptation of the elite groups that accept the prevailing sharing arrangement. The problem with this tendency is that it has made elite consensus on the modalities for power-sharing almost elusive. Instead, it promotes bitter struggles between elite coalitions, with the most influential coalition imposing its will on the other coalition(s). It is hard for power-sharing arrangements founded on deep-seated rivalry

and sense of inequality to succeed. Instead, such arrangements are likely to fuel the existing adversarial elite relations and complicate political conflicts.

There are two other major challenges to power-sharing in Nigeria. The first relates to the democracy deficit inherent in power-sharing. In search of elite accommodation and in a bid to provide the context for power-sharing, the ruling elite in Nigeria have tended to converge under one or few national parties¹⁵⁸. Much of the activities of these parties and how national decisions are reached are shrouded in secrecy. Within the parties, the political elite are allowed maximum control over their localities, to the extent that these elite down-play popular participation in politics¹⁵⁹. Although it is often argued that this situation is inclined to reducing inter-group competition between the elite, the growing convergence of the elite in one or few national parties breeds one-partyism and eliminates opposition/alternative viewpoints. It also foments what is now popularly referred to in Nigeria as “Godfatherism”. Godfatherism involves handing out of parts of the state, including specific territorial districts, to a group of elites, usually under the leadership of one or more notables who maintain the structure essentially by force (Ibeanu 2007:9). Power-sharing encourages Godfatherism because it provides the basis for an individual or a small coterie of elites to control power on behalf of an ethnic or regional group – such individuals many times eliminate competition, hijack local/national party organization and exploit government machinery for private gain (see Omobowale and Olutayo 2007).

The second major challenge to power-sharing in Nigeria is that it creates a “dependency syndrome” with groups looking up more to what they can receive from the national vault than

¹⁵⁸ During the Second Republic, NPN was the ‘umbrella’ political organization; NRC and SDP were the nation-wide parties in the Third Republic, while PDP is the national party of the Fourth Republic.

¹⁵⁹ This situation has given rise to a phenomenon known as “god-father” politics in Nigeria, a situation where prominent political elite (the god-father) decides who takes up posts assigned to a particular area.

what they can contribute. This syndrome reflects in the domination of the public discourse by debates over access to share of federal resources rather than how expand the “wealth of the nation”. The problem with conceiving politics merely as the struggle for a share of the “fruits of power” is that it is hard to determine how much more than nothing the marginal groups would be satisfied with, or how much less than “all” would please the dominant groups (Nolutshungu 1990:108). The result is mutual and recurrent claims of marginalization by dominant and marginal groups as well as attempts by all groups to continually manipulate the modalities for power-sharing.

In spite of the above challenges, power-sharing has great possibilities in Nigeria. First, there is the belief in many quarters that a society as large and complex as Nigeria cannot be peacefully governed without some measure of inter-group consensus. Power-sharing features as the most acceptable modality for reaching elite consensus on how Nigeria should be ruled¹⁶⁰. Because no elite group would tolerate being “out of power”, there is the readiness by each group to collaborate with others for as long as it is assured of being “in power”. For the dominant groups who are the main beneficiaries of the arrangements, there is a disposition to secure the system by neutralizing any opposition. This is why the North in particular is usually attentive to the grievances against power-sharing and often ready to pacify the aggrieved groups.

So what are the general implications from the above analysis? An investigation of power-sharing in Nigeria has shown that it makes sense to re-examine the complexity of Nigerian politics and not to make conclusions based on a few historical instances. As this study has illustrated, despite regime and constitutional changes, most elements of power-sharing in

¹⁶⁰ Although some may see it also as a strategy the North has used in getting different ethno-regional elite groups to agree to the rule of the dominant group – the North.

Nigeria were preserved and passed on from one regime or constitutional order to another. This shows that the structure has a strong grip on the agents who on the other hand manipulate the political structure to their best interests. Therefore, it is oversimplifying to perceive Nigeria as a regime marked by discontinuity because of some instances of political and institutional breakdowns.

Following from the above, the concept of power-sharing has to be rethought. Rather than interpret the concept merely in terms of office distribution, the scope of the areas where power can be shared needs to be extended. This will help the analyst not to miss out key explanations for political continuity and change. As this study has shown, political continuity is enhanced if the elites are provided with many access points to the state through an expanded or multifaceted conception of power-sharing. This highlights the need for analysts and policy-makers to have a broader view of power-sharing. Unfortunately, in many African countries where power-sharing deals were reached, they were limited to building coalition governments and the sharing of executive power¹⁶¹ (Spears 2000 and 2002, Lemarchand 2007). This may limit the durability of the arrangement since actors are restricted and allowed to pursue their multifaceted interests within one sphere – the political sphere. However, as can be seen in the Nigerian case, the creation of multiple access to power through an expansion of the scope of power-sharing enabled the arrangements to survive.

An important avenue for further research is to compare Nigerian case with other cases of power-sharing in Africa such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya. Here it would be interesting to examine the kinds of outcomes that will be produced by the interaction of the socio-political context and power-sharing. It would be

¹⁶¹ The most recent cases are Kenya and Zanzibar; there have been power-sharing deals in Ethiopia, Angola, South Africa, Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC.

especially fruitful to analyze the extent to which the threats of and eventual outbreak of civil war impact on the conception and implementation of power-sharing. Again, a study of the political elite (their formation, circulation, and transformation) in these countries may also be empirically and theoretically relevant for understanding power-sharing in particular and African politics in general.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS AND MONOGRAPHS

- Adamolekun, Ladipo 1986. *Politics and Administration in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Adebanwi, Wale 2007. *Necrophilia and Elite Politics: The Case of Nigeria*. ASC Working Paper 71/2007. Leiden: African Studies Centre.
- Adedeji, Adebayo 1969. *Nigerian Federal Finance: Its Development, Problems and Prospects*. London: Hutchinson.
- Adigwe, Francis 1974. *Essentials of Government for West Africa*. Ibadan: University Press Limited.
- Afigbo, Adiele 1972. *The Warrant Chiefs: Indirect Rule in South-eastern Nigeria, 1891-1929*. London: Longman.
- Ahmad, Ehtisham and Singh, Raju 2003. *Political Economy of Oil Revenue-Sharing in a Developing Country: Illustrations from Nigeria*. IMF Working Paper WP/03/16. Washington, DC: IMF.
- Ake, Claude 1967. *A Theory of Political Integration*. Homewood, Ill: Dorsey Press.
- Akinola, Anthony 1996. *Rotational Presidency*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Akinyemi, Bolaji; Dele-Cole, Patrick and Ofonagoro, Walter 1979. *Readings on Federalism*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
- Alm, James and Boex, Jameson 2002. *An Overview of Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations and Subnational Public Finance in Nigeria*. Working Paper 02-1. Atlanta: International Studies Program, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University.
- Amuwo, Kunle; Adigun, Agbaje; Rotimi, Suberu and Georges, Herault 1998. *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Anifowose, Remi 1982. *Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience*. Enugu: NOK.
- Anyanwu, J.C. 1997. *Nigerian Public Finance*. Onitsha: Joanee Educational.
- Ashwe, Chiichii 1986. *Fiscal Federalism in Nigeria*. Canberra: Australian National University.
- Awa, Eme 1964. *Federal Government in Nigeria*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Awolowo, Obafemi 1947. *Path to Nigerian Freedom*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Azikiwe, Nnamdi 1943. *Political Blueprint of Nigeria*. Lagos: African Book Publishing Co.

- Baubock, Rainer 2002. *United in Misunderstanding? Asymmetry in Multinational Federations*. ICE – Working Paper Series No. 26. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences.
- Bennett, Andrew and George, Alexander 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Bird, Richard 2003. *Asymmetric Fiscal Decentralization: Glue or Solvent?* Working Paper 03-09. Atlanta: International Studies Program, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University.
- Coleman, James 1958. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. Benin City: Broburg and Wistrom.
- Dappa-Biriye, H.J.R. 1995. *Minority Politics in Pre- and Post-Independence Nigeria*. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press.
- Diamond, Larry 1988. *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria: The Failure of the First Republic*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press.
- Diamond, Larry; Kirk-Greene, Anthony and Oyediran, Oyeleye 1997. *Transition Without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society Under Babangida*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.
- Dudley, Billy 1968. *Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria*. London: Frank Cass.
- Dudley, Billy 1973. *Instability and Political Order: Politics and Crisis in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Dudley, Billy 1982. *An Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics*. London: Macmillan.
- Ekeh, Peter and Osaghae, Eghosa E. 1989. *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Ekekwe, Eme 1986. *Class and State in Nigeria*. London: Longman.
- Elazar, Daniel J. 1995. *Federalism: An Overview*. Pretoria: HSRC Publishers.
- Ezera, Kalu 1960. *Constitutional Development in Nigeria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Feinstein, Alan 1987. *African Revolutionary: the Life and Times of Nigeria's Aminu Kano*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.
- Gana, Aaron and Samuel, Egwu 2003. *Federalism in Africa, Volume one: Framing the National Question*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Harneit-Sievers, Axel 2006. *Constructions of Belonging: Igbo Communities and the Nigerian State in the Twentieth Century*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

- Hedstroem, Peter and Swedberg, Richard. 1998. *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Horowitz, Donald 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Horowitz, Donald 1991. *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Human Rights Watch 1999. *The Price of Oil: Corporate Responsibility and Human Rights Violations in Nigeria's Oil Producing Communities*. New York: HRW.
- Human Rights Watch 2007. *Chop Fine: The Human Rights Impact of Local Government Corruption and Mismanagement in Rivers State, Nigeria*. New York: HRW.
- Ibeanu, Okechukwu 2007. *Breaking the Promethean Chain: Protecting Popular Electoral Mandates in the South-East Zone of Nigeria*. Onitsha: Nigerian Political Science Association (South-East) Chapter.
- Ibrahim, Ado-Kurawa 2005. *Nigerian Politics and National Political Reform Conference*. Kano: Tellettes.
- Ihonvbere, Julius and Shaw, Timothy 1998. *Illusions of Power: Nigeria in Transition*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Ikime, Obaro 1980. *Groundwork of Nigerian History*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- International IDEA 2000. *Democracy in Nigeria: Continuing Dialogue(s) for Nation-Building*. Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.
- Irukwu, J. O. 2007. *Nation Building and Ethnic Organizations: The Case of Ohaneze in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Isichei, Elizabeth 1983. *A History of Nigeria*. London: Longman.
- Jega, Attahiru 2000. *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics Under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria*. Kano: Center for Research and Documentation.
- Jinadu, Adele 2002. *Ethnic Conflict and Federalism in Nigeria*. Discussion Paper on Development Policy No. 49. Bonn: Center for Development Research.
- Jinadu, Adele 2007. *Explaining and Managing Ethnic Conflict in Africa: Towards a Cultural Theory of Democracy*. Claude Ake Memorial Paper series No.1. Uppsala: DPCR & NAI.
- Joseph, Richard 1991. *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Kastfelt, Niels 1994. *Religion and Politics in Nigeria: A Study in Middle Belt Christianity*. London: British Academic Press.

- Kirk-Greene, Anthony H. M. 1971. *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: A Documentary Sourcebook 1966-1970*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Kukah, Matthew H. 1993. *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Kurfi, Amadu 1983. *The Nigerian General Elections 1959 and 1979 and the Aftermath*. Lagos: Macmillan.
- Lewis, Arthur. 1965. *Politics in West Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lijphart, Arend 1968. *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lijphart, Arend 1977. *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Lijphart, Arend 1985. *Power-Sharing in South Africa*. Policy Papers in International Affairs. Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California.
- Maier, Karl 2000. *This House has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Mayntz, Renate 2003. *Mechanisms in the Analysis of Macro-Social Phenomena*. MPIfG Working Paper, 03/3. Cologne: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies.
- Musgrave, Richard A. 1959. *The Theory of Public Finance*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Mustapha, Raufu A. 2004. *Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector in Nigeria*. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
- Mustapha, Raufu A. 2007. *Institutionalising Ethnic Representation: How Effective is the Federal Character Commission in Nigeria?* CRISE Working Paper No. 43. Oxford: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.
- Nnoli, Okwudiba 1978. *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Nnoli, Okwudiba 1994. *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa: Intervening Variables*. Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Nnoli, Okwudiba 1995. *Ethnicity and Development in Nigeria*. Aldershot: Avebury.
- Nwabueze, Ben 1982. *A Constitutional History of Nigeria*. London: Longman.
- Nwala, Uzodinma 1997. *Nigeria: Path to Unity and Stability*. Nsukka: Niger Books and Publishing Company.
- Nwankwo, Arthur 1985. *The Igbo Leadership and the Future of Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension.
- Obi, Cyril 2001. *Oil minority rights versus the Nigerian State: Conflict and Transcendence*. University of Leipzig Papers on Africa No. 53. Leipzig: University of Leipzig.

- Odumosu, O. 1963. *The Nigerian Constitution: History and Development*. London: Sweet & Maxwell.
- Odusola, Ayodele 2006. *Tax Policy Reforms in Nigeria* Research Paper No. 2006/03. Helsinki: UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research.
- Oguine, Ike 2000. *Nigeria's Oil Revenues and the Oil Producing Areas*. Dundee: The Centre for Energy, Petroleum and Mineral Law and Policy.
- Ohonbamu, O. 1968. *The Psychology of the Nigerian Revolution*. Ilfracombe, Devon: A. H. Stockwell.
- Ojiako, James O. 1979. *13 Years of Military Rule, 1966-79*. Lagos: Daily Times of Nigeria.
- Okonjo, Isaac 1974. *British Administration in Nigeria, 1900-1950*. New York: NOK Publishers.
- Okpu, Ugbana 1977. *Ethnic Minority Problems in Nigerian Politics 1960-1965*. Uppsala: Academiae Ubsaliensis.
- Onu Godwin and Momoh Abubakar 2005. *Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*. Lagos: Nigerian Political Science Association.
- Osagahe, Eghosa E. and Ebere, Onwudiwe 2001. *The Management of the National Question in Nigeria*. Ibadan: PEFS.
- Osaghae, Eghosa E. 1998. *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence*. London: Hurst & Co.
- Osemwota, O. 1994. *Regional Economic Disparity and Conflict in Nigeria*. Benin: Omega Publishers.
- Otite, Onigu 1990. *Ethnic Pluralism and Ethnicity in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Shoneson.
- Paden, John 1986. *Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto: Values and Leadership in Nigeria*. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Panter-Brick, Keith 1970. *Nigerian Politics and Military Rule: Prelude to Civil War*. London: The Athlone Press.
- Pierson, Paul 2004. *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Post, Kenneth and Vickers, Michael 1973. *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, 1960-1966*. London: Heinemann.
- Price, J. 1967. *Political Institutions of West Africa*. London: Hutchinson Educational.
- Riker, William 1964. *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*. Boston: Little Brown.
- Saro-Wiwa, Ken 1989. *On A Darkling Plain*. Port Harcourt: Saros Publishers.

- Saro-Wiwa, Ken 1992. *Genocide in Nigeria: the Ogoni Tragedy*. Port Harcourt: Saros Publishers.
- Saro-Wiwa, Ken 1999. *A Month and a Day: A Detention Diary*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Sisk, Timothy 1996. *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflict*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Sklar, Richard 1963. *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent Nation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Suberu, Rotimi 1996. *Ethnic Conflicts and Governance in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum and IFRA.
- Suberu, Rotimi 2001. *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Uche, Chibuike and Uche, Ogonnaya 2004. *Oil and the Politics of Revenue Allocation in Nigeria*. ASC Working Paper 54/2004. Leiden: African Studies Centre.
- UNDP 2006. *Niger Delta Human Development Report*. Abuja: United Nations Development Programme.
- World Bank 2003. *Nigeria: State Finances Study, Report No. 25710-UNI*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

CHAPTERS IN BOOKS

- Abegunrin, Olayiwola 2006. "Chief M. K. O. Abiola's Presidential Ambitions and Yoruba Democratic Rights", in Toyin Falola and Ann Genova (eds) *Yoruba Identity and Power Politics*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.
- Abubakar, Dauda 1998. "The Federal Character Principle, Consociationalism and Democratic Stability in Nigeria", in Kunle, Amuwo, Adigun, Agbaje, Rotimi, Suberu, and Georges, Herault (eds.) *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Adebanwi, Wale 2001. "Clashing Cymbals: The Nigerian Press and the Narratives of the National Question" in Eghosa E. Osaghae and Ebere Onwudiwe (eds.) *The Management of the National Question in Nigeria*. Ibadan: PEFS.
- Adejuyigbe, O. 1979. "Rationale and Effect of State Creation in Nigeria with Reference to the 19 States", in A.B. Akinyemi, P. Dele-Cole and W. Ofonagoro (eds.) *Readings on Federalism*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.

- Adejuyigbe, O. 1989. "Creation of States in 1967 and 1976", in P. Ekeh, P. Dele-Cole, and G. Olusanya (eds.) *Nigeria Since Independence: The First 25 Years (Vol. V: Politics and Constitutions)*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Adekanye, Bayo J. 1989. "The Quota Recruitment Policy: Its Sources and Impact on the Nigerian Military", in Peter Ekeh and Eghosa E. Osaghae (ed) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Adekunle, Julius 2006. "Yoruba Factor in Nigerian Politics", in Toyin Falola and Ann Genova (eds) *Yoruba Identity and Power Politics*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.
- Agbaje, Adigun 1989. "Mass Media and the Shaping of Federal Character: A Content Analysis of Four Decades of Nigerian Newspapers (1950-1984)", in Peter Ekeh and Eghosa E. Osaghae (ed.s) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Agbaje, Adigun. 1998. "The Ideology of Power-sharing: An Analysis of Content, Context and Intent", in Kunle, Amuwo; Adigun, Agbaje; Rotimi, Suberu and Georges, Haurault (eds.) *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Ake, Claude. 1985. "The Nigerian State: Antinomies of a Periphery Formation" in Claude Ake (ed). *Political Economy of Nigeria*. London: Longman.
- Akindele, Rafiu 1979. "Federal Grants-In-Aid to State Governments: A Note on an Aspect of the Federal Spending Power in Nigeria" in A.B. Akinyemi, P. Dele-Cole and W. Ofonagoro (eds.) *Readings on Federalism*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
- Albert, Olawale 1998. "Federalism, Inter-ethnic Conflicts and the Northernisation Policy of the 1950s and 1960s", in Kunle, Amuwo; Adigun, Agbaje; Rotimi, Suberu and Georges, Haurault (eds.) *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Anita, B. E. and Haruna, Andrew. 1997. "Language in Ethnicity in Nigeria" in F. U. Okafor (ed). *New Strategies for Curbing Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Asobie, Assisi H. 1996. "Centralising Trends in Nigerian Federalism" in Isawa, J. Elaigwu and R. A. Akindele (eds) *Foundations of Nigerian Federalism 1960-1995, Volume 3*. Abuja: National Council on Intergovernmental Relations.

- Bach, Daniel C. 1997. "Indigeneity, Ethnicity, and Federalism", in Larry, Diamond; Anthony, Kirk-Greene and Oyeleye, Oyediran (eds). *Transition Without End: Nigeria Politics and Civil Society Under Babangida*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.
- Badejo, Babafemi A. 1997. "Party Formation and Party Competition", in Larry, Diamond; Anthony, Kirk-Greene and Oyeleye, Oyediran (eds) *Transition Without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society Under Babangida*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.
- Dent, Martin J. 1966. "A Minority Party – The UMBC", in John P. Mackintosh (ed) *Nigerian Government and Politics*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Ekeh, Peter 1989. "The Structure and Meaning of Federal Character in the Nigerian Political System", in Peter, Ekeh and Eghosa, E. Osaghae (ed) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Falola, Toyin 2006. "The Yoruba Nation", in Toyin Falola and Ann Genova (eds) *Yoruba Identity and Power Politics*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.
- Gana, Aaron 2003. "Federalism and the National Question in Nigeria: A Theoretical Exploration" in Aaron, Gana and Samuel, Egwu (eds). *Federalism in Africa*, Volume one: Framing the National Question. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Gboyega, Alex 1979. "The Making of the Nigerian Constitution", in O. Oyediran (ed). *Nigerian Government and Politics under Military Rule, 1966-1979*. London: Macmillan.
- Gboyega, Alex 1981. "Choosing a New Cabinet" in Oyeleye Oyediran (ed) *The Nigerian 1979 Elections*. London: The Macmillan Press.
- Gboyega, Alex 1989. "The Public Service and Federal Character" in Peter Ekeh and Eghosa E. Osaghae (ed) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Horowitz, Donald 2002. "Constitutional Design: Proposals Versus Processes" in A. Reynolds (ed) *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ibrahim, Jibrin 2002. "The National Conference and the Challenge of Developing Democratic Federalism in Nigeria", in Otiye Igbuzor and Olalade Bamidele (eds) *Contentious Issues in the Review of the 1999 Constitution*. Lagos: Citizen's Forum for Constitutional Reform.
- Ibrahim, Jibrin 2003. "The Transformation of Ethno-Regional Identities in Nigeria", in Attahiru, Jega (ed.) *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics Under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria*. Kano: Centre for Research and Documentation.

- Ikporukpo, Chris 2001. "The Myths and Realities of Majority Groups in Nigeria", in Eghosa, E. Osaghae and Ebere, Onwudiwe (eds.) *The Management of the National Question in Nigeria*. Ibadan: PEFS.
- Iwaloye, Lambo B. and Ibeanu, Anselm. 1997. "The Peoples of Nigeria", in F. U. Okafor (ed). *New Strategies for Curbing Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Lijphart, Arend 1991. "Power-Sharing Approach", in J.V. Montville (ed) *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*. New York: Lexington Books.
- Lijphart, Arend 1995. "Multiethnic Democracy", in S. Lipset et al. (eds) *The Encyclopedia of Democracy*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly.
- Lijphart, Arend 2002. "The Wave of Power-sharing Democracy", in A. Reynolds (ed) *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mustapha, Raufu A. 2002. "Coping with Diversity: The Nigerian State in Historical Perspective", in Abdi, I. Samatar and Ahmed, I. Samatar (ed). *The African State: Reconsiderations*. Portsmouth, N H: Heinemann.
- Mustapha, Raufu A. 2003. "Transformation of Minority Identities in Post-Colonial Nigeria", in Attahiru, Jega (ed.) *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics Under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria*. Kano: Center for Research and Documentation.
- Naanen, Ben 2001. "The Niger Delta and the National Question" in Eghosa, E. Osaghae and Ebere, Onwudiwe (eds.) *The Management of the National Question in Nigeria*. Ibadan: PEFS.
- Naanen, Ben 2002. "State Movements", in Alagoa, Joe and Derefaka, Abi (eds) *The Land and People of Rivers State: Eastern Niger Delta*. Port Harcourt: Onyeoma Research Publications.
- Nwabughuogu, Anthony I. 1996. "Unitarism Versus Federalism: A British Dilemma, 1914-1954" in J. Isawa, Elaigwu and G. N. Uzoigwe (eds) *Foundations of Nigerian Federalism 1900-1960, Volume 2*. Abuja: National Council on Intergovernmental Relations.
- Obi, Cyril 1998. "The Impact of Oil on Nigeria's Revenue Allocation System: Problems and Prospects for National Reconstruction" in K. Amuwo, A. Agbaje, R. Suberu, and G. Herault (eds) *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.

- Olalokun, Akin 1979. "Nigerian Federal Finances: Issues and Choices" in A.B. Akinyemi, P. Dele-Cole and W. Ofonagoro (eds.) *Readings on Federalism*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
- Olukoju, Ayodeji 1997. "Nigeria: A Historical Review", in F. U. Okafor (ed). *New Strategies for Curbing Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Omoruyi, Omo 1989. "Federal Character and the Party System in the Second Republic", in Peter Ekeh and Eghosa E. Osaghae (ed) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Osaghae, Eghosa E. 1988. "Federal Society and Federal Character: The Politics of Plural Accommodation in Nigeria since Independence", in Uma O. Eleazu (ed) *Nigeria: The First 25 Years*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Osaghae, Eghosa E. 1989^a. "The Federal Cabinet, 1951-1984", in Peter, Ekeh and Eghosa, E. Osaghae (ed) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Osuntokun, Jide 1979. "The Historical Background of Nigerian Federalism", in Bolaji, Akinyemi, Patrick, Dele-Cole and Walter, Ofonagoro (eds.) *Readings on Federalism*. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
- Oyediran, Oyeleye 1981. "Political Parties: Formation and Candidate Selection", in Oyeleye Oyediran (ed) *The Nigerian 1979 Elections*. London: The Macmillan Press.
- Oyovbaire, S. Egite 1978. "The Politics of Revenue Allocation", in Keith Panter-Brick (ed). *Soldiers and Oil: The Transformation of Nigeria*. London: Frank Cass.
- Paden, John 1997. "Nigerian Unity and the Tensions of Democracy: Geo-Cultural Zones and North-South Legacies", in Beckett Paul A. and Crawford Young (eds) *Dilemmas of Democracy in Nigeria*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press.
- Panter-Brick, Keith 1978. "The Constitution Drafting Committee", in Keith Panter-Brick (ed) *Soldiers and Oil: The Political Transformation of Nigeria*. London: Frank Cass.
- Post, Kenneth W. J. 1966. "The Action Group: The Crisis of 1962 and Its Aftermath", in John P. Mackintosh (ed) *Nigerian Government and Politics*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Rothchild, D. and Roeder, P. 2005. "Dilemmas of State-building in Divided Societies", in Roeder, P and Rothchild, D. (eds.) *Sustainable Peace: Power and Democracy after Civil Wars*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Saro-Wiwa, Ken 1994. "Multi-Ethnic Demands in Nigeria: Minority Versus Majority Interest", in Oyeleye, Oyediran (ed) *Autonomy of Communes in Africa and German-Speaking Countries in Europe*. Ibadan: Vantage.
- Sen, Yima 2002. "The Minority Question in Northern Nigeria", in Abubakar, Momoh and Said, Adejumbi (eds) *The National Question in Nigeria: Comparative Perspectives*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Sklar, Richard and Whitaker Jr., C. S. 1966. "Nigeria", in J. Coleman and C. Rosberg, Jr. (eds). *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Sklar, Richard 1991. "Nigerian Politics: The Ordeal of Chief Awolowo", in Richard L. Sklar and C. S. Whitaker (eds) *African Politics and Problems in Development*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.
- Stauffer, Thomas and Topperwien, Nicole 2005. "Balancing Self-rule and Shared Rule" in Lidija R. Basta Fleiner and Thomas Fleiner (eds) *Federalism and Multiethnic States: The Case of Switzerland*. Fribourg: Institute of Federalism.
- Stepan, Alfred 2004. "Toward a New Comparative Politics of Federalism, Multinationalism and Democracy: Beyond Rikerian Federalism" in Edward L. Gibson (ed) *Federalism and Democracy in Latin America*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Suberu, Rotimi and Larry Diamond 2002. "Institutional Design, Ethnic Conflict Management and Democracy in Nigeria", in A. Reynolds (ed.) *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Suberu, Rotimi 1998. "States' Creation and the Political Economy of Nigerian Federalism", in K. Amuwo, A. Agbaje, R. Suberu and G. Haurault (eds.) *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Tamuno, Tekena 1998. "Nigerian Federalism in Historical Perspective", in Kunle, Amuwo, Adigun, Agbaje, Rotimi, Suberu, and Georges, Haurault (eds.) *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Uwazurike, Chudi 1997. "Politics and the Search for Accommodation in Nigeria: Will Rotational Consociationalism Suffice?", in Paul, A. Beckett and Crawford, Young (eds) *Dilemmas of Democracy in Nigeria*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press.
- Yahaya, A. 1978. "The Creation of States", in K. Panter-Brick (ed) *Soldier and Oil: The Political Transformation of Nigeria*. London: Frank Cass.

ARTICLES

- Abatan, Dayo 1994. "The Benefits of Rotational Presidency" *Daily Times*, 26 October.
- Adamolekun, Ladipo and Ayo, Bamidele 1989. "The Evolution of the Nigerian Federal Administration System" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 19(1): 157-176.
- Adamolekun, Ladipo; Erero, John and Oshionebo, Basil 1991. "Federal Character and Management of the Federal Civil Service and the Military" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 21(4): 75-88.
- Adebayo, A. G. 1990. "The 'Ibadan School' and the Handling of Federal Finance in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28(2): 245-265.
- Adindu, Godwin 2003. "How Obasanjo Broke Arewa, Afenifere, Ohanese's back", *Daily Independent*, 1 May.
- Afigbo, Adiele 1991. "Background to Nigerian Federalism: Federal Features in the Colonial State" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 21(4): 13-29.
- Ake, Claude 1981. "Presidential Address to the 1981 Conference of the Nigerian Political Science Association" *West Africa*, 25 May.
- Akinola, Anthony 1988. "Nigeria: The Quest for a Stable Polity: Another Comment" *African Affairs*, 87(348): 441-445.
- Akinola, Anthony 1989. "A Critique of Nigeria's Proposed Two-Party System" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 27(1): 109-123.
- Akinyele, R. T. 1996. "States Creation in Nigeria: The Willink Report in Retrospect" *African Studies Review*, 39(2): 71-94.
- Akinyele, R. T. 2000. "Power-sharing and Conflict Management in Africa: Nigeria, Sudan, and Rwanda" *African Development*, XXV (3&4): 209-233.
- Alexander, Gerard 2001. "Institutions, Path Dependence, and Democratic Consolidation", *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 13(3): 249-270.
- Andeweg, Rudy 2000. "Consociational Democracy" *Annual Review Political Science*, 3: 509-536.
- Anyanwu, K. 1982. "The Bases of Political Instability in Nigeria", *Journal of Black Studies*, 13(1): 101-117.
- Ayoade, John A. 1986. "Ethnic Management in the 1979 Nigerian Constitution" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 16(2): 73-90.
- Ballard, J. A. 1971. "Administrative Origins of Nigerian Federalism" *African Affairs*, 70(281): 333-348.

- Barnes, A. E. 1997, “‘Some Fire behind the Smoke’: The Fraser Report and Its Aftermath in Colonial Northern Nigeria”, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 31(2): 197-228.
- Barry, Brian 1975. “Political Accommodation and Consociational Democracy” *British Journal of Political Science*, 5(4): 477-505.
- Bogaards, Matthijs 2006. “Democracy and Power-sharing in Multinational States: Thematic Introduction” *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 8(2): 119-126.
- Burton, Michael and Higley, John 2001. “The Study of Elite Transformations” *International Review of Sociology*, 11(2): 181-199.
- Büthe, Tim 2002. “Taking Temporality Seriously: Modeling History and the Use of Narratives as Evidence” *The American Political Science Review*, 96(3): 481-493.
- Calhoun, Craig 1998 “Explanation in Historical Sociology: Narrative, General Theory, and Historically Specific Theory” *American Journal of Sociology*, 104(3): 846–871.
- Diamond, Larry 1982. “Cleavage, Conflict and Anxiety in the Second Republic” *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 20(4): 629-668.
- Diamond, Larry. 1987. “Class Formation in the Swollen African State” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 25(4): 567-596.
- Dowding, Keith M. and Kimber, Richard 1983. “The Meaning and Use of ‘Political Stability’” *European Journal of Political Research*, 11(3): 229–243.
- Ebeku, Kaniye 2003. “Nigerian Supreme Court and Ownership of Offshore Oil” *Natural Resources Forum*, 27: 291-299.
- Ejiogu, E. 2001. “The Roots of Political Instability in an Artificial ‘Nation-state’: The Nigerian Case” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, XLII(3): 323-342.
- Ekwe-Ekwe, Herbert 1985. “Nigeria’s Plight: From Shagari to Buhari” *Third World Quarterly*, 7(3): 610-625.
- Falola, Toyin 2001. “Schooling the Northern Nigerian Elite”, *The Journal of African History*, 42(2): 333-335.
- Fisher, Walter R. 1985. “The Narrative Paradigm: In the Beginning” *Journal of Communication*, 35(4): 73-89.
- Frynas, Jędrzej George 2001. “Corporate and State Responses to Anti-Oil Protests in the Niger Delta” *African Affairs*, 100: 27-54.
- Harnischfeger, Johannes 2004. “Sharia and Control over Territory: Conflicts between ‘Settlers’ and ‘Indigenes’ in Nigeria” *African Affairs*, 103(412): 431-452.

- Hartzell, Caroline and Hoddie, Matthew 2003. "Institutionalizing Peace: Power-sharing and Post-civil War Conflict Management" *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(2): 318-332.
- Herbst, Jeffrey 1996. "Is Nigeria a Viable State?" *The Washington Quarterly*, 19(2): 151-172.
- Hurwitz, Leon 1973. "Contemporary Approaches to Political Stability" *Comparative Politics*, 5(3): 449-463.
- Ibeanu, Okechukwu 2004. "The Rhetoric of Rights: Understanding the Changing Discourses of Rights in the Niger Delta" *ACAS Bulletin*, 68: 15-20.
- Ibelema, Minabere 2000. "Nigeria: The Politics of Marginalization" *Current History*, 99(633-641): 211-214.
- Ibrahim, Jibrin 1999. "Political Transition, Ethnoregionalism, and the 'Power Shift' Debates in Nigeria" *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 27(1): 12-16.
- Ikelegbe, Augustine 2006. "The Economy of Conflict in the Oil Rich Niger Delta Region of Nigeria" *African and Asian Studies*, 5(1): 23-55.
- Ikporukpo, Chris 2004. "Petroleum, Fiscal Federalism and Environmental Justice in Nigeria" *Space and Polity*, 8(3): 321-354.
- Isumonah, Adefemi V. 2001. "Oil-Bearing Minorities' Struggles in Nigeria: Towards an Alternative Constitutional Framework" *Politeia*, 20(2): 5-21.
- Isumonah, Adefemi V. 2004. "The Making of the Ogoni Ethnic Group" *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 74(3): 433-453.
- Jackson, L. 1972. "Nigeria: The Politics of the First Republic" *Journal of Black Studies*, 2(3): 277-302.
- Jinadu, Adele 1985. "Federalism, the Consociational State, and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 15(2): 71-100.
- Joseph, Richard 1978. "Political Parties and Ideology in Nigeria" *Review of African Political Economy*, 5(13): 78-90.
- Kraxberger, Brennan 2004. "The Geography of Regime Survival: Abacha's Nigeria" *African Affairs*, 103(412): 413-430.
- Law, R. C. C. 1973. "The Heritage of Oduduwa: Traditional History and Political Propaganda among the Yoruba" *The Journal of African History*, 14(2): 207-222.
- Lemarchand, Rene 2007. "Consociationalism and Power-sharing in Africa: Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo" *African Affairs*, 106(422): 1-20.
- Lijphart, Arend 1969. "Consociational Democracy", *World Politics* 21(2):207-225.

- Lijphart, Arend 1979. "Consociation and Federation: Conceptual and Empirical Links" *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 12(3):499-515.
- Lijphart, Arend 1996. "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy: A Consociational Interpretation", *American Political Science Review*, 90(2):258-268.
- Lincoln, Joshua 1999. "The 'Persistent' Federation: Nigeria and Its Federal Future" *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 27(1): 17-20.
- Lindner, J. 2003. "Institutional Stability and Change: Two Sides of the Same Coin", *Journal of European Public Policy*, 10(6):912-935.
- Lustick, Ian 1979. "Stability in Deeply Divided Societies: Consociationalism versus Control" *World Politics*, 31(3):325-344.
- Lustick, Ian 1997. "Lijphart, Lakatos, and Consociationalism" *World Politics*, 50(1): 88-117.
- Mackintosh, John 1965. "The Struggle for Power in Nigeria" *Transition*, 22: 21-25.
- Madunagu, Edwin. 1994^a. "Nigeria's Power-blocs" *The Guardian*, 14 April.
- Madunagu, Edwin. 1994^b. "Notes on the Power-blocs (1)" *The Guardian*, 21 April.
- Mahoney, James 2000. "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology" *Theory and Society*, 29:507-548.
- McGarry, John and O'Leary, Brendan 2006. "Consociational Theory, Northern Ireland's Conflict, and its Agreement: What Consociationalists can Learn from Northern Ireland" *Government and Opposition*, 41(1): 43-63.
- Miles, Matthew B. 1979. "Qualitative Data as an Attractive Nuisance: The Problem of Analysis" *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24(4): 590-601.
- Miles, Matthew B. and Huberman, Michael A. 1984. "Drawing Valid Meaning from Qualitative Data: Toward a Shared Craft" *Educational Researcher*, 13: 20-30.
- Miles, William 1987. "Partitioned Royalty: The Evolution of Hausa Chiefs in Nigeria and Niger", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 25(2): 233-258.
- Mustapha, Raufu A. 1986. "The National Question and Radical Politics in Nigeria", *Review of African Political Economy*, 13(37): 81-96.
- Naanen, Ben 1995. "Oil-producing Minorities and the Restructuring of Nigerian Federalism: The Case of the Ogoni People", *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 33(1): 46-78.
- Nafziger, Wayne 1973. "The Political Economy of Disintegration in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 11(4): 505-536.
- Natufe, Omajuwa 2005. "Resource Control and Federalism: The Argument" *The Guardian*, 8 July.

- Njoku, Raphael 2000. "Consociationalism: Its Relevance for Nigeria" *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 5(2): 1-35.
- Njoku, Uzochukwu 2005. "Colonial Political Re-Engineering and the Genesis of Modern Corruption in African Public Service: The Issue of the Warrant Chiefs of South Eastern as a Case in Point" *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 14(1): 99-166.
- Nolte, Insa 2002. "Federalism and Communal Conflict in Nigeria" *Regional and Federal Studies*, 12(1): 171-192.
- Nolutshungu, Sam 1990. "Fragments of a Democracy: Reflections on Class and Politics in Nigeria" *Third World Quarterly*, 12(1): 86-115.
- Obiyan, Sat A. 1999. "Political Parties under the Abubakar Transition Program and Democratic Stability in Nigeria" *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 27(1): 41-43.
- Ofeimun, Odia 2005. "Resource Control and Beyond (1)" *The Guardian*, 18 July.
- Offensend, David 1976. "Centralisation and Fiscal Arrangements in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 14(3): 507-513.
- Olson, Mancur 1969. "The Principle of 'Fiscal Equivalence': The Division of Responsibilities among Different Levels of Government". *American Economic Review*, 59: 479-487.
- Olugbade, Kola 1992. "The Nigerian State and the Quest for a Stable Polity", *Comparative Politics*, 24(3): 293-316.
- Olusanya, G. O. 1967. "Political Awakening in the North: A Reinterpretation" *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria*, IV(1): 126-137.
- Olutayo, Olanrewaju 1999. "The Igbo Entrepreneur in the Political Economy of Nigeria" *African Study Monograph*, 20(3): 147-174.
- Omeje, Kenneth 2005. "Oil Conflict in Nigeria: Contending Issues and Perspectives of the Local Niger Delta People" *New Political Economy*, 10(3): 321-334.
- Omobowale, Ayokunle and Olutayo, Akinpelu 2007. "Chief Lamidi Adedibu and Patronage Politics in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 45(3): 425-446.
- Onwubiko, Emmanuel 2005. "The Politics of Ethnic Agenda at the Confab" *The Guardian*, 7 April.
- Osaghae, Eghosa E. 1991. "Ethnic Minorities and Federalism in Nigeria" *African Affairs*, 90(359): 237-258.
- Osaghae, Eghosa E. 1992. "The Status of State Governments in Nigeria's Federalism" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 22(3): 181-200.

- Osaghae, Eghosa. E. 1998. "Managing Multiple Minority Problems in a Divided Society: The Nigerian Experience" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36(1): 1-24.
- Osaghae, Eghosa. E. 2001. "From Accommodation to Self-Determination: Minority Nationalism and the Restructuring of the Nigerian State" *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 7(1): 1-20.
- Othman, Shehu 1984. "Classes, Crises and Coup: The Demise of Shagari's Regime" *African Affairs*, 83(333): 441-461.
- Oyediran, Oyeleye and Agbaje, Adigun 1991. "Two-Partyism and Democratic Transition in Nigeria" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29(2): 213-235.
- Oyovbaire, S. Egite 1983. "Structural Change and Political Processes in Nigeria" *African Affairs*, 82(326): 3-28.
- Patterson, Molly and Monroe, Kristen R. 1998. "Narrative in Political Science" *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1: 315-331.
- Phillips, Adedotun 1971. "Nigeria's Federal Financial Experience" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9(3): 389-408.
- Phillips, Adedotun 1991. "Managing Fiscal Federalism: Revenue Allocation Issues", *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 21(4): 103-111.
- Phillips, C. 1980. "Nigeria's New Political Institutions, 1975-79" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 18(1): 1-22.
- Pierson, Paul 2000. "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics", *American Political Science Review*, 94(2): 251-267.
- Reilly, Benjamin 2006. "Political Engineering and Party Politics in Conflict-Prone Societies" *Democratization*, 13(5): 811-827.
- Reno, William 1999. "Crisis and (No) Reform in Nigeria's Politics", *African Studies Review*, 42(1): 105-124.
- Requejo, Ferran 2001. "Federalism and National Groups" *International Social Science Journal*, 53(167): 41-49.
- Rhodes, Carl and Brown, Andrew D. 2005. "Narrative, Organizations and Research" *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 7(3): 167-188.
- Rupley, Lawrence A. 1981. "Revenue Sharing in Nigerian Federation" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 19(2): 257-277.
- Salawu, B. 2001. "Ethnicism and Political Instability in Nigeria: Implication for the Survival of Democracy", *African Journal of International Affairs and Development*, 6(1): 100-111.

- Saunders, Cheryl 2002. "Collaborative Federalism" *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 61(2): 69-77.
- Schatz, Sayre 1984. "Pirate Capitalism and the Inert Economy of Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 22(1): 45-57.
- Sklar, Richard 1967. "Nigerian Politics in Perspective" *Government and Opposition*, 2(4): 524-539.
- Sklar, Richard 1979. "The Nature of Class Domination in Africa" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 17(4): 531-552.
- Sklar, Richard 1981. "Democracy for the Second Republic" *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 11(1/2): 14-16.
- Smith, Adam 2005. "Fractured Federalism: Nigeria's Lessons for Today's Nation Builders in Iraq" *The Round Table*, 94(1): 129-144.
- Smith, Brian 1981. "Federal-State Relations in Nigeria" *African Affairs*, 80(320): 355-378.
- Spalding, Nancy 2000. "A Cultural Explanation of Collapse into Civil War: Escalation of Tension in Nigeria", *Culture and Psychology*, 6(1): 51-87.
- Spears, Ian S. 2000. "Understanding Inclusive Peace Agreements in Africa: The Problems of Sharing Power" *Third World Quarterly*, 21(1): 105-118.
- Spears, Ian S. 2002. "Africa: The Limits of Power-Sharing" *Journal of Democracy*, 13(3): 123-136.
- Steiner, Jurg 1981. "The Consociational Theory and Beyond" *Comparative Politics*, 13(3): 339-354.
- Suberu, Rotimi 1988. "Federalism and Nigeria's Political Future: A Comment" *African Affairs*, 87(348): 431-439.
- Suberu, Rotimi 1991. "The Struggle for New States in Nigeria, 1976-1990" *African Affairs*, 90(361): 499-522.
- Swenden, Wilfried 2002. "Asymmetric Federalism and Coalition-Making in Belgium" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 32(3): 67-87.
- Tamuno, Tekena 1972. "Patriotism and Statism in the River State, Nigeria" *African Affairs*, 71(284): 264-281.
- Thelen, K. 1999. "Historical Institutionalism and Comparative Politics", *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 369-404.
- Tillin, Louise 2006. "United in Diversity? Asymmetry in Indian Federalism" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 37(1): 45-67.

- Tilly, Charles 2001. "Mechanisms in Political Process" *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4: 21-41.
- Ubah, C. N. 1980. "Western Education in Africa: The Igbo Experience", *Comparative Education Review*, 24(3): 371-388.
- Ukeje, Charles and Adebani, Wale 2008. "Ethno-nationalist Claims in Southern Nigeria: Insights from Yoruba and Ijaw Nationalisms since the 1990s", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(3): 563-591.
- Ukiwo, Ukoha 2003. "Politics, Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41(1): 115-138.
- Ukiwo, Ukoha 2007. "Education, Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnic Relations in Nigeria", *International Journal of Education Development*, 27: 266-281.
- Usman, Bala Yusufu 1995^a. "Nigeria: Myths and Realities (1)" *West Africa*, 4-10 December.
- Usman, Bala Yusufu 1995^b. "Nigeria: Myths and Realities (2)" *West Africa*, 11-17 December.
- Van Den Bersselaar, Dmitri 2005. "Imagining Home: Migration and the Igbo Village in Colonial Nigeria", *The Journal of African History*, 46(1): 51-73.
- Vaughan, Olufemi 1994. "Communalism, Legitimation and Party Politics at the Grassroots: The Case of the Yoruba", *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 7(3): 419-440.
- Watts, Ronald 2001. "Models of Federal Power Sharing" *International Social Science Journal*, 53(167): 23-32.
- Whitaker, Jr., C. S. 1981. "Second Beginnings: The New Political Framework" *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 11(1/2): 2-13.
- White, Hayden 1984. "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory" *History and Theory*, 23(1): 1-33.
- Wolpe, Howard 1969. "Port Harcourt: Ibo Politics in Microcosm", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 7(3): 469-493.
- Zimmerman, Joseph F. 2001. "National-State Relations: Cooperative Federalism in the Twentieth Century" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 31(2): 15-30.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- Mbanefo, G. 1997. *Fiscal Federalism: The Nigerian Experience*. Paper presented at the Mandatory Continuing Professional Education Seminar organized by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria.

Van Houten, Pieter. 1999. *The Politics of Fiscal Autonomy Demands: Regional Assertiveness and Intergovernmental Financial Relations in Belgium and Germany*. Paper Prepared for the CASPIC MacArthur Scholars' Conference "Rescaling the State", Wilder House, Chicago, 1-2 May.

Vincent, O. 2001. "Fiscal Federalism: the Nigerian Experience", in Proceedings of the Fourth Public Lecture of the Nigerian Economic Society held in Abuja, 11 December.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Electoral Act 2006, Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette, 42(93). Lagos: The Federal Government Printer, 2006.

Federal Character Commission, *1st Annual Report*. Abuja: FCC, 1996.

Federal Character Commission, *Consolidated Manpower Statistics – Federal Civil Service*. Abuja: FCC, 2000.

Federal Republic of Nigeria, *Report of the Constitutional Conference Containing the Resolutions and Recommendations*, Vol. II. Abuja: National Assembly Press, 1995.

Government's Views and Comments on the Findings and Recommendations of the Political Bureau. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1987.

Independent National Electoral Commission, *Political Party Finance Handbook*. Abuja: INEC, 2005.

National Universities Commission, *Annual Review of Nigerian Universities – Academic Year 1974-75*. Lagos: NUC, 1978.

Nigeria: Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives 1961-62, Vol. 1, Federal Government Printer, Lagos, 1962.

Nigeria: Report of the Interim Revenue Allocation Review Committee, Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, 1969.

Report of the Constitution Drafting Committee Containing the Draft Constitution, vol. 1. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1976.

Report of the Constitutional Conference Containing the Resolutions and Recommendations, vol. II. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1995.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1960. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999. Lagos: Federal Government Press.

The Report of the Political Bureau. Abuja: The Directorate of Social Mobilization, 1987.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Daily Sketch Newspapers

New Nigerian Newspapers

Nigerian Times Newspapers

The Daily Independent

The Daily Times of Nigeria

The Guardian Newspapers

ThisDay Newspapers

NewsWatch Magazine

Tell Magazine

The News Magazine

West Africa Magazine