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C U L T U R A E S O C I E T À

Sauti ya Kisonge: Images and Imaginaries Debated on the Cyberbaraza

Money Can Buy Friends: Wealth and Relationships in Senegalese TV Series

Una società in scena: teatro e fiction televisive in Senegal dall'indipendenza a oggi

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Dawit L. Petros, *Untitled (Prologue II)*, *The Stranger's Notebook*, 2016 © Courtesy of the artist and Tiwani Contemporary, London

Indice

n.87

Editoriale

- 1 Nuovi canali per nuove narrazioni**
di Sandra Federici

Dossier: L'Africa si racconta. Dal griot all'influencer digitale

- 7 Sauti ya Kisonge: Images and Imaginaries Debated on the Cyberbaraza**
by Irene Brunotti

- 16 Money Can Buy Friends: Wealth and Relationships in Senegalese TV Series**
by Dieynaba Gabrielle Ndiaye

- 22 Una società in scena: teatro e fiction televisive in Senegal dall'indipendenza a oggi**
by Nelly Diop

- 30 FOCUS/** a cura di Rossana Mamberto

- *Le Journal Rappé*: la notizia si fa rap
- Félix Fokoua, raccontare il Camerun con lo *smartphone*
- Il tuo matrimonio da sogno con *Kenya Weddings*
- *Africa on the rise - Changing the African conversation*. Un vento nuovo soffia sul web



- *Circumspecte.com*: informare, interagire e ispirarsi

Fumetto

- 38 Manufacturing Image: Nigerian Tribune and the Making of Political Heroes and Villains in Nigeria, 1960-1965**
by Shina Alimi

Immigrazione

- 46 Deconstructing Europe's Permanent Migrants Crisis: a Critical Look at the EU Governance of the Border in the Mediterranean and North Africa**
by Giacomo Orsini
- 54 Barriers or Bridges? Una studentessa al Palazzo di Vetro a New York**
by Marwa Hagi



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68 *13.11*, la web serie di ElenFant Film
a cura della redazione

Eventi

70 *Afrotopia*. La biennale di Bamako
2 dicembre 2017-31 gennaio 2018
di Roberta Sireno

72 *Food, fashion, design: imprese creative tra Italia e Africa*
di Luca Colombo

74 *7 Tavole: un connubio tra alta cucina e sociale*
di Elisabetta Degli Esposti Merli

78 *Under the Sea and Far out to Space. Afro Tech and the Future of Re-Invention*
di Rossana Mamberto

Libri

82 *S. Rizzello, Favola agrodolce di Riso Fuorisede*
di Roberta Sireno

82 *F. Pistocchi, Sierra Leone. Scenari globali e percorsi locali: geografie del cambiamento*
di Ruggiero Montenegro

83 *L. Simonato, Con i loro occhi, con la loro voce*
di Maria Scrivo

Arte

58 *2017 à Paris : une année africaine ?*
par Marie-José Hoyet

Cinema

64 *Hotel Splendid*. Rappresentare le migrazioni tramite il cinema etnografico
di Mauro Bucci



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Manufacturing Image: Nigerian Tribune and the Making of Political Heroes and Villains in Nigeria, 1960-1965

by Shina Alimi

In the 1960s, the construction of “heroes” and “villains” in the editorials, articles and cartoons of the Nigerian Tribune showed an unscrupulous use of newspapers for political propaganda.

Like the last decade of colonial rule in Nigeria, early post-independence period in the country was characterised by ethnic and partisan politics. These political features were rooted in mutual suspicions and hostility among political and ruling class in the country. Coupled with these were intra-party crises that were under-laid by interpersonal feuds among the party leaders. The worst intra-party crises were experienced in the Western Region of Nigeria as a result of interpersonal bickering among the leaders of the ruling party of the region, the Action Group (AG). Thus, between 1962 and 1965, the region was engulfed in two major crises, the Action Group (AG) party and the Elections crises which later stigmatised the region as the “Wild Wild West”. Central to these crises was the *Nigerian Tribune*, the megaphone of the AG. Through its editorial comments, news reports and cartoons, the newspaper constructed political narratives of heroic and villainous leaders in the region. These narratives became the foundation on which public opinions were moulded. The focus of this paper is to examine how the *Nigerian Tribune*, the dominant newspaper in the old western region made and unmade heroes, moulded images of leaders and tensed up political crises in the region between 1960 and 1965. The study adopts historical approach and analyses relevant selected editorial comments and cartoons.

Background of the Crisis

The liquidation of colonial estates in Nigeria was a mixed bag of constitutional process and a few protests. Unlike most North African states where nationalist struggles were characterised by violence, Nigerian nationalists negotiated Nigerian independence through constitutional means (Sklar 1963; Falola and Heaton 2008). Protests were limited to labour agitations, civil disobedience and mass demonstrations against colonial policies (Coleman 1986; Ananaba 1969). The political landscape of Nigerian First Republic was rooted in regional, ethnic and partisan politics of the previous decade. At her independence in 1960, three political parties, the Northern People’s Congress (NPC), the National Convention of Nigeria and the Cameroon (NCNC) and the Action Group (AG) were the major political parties in Nigeria (Sklar 1963; Falola and Heaton 2008; Alimi 2011a; Alimi 2015). These political parties were organised based on the region of their origin. While the NPC was popular among the northern elite, the AG was the dominant political party in the West. Although the NCNC attracted some followership at the national level, the party was more popular among the Ibo in the eastern region and was affiliated with the Ibo Federal Union. Each of these political parties was affiliated with dominant regional and ethnic groups and associations. For instance, while the NPC was affiliated with the *Jam’iyyar Mutanen Arewa* and *Jamiyar Naman Sawaba*, the AG was affiliated with the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa*. Thus, the political atmosphere of the early postcolonial Nigeria was



Plate 1: *Nigerian Tribune*, September 30, 1965.

characterised by regionalism and ethnicity (Coleman 1986; Nolte 2009). Emanated from ethnic and regional politics were fear of domination, competition over control and distribution of resources and mutual suspicion. While the NCNC and the AG nursed the fear that the NPC-controlled federal government would favour the north in the allocation and distribution of federal resources, the NPC feared that the NCNC and the AG controlled governments would place the south ahead of the north in term of development (Falola and Heaton 2008).

Another feature of Nigerian First Republic was intra-party crises, particularly among the leadership of the AG. The origin of these crises could be traced to the 1959 Federal Election. Expectedly, each political party anticipated victory and control of the federal government. Besides, the election was also a crucial factor in the game of power equilibrium among the three regions. In the election, the NPC emerged winner but jointly controlled the federal government with the NCNC. The AG became the opposition party. The leader of the ruling party in the West (the AG) Chief Obafemi Awolowo thus became the leader of the opposition party (Falola and Heaton 2008).

By 1962, the AG had no doubt become a fringe party in its opposition role. Thus, some members of the party believed that the western region had strategically become irrelevant at the national and thus argued for alliance and formation of national government with the NPC. This group hoped that an alliance with the ruling party would create greater opportunities for the region in resources allocation and power sharing. At the head of this group was Chief S.L. Akintola, the Premier of the western region and deputy leader of the AG. The leader and president of the party, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, did not support coalition with NPC to form a national government.

The AG crisis was also rooted in ideological disputes among the leadership of the party. By 1962, it became obvious that the leader of the party, Chief Awolowo, and a crop of young radical intellectuals within the party had embraced a more radical political ideology. This group advocated "Democratic Socialism" as a new ideological base for the party. Awolowo viewed socialism as a better political economic system than capitalism for emerging and non-industrialised nations like Nigeria. It was also argued that by embracing democratic socialism, western region would become more sufficient and reduce its dependence on the central government. These young intellectual and radical elements who viewed the new ideology as a way of invigorating the strengths of the party and repositioning the region included Drs H. A. Oluwasanmi, S.A. Aluko and Messrs Ayo Fasanmi, S.G. Ikoku and Ojo Bamigboye (Osuntokun 1984; Falana 1985). This political ideology was opposed by some prominent leaders of the party led by chief Akintola. Opposition to the Democratic Socialism Ideology also came from the conservative elites in the party. These included entrepreneurs, bankers, merchants and prominent traditional rulers who feared that socialism would bring equalisation and wealth redistributions in the region (*Ibid.*).

The eight annual congress of the party held in Jos in February 1962 brought the crisis to the climax. At the congress, Chief Awolowo's speech assumed a rather accusatory tone. A number of charges were levelled against Chief Akintola's government. The administration was chastised for reducing taxes, increasing students' school fees and exempting women in poll tax (Osuntokun 1984). Other charges included anti-party activities and maladministration. Not only that, the Jos congress provided a great platform to introduce a new political ideology to the members of the party. The imposition of the new ideology on the party met stiff opposition from Chief Akintola and his supporters who thus walked out of the convention. The adoption of the new ideology was not without some internal restructuring. For instance, Ayo Rosiji resigned his position as the National Secretary of the party and was replaced with S.G. Ikoku, while Chief Anthony Enahoro and Alhaji Ibrahim were elected as the Vice-Presidents of the party. Chief Akin-

tola was returned as the party's Deputy Leader and was advised to resign his position as the premier of the western region. A temporary truce was signed in February 10, 1962. The breather was rather short as open fights erupted between the supporters of the two leaders in May 1962. At the meeting of the AG leaders of May 10, 1962, Chief Akintola was accused «on charges of maladministration, anti-party activities and gross indiscipline» (the *Nigerian Tribune*, May 22, 1962). Akintola's defense was both courageous and heroic. Chief Akintola revealed Chief Awolowo's insufferably overbearing attitude towards him and undue interference in the administration of the region. The Premier also opened the Pandora's box of endemic corruption in which the party's leaders could not be absolved. A motion was tabled by Chief Anthony Enahoro that Chief Akintola should «resign forthwith the offices of Premier and Deputy Leader» (Osuntokun 1984). A majority members of the party's leaders unanimously voted that Akintola should be removed from his offices. The refusal of Chief Akintola brought the matter to the peak as another meeting of the party was conveyed on May 20, 1962. Here, the mobilised AG members of the Western House of Assembly passed a vote of no confidence in the premier. A petition signed by over sixty members of the party praying the removal of the premier was sent to Ooni Adesoji Aderemi, the Governor of the region. Chief Akintola was removed from the office of the Premier by the Governor.

Alhaji Dauda Soroye Adegbenro, a strong political ally of Chief Awolowo, was appointed as the new Premier of the region. This event led to the breakdown of law and order in the Western House of Assembly. In retaliation, Chief Akintola wrote a petition to the Prime Minister praying that he should advise the Queen to remove Ooni Adesoji Aderemi from the office of Governor of the region for his partisan role in the intra-party crisis (*Ibid.*). The federal government responded by the declaring a state of emergency in the western region on 29th May, 1962. This was followed by the appointment of M. A. Majekodunmi as a sole administrator for the region. Most prominent leaders of the party were placed under house arrests. After the Supreme Court's ruling, Akintola was

returned to the Office as the Premier of western Nigeria, while the restrictions on his supporters were lifted.

Chief Awolowo and some of his supporters were charged with and found guilty of treasonable felony for smuggling arms from Ghana and training the revolutionaries to overthrow the Federal Government of Nigeria. Thus, Awolowo and his supporters were sentenced to ten years in prison. The AG intra-party crisis had a number of implications on political history of Nigerian First Republic. In the first instance, the crisis provided the much needed opportunity for the NPC-controlled Federal Government to infiltrate the political space of the western region and create division among the rank of AG leadership. Second, the crisis showed unsustainability of rigid regional politics for a nascent state like Nigeria and vulnerability of Action Group as a regional party. Third, the crisis marked the beginning of the end of the Action Group. Fourth, it worsened the existing fear of mutual suspicion and ethnic politics in Nigeria. Fifth, the crisis was critical in Nigerian history as it created political heroes and villains in Nigerian history. More importantly, because of its accompanied anarchy, the crisis became one of the major excuses for the military interference in Nigerian politics.

The Nigerian Tribune and the Western Region Crisis

The *Nigerian Tribune* was established by Chief Obafemi Awolowo on November 16, 1949. The newspaper served as the mouth organ of the Action Group and the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a pan-ethnic union (Ayoade 1985; Lloyd 1955; Bascom 1966; Esedebe 1980; Bourgault 1995, 156; Adelani 1999; Adebaniwi 2004). The newspaper played morally reprehensible roles in the ethnic politics of the late colonial and early post-independence periods (Coleman 1986). It created a meta-narrative of political heroes and villains. The activities of the *Nigerian Tribune* in the late colonial and early post-independence periods have been discussed elsewhere (Alimi 2011a and b; 2012; 2015). The news reports, opinions, editorials and cartoons published by the *Nigerian Tribune* were characteristically sensational and ethically vicious. While the newspaper praised its founder and the national leader of the AG, Chief

Obafemi Awolowo as «the African's greatest state's man», it condemned Chief Akintola for what it considered as anti-party activities (*Nigerian Tribune*, May 15, 1962; Falana 1984).

In its news report of 17th May, 1962 the *Nigerian Tribune* described Chief Awolowo as a man «above insults». In an editorial, the newspaper painted Chief Akintola as «a disgraced leader» who engaged in anti-party activities (*Nigerian Tribune*, May 15, 1962; May 26, 1962). The anti-party activities of the premier were considered by the newspaper as the «most outrageous rape on democracy» (*Ibid*). The deposition of Akintola as the premier by the Governor of the region was not only considered as «A Happy Riddance» but also as «the only correct decision that should have been taken under the present circumstances» (*Nigerian Tribune*, May 26, 1962). In this same editorial the *Nigerian Tribune* congratulated the leadership of the Action Group «on the swiftness with which it has dealt with the indiscipline of Chief Akintola.» The editorial concludes:

All the charges of maladministration, anti-party activities and indiscipline of which the party found him guilty were only confirmed by his press conference of yesterday. Here was a Premier telling deliberate falsehood... Could any Premier have behaved more irresponsibly? There is no doubt at all that for the region as well as for the Action Group the exit of Chief Akintola is a happy riddance.

The crisis in the Western Region was exacerbated by the population census crisis of 1962/63. The 1962 census was the first census conducted by the nascent Nigerian state. The census became the platform where ethnic and regional politics was played. The previous census conducted in 1953 had provided population figures which served as the basis of federal revenue allocation and the number of seats that could represent each region. Thus, the 1962 population census was seen by the southern political parties as opportunities to end the northern hegemony in Nigerian federal government. Thus, each political party bent on manipulating the census results for the region it had political strength. The first results announced showed that the Eastern and Western Regions had experienced 70% increase in population unlike the 30% experienced in the North. The result was met with protest by the NPC-led government which alleged serious rigging, gross inaccuracy, manipulation and inflation of figures. By November 1963, a new census result that favoured the perpetuation of the Northern hegemony had been announced (Falola and Heaton 2008).

Significantly, in addition to the internal crisis in the AG, the census crisis also provided the basis for the need to form alliances that could be strong enough to either oust or court the NPC-ruling party. While the NPC and the Akintola-led Nigerian National Democratic Party with few small parties formed the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA),

the remnant of the AG with the minority parties (such as NEPU and the United Middle Belt Congress) in the north joined the NCNC to form the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). The first testing ground for these political courtships was the December, 1964 Federal Elections. The political campaigns and atmosphere that preceded the elections were characterised by intimidation, hooliganism, thuggery and violence against members of opposition parties. The crises were more intense in the north and the west. In the western region, UPGA candidates and supporters were abused and assaulted. Most of them were arrested, jailed and denied access to legal defence (Nnoli 1978; Falola and Heaton 2008). Not only that, both the NPC and the NNNDP controlled the federal and the Western Regional apparatuses that were used to obstruct and disrupt fair conduct of elections. One of the tactics employed by the NNA was officially declared some of their candidates unopposed and a few seats uncontested by the UPGA. In the West and the North for instance, more than 45% were declared unopposed to the NNA candidates, while the NCNC adopted similar method of rigging to win seats for their candidates in the East. In response to official electoral malpractices, the UPGA proposed to member parties to boycott the 1964 Federal Election. While the boycott was successful in the East, elections were conducted in the north, west and mid-west. The NNA claimed

Costruire un'immagine: il *Nigerian Tribune* e la creazione di eroi e antagonisti politici in Nigeria, 1960-1965

Il primo periodo post indipendenza in Nigeria è stato caratterizzato da sospetto reciproco e ostilità tra i principali partiti politici nel Paese, ma anche da accese faide personali tra i *leader* interni agli stessi partiti. La peggiore crisi si è avuta della regione occidentale della Nigeria come risultato di liti personali nel partito dominante nella regione, l'Action Group (AG). Centrale è stato il ruolo del

quotidiano *Nigerian Tribune*, sorta di megafono del partito, fondato dal suo *leader* Obafemi Awolowo. Attraverso i suoi editoriali, articoli e vignette, il giornale ha costruito una meta-narrazione politica di *leader* «buoni» e «cattivi», su cui si è formata l'opinione pubblica del tempo.

L'articolo rivela come lo scarso o inesistente senso della deontologia professionale abbia permesso di veicolare messaggi che non solo apparivano faziosi, ma a volte sembravano approvare l'uso della violenza. L'uso spregiudicato delle vignette, in particolare, è stato uno degli strumenti più efficaci di propaganda politica dell'AG per esaltare l'immagine del *leader* nazionale Awolowo e dipingere negativamente il rivale diretto, Chief Akintola.

a sweeping victory in the three regions while political stalemate remained in the East (Falola and Heaton 2008). In response to political alliance between the NNNDP and the NPC, and the orgy of political violence in the West, the *Nigerian Tribune* in one of its editorials titled "GRIM IRONY" notes:

The feudalistic idealism of the Northern People's Congress may be forced upon the people outside the geographical borders of the North through Akintola's NNNDP: the prerogative shall not extend far... You read acts of vandalism of NNNDP thugs daily. Why? Simple. Chief Akintola has proposed political marriage to Ahmadu Bello. The NNNDP under the leadership of Akintola, in its effort to tie the South to the apron string of the black prince of Sokoto has to rely preponderantly on crude tools to achieve this objective. It is as simple as that. For us however, there is a grim irony to all this. Bello can force "Akin Wonder" to commit political suicide. Bello also possesses power enough to kill him politically if he refuses to commit it. And so it has been show of POWER all along. As you read this, the next you read may be that the NNNDP thugs have burnt down the houses of UPGA adherents... (*Nigerian Tribune*, November 7, 1964).

The political atmosphere that preceded the Western Region Parliamentary election of 1965 was tensed. The election was crucial for both UPGA and NNA. While the election was a ready opportunity for UPGA to recapture power in the West, it was also an opportunity to gain total control of the whole southern Nigeria. Some people held the assumption that the victory of the UPGA could earn freedom for Chief Obafemi Awolowo from prison (Falana 1984). For the NNA, victory in the election would guarantee and perpetuate its political hegemony at the central as well as control of the Western Region. It would be a testing ground for the popularity of the NNNDP and Akintola led-government in the West. The roles of the *Nigerian Tribune* during the campaign for the election were not different from that of 1964 federal election. The newspaper devoted its headlines, editorials and cartoons to support UPGA but poured acidic comments on the activi-

ties of the NNA. The newspaper used its editorial pages to expose and emphasise political malpractices and violence committed by the NNA particular the NNNDP, while it ignored similar acts committed by the UPGA (Falola and Heaton 2008). There is no doubt that the political stance of the *Nigerian Tribune* matched the political philosophy of UPGA. In its editorial of September 20, 1965 titled «Democracy Raped», the *Nigerian Tribune* notes:

The NNNDP has designed so many unorthodox means to return to power. Without counting the cost, the party designed a master-plan to desecrate the ballot box. We are sure the people will DEFEND their inalienable rights and will CRUSH anything or anybody that may tend to steal right... The NNNDP will be indulging in self-deception if it presumes that it could rule for another five years by a resort to the use of brute force. It is too expensive for any human being to sit on an explosive keg of gun powder for five years. This is what the party wants to experiment...

Assessing the language and tones of the *Nigerian Tribune's* reports, editorials and cartoons, it is abundantly clear that the newspaper displayed poor professional ethics. Some of its headlines were as inciting as biased. For instance, some headlines read: «Oshun, Ife, Ilesha become troubled Spots, NNNDP THUGS HIT WEST»; «Mass Arrest of UPGA Men» (October 2, 1965); «Okpara goes home today to prepare for West battle, AKINTOLA OPTS OUT» (September 20, 1965). The use of some phrases such as «CRUSH anything or anybody» and «forced against the wall and tempted, in desperation, to take the law into their hands» by the newspaper indicated desperation and approval of violence.

Another approach used by the *Nigerian Tribune* to express sympathy for the AG political party and its supporter was through political cartoons. Although the newspaper's position and partisan politics had been carefully masked in its editorials, these could not be effectively concealed in its editorial cartoons. These cartoons were used to campaign for the AG, project positive image for the party's candidates, denigrated the NNNDP, condemned and mocked the personality of Chief Akintola. The following cartoons

exemplify the extreme level of partisan politics by the *Nigerian Tribune*.

Propaganda Cartoons and Politics of Ethnic (un)Patrotism

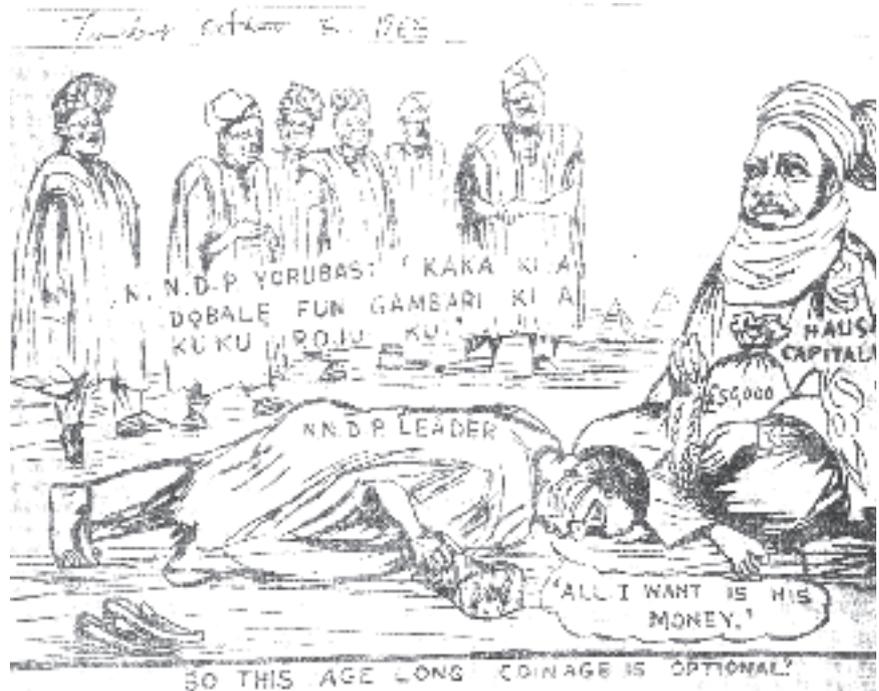
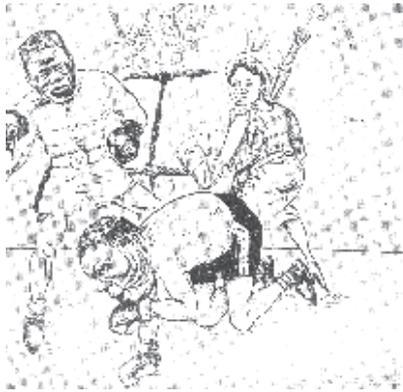
The cartoon in plates 1 and 2 were used by the *Nigerian Tribune* to demonstrate the Akintola's NNNDP politics of ethnic disloyalty to the people of western region. In plate 1 (p. 39), Chief Akintola and two other figures are presented in one panel cartoon. At the background of these figures are grazing cattle. Chief Akintola is appareled in Hausa/Fulani clothes crowned with turban. The two other figures in the cartoon are also contrasted by their clothes. The clothing contrasts are symbolically used to represent ethno-regional backgrounds of these figures. While one is clothed in full regalia of Hausa/Fulani monarchs with the label "FEDERAL LORD", the second is appareled in Yoruba "Agbada" with the label of "DEMO". The "FEDERAL LORD" is used figuratively to depict the former's high political status and power within Nigerian political structure, the latter wearing a despondent look and bearing a heavy chest with the inscription "WEST" and the advertisement of "for sale" on his head is metaphorically portrayed as a servant. "DEMO" was derived from the word "DEMOCRATIC" of the NIGERIAN NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY. It has different connotative meanings among the Yoruba people. It was politically used to mean deception. Hence, the saying: *bio ri owo mi ori inu mi, demo mo wa* (if you see my hands, you can't see my mind. I am in the "DEMO"). It also connotes evil. Hence, the NNNDP was regarded as an evil party.

The cartoonist tries to achieve two major objectives. In the first instance, he presents Akintola-NNNDP as an unpatriotic political party that bends on selling the WEST to the Federal government-led by the Hausa/Fulani elite. The utterance of the "FEDERAL LORD" («This my father's lost territory») in the cartoon reflects historical political and religious tensions between the north and the south. This requires amplification. The utterance is a reminiscence of Islamic jihad launched by the radical Fulani muslim clerics in 1804 from their base, Gudu. The jihad led to the establishment of a Caliphate with the capital at Sokoto.

Right: Plate 2: *Nigeria Tribune*, October 5, 1965.

Second on the Right: Plate 3: *Nigerian Tribune*, September 18, 1965.

Below: Plate 4: *Nigerian Tribune*, September 24, 1965.



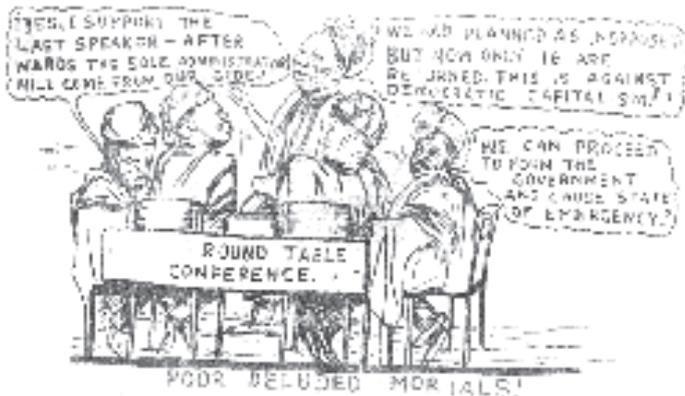
With the conquest of northern region with the exception of north-eastern controlled by the Sheu and pockets of states in central/middlebelt of Nigeria, the intention of the jihadist was to extend their military and religious adventure to other parts of the country until they had reached the sea. At the battle of Oshogbo in 1840, the advancing military machine of the Fulani jihadist was repulsed by the Ibadan forces (Johnson 1921). The failure of the jihadist to complete the conquest of the west was regarded by a few northern political and religious elite as a regrettable unfinished task. One of the most referenced quotation to this was the remark made by Tafawa Balewa (later the first Prime Minister of Nigeria). During the Nigerian Legislative Council of March, 1947, Tafawa Balewa notes, «I should like to make it clear to you that if the British quitted Nigeria now at this stage the Northern people would continue their interrupted conquest to the sea» (Nnoli 1978). Thus, the cartoonist attempts to show that the NNDP's alliance with the NPC is an opportunity to complete the task of territorial expansion and conquest started by the jihadist.

The second objective of the cartoonist is the emphasis on cultural contrast between people of the western and northern regions. This is achieved through emphasis on their dressing styles. The cartoonist satirically shows



that the only way to assure confidence of the northern people is to embrace their cultural heritage. Thus, Premier Akintola is apparelled in the northern clothes to show the level of courtship and the stage of alliance between the NNDP and the NPC. The cartoon in plate 1 also shows that even by 1965, the country still suffered from ethnic

politics of the pre-independence period. Thus, the newspaper makes recourse to ethnic jingoism to gain sympathy for the AG against the NNDP. The theme of cartoon in plate 2 is not radically different from that of plate 1. This cartoon depicts power relations and politics of resource allocation among regions, ethnic groups and political



Above: Plate 5: The Poor Deluded Mortals, *Nigerian Tribune*, October 4, 1965.

Plate 6: The Poor Deluded Mortals, *Nigerian Tribune*, October 1, 1965.

parties in Nigeria. A detailed analysis of this cartoon has been done elsewhere (See: Adejuwon and Alimi 2011).

Exodus from the Premier Lodge

The cartoon in plate 3 depicts Premier Akintola and his supporters evacuating the premier's lodge. All the characters in the cartoon carry different loads. This figuratively portrays two things. First, the *Nigerian Tribune* predicts defeat for the Akintola-led NNDP in the forthcoming election and evacuation of this group from the premier lodge. Second, it builds confidence and reassures the supporters of the AG in the west of the anticipated victory in the election.

Election Bout

The cartoon in plate 4 is a caricature of a postulated possible consequence of the 1965 western election. The *Nigerian Tribune* interpreted the 1965 Western House election not only as a competition but also a show of power between the UPGA and the NNA. The newspaper was optimistic and thus predicted a clear victory for the UPGA in the election. The cartoonist portrays the election as a sort of boxing match. In addition to physical strength, boxing competitions require exchange of punches by two pugilists. Although an interesting sport, boxing

involves inflicting serious pain on the opponent before achieving victory. The cartoonist uses the concept of antithesis to present his message. Unlike other sports, boxing is a form of sport that is full of entertainment but not without a peculiar negative feature. In entertaining the spectators, the boxers inflict and endure pains. In the cartoon, the leaders of the two major contending political parties for the election, Chief Akintola (NNDP) and Alhaji Dauda Soroye Adegbenro (AG) are pitted against each other in the boxing ring. Alhaji Adegbenro was a prominent leader of the Action Group. He served as the premier of the Western Region between May and December 1962. He was a member of Western House of Assembly and the House of Representative in the '50s (Falola and Genova 2009). A subjective but optimistic results of the election are painted by the cartoonist for the supporters of the AG. Alhaji Adegbenro is depicted as the victor who knocked out his opponent, Chief Akintola, in the political ring. In addition to the two pugilists, the cartoon features a woman apparently acting as an umpire. At the background are cheering spectators. This cartoon has significant implications for the contending parties and their supporters. While it creates an aura of optimism for the supporters of the AG, it seeks to create fear, despair and pessimism in the supporters of the NNDP. In conclusion, this could be viewed as a political propaganda and psychological warfare by the *Nigerian Tribune*.

The Poor Deluded Mortals

This is another political propaganda cartoon. There are five characters in this cartoon. In addition to Chief Akintola, the remaining four characters dress in agbada and caps. This feature and the tribal marks on their cheeks reveal their Yoruba ethnic group and the western regional background. The cartoonist conveyed his message through a combination of textual theme "Round Table Conference" with a circular curvature of the seated characters. The characters in the "Round Table Conference" are all members of the NNDP. The message in the cartoon is rendered more plainly through a conversational textual style. The focus of the discussion is a political strategy and calculated efforts to rig the forthcoming election. The conversation claims that the NNDP is planning to edge and screen out their opponents from other parties. It also shows the alternative plan of the party. That is, in the case of loss, to create political anarchy that could result in another state of emergency in the region. This, is also beneficial for the NNDP in that the sole administrator could only come from the party. The title of the cartoon "Poor Deluded Mortals" summarises the message of the *Nigerian Tribune*.

The cartoonist skilfully arranges the characters in a circular shape to reflect the globosity of a round table seating. Little emphasis is placed on the background while prominence is given to the characters in the cartoon. This is achieved by careful blend of thick and light ink for the foreground and the background. The

cartoonist carefully captures the mood of seriousness through detailed attention to facial expression and body gesture.

Under the Jackboot

This is another propaganda cartoon. The cartoon features Chief Akintola making an announcement with a megaphone. Under his feet are a group of people groaning for relief. The inscription on the premier's clothes reads «N.N.D.P. Nationalist», while the message from his megaphone reads «The Nigeria I want is where no one is oppressed». The motive of the *Nigerian Tribune* is very pellucid. The newspaper attempts to portray the contradictions in the political ideology and actions of the Akintola-led NNNDP. It achieves this through the use of antithesis. For the newspaper, while the party claims to be the vanguard of human rights, its activities are oppressive and not public-friendly. The looks on the faces of the public under Akintola feet are characteristically depressed and frustrated. The objects of this kind of cartoon are to create a downslope image for Akintola and NNNDP and warn people of the west against Akintola. For its role in partisan politics and publishing sensational stories, the *Nigerian Tribune* did not go unscathed. The newspaper became the victim of constant invasion and raiding by the Police. For instance, the newspaper was raided about 10 times by the police between February 5, 1964 and January 6, 1966 (Alimi 2011b; Suberu 1989). For publishing an inciting editorial titled «Where Do We Go from Here» which charged the NNNDP-led government of corruption, the editor of the newspaper, Mr Ayo Ojewumi (Pen Atlanta) was sentenced to a prison term of ten years. The *Nigerian Tribune* was also included among the four newspapers banned from circulation by Western Region district council in November, 1965.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the involvement of the *Nigerian Tribune* in partisan politics and its loyalty to the regional party, the Action Group, and its founder, Chief Awolowo exemplify how popular press could become socially irresponsible. Through its inciting editorials,

news reports and cartoons, the newspaper adopted a meta-narrative style to manufacture and launder images of political actors in Nigeria. While it poured encomium on the National leader of the Action Group, it created a villainous image for Chief Akintola, a strong political rival of its (*Nigerian Tribune's*) owner. As a major and the most circulated newspaper in the west during the period, the newspaper's reports became major factor in the future political narratives of the region. Within pages of political history of the region, while Chief Awolowo continues to enjoy attention of historians and political analysts, Chief Akintola remains at the fringe of narratives and footnote of history of the region. Thus, this crisis has remained a darkest episode and created unhealed wound in the history of the region. It stigmatised the region as «Wild Wild West» and the *Nigerian Tribune* as *Nigerian Tetebuyan* (eager to abuse). Following October 11, 1965 election was a period of political violence and anarchy in the region. This continued till January 1966 when the Military in a bloody *coup d'état* that truncated the First Republic in Nigeria. Thus, began Military rule in Nigeria.

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