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The Modern Igbo Man and Quest for Freedom

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Abstract

The modern Igbo man has through the decades been beset with one type of problem or the other. He has known multi-quam problems: poverty, ignorance, marginalization, genocide, betrayal, war etc. It is the onus of this paper to examine our operative concepts, Igbo man's set of unfreedoms, and the shades of Igboman's freedom and fuel his desire for freedom and compel him to aspire and become not only free but more enterprising.

Key words: Igbo man, freedom, unfreedom

Introduction

Freedom has always been a cherished value by different peoples, races at every point in time. As far as the modern Igbo is concerned, the turbulence of this time is that of the soul, in the human spirit. This ugly situation the Igbo find themselves in today is quite, a recurrent one in human history.

The Igbo have made lots of struggles, as many others have sought for centuries, the opportunities to live .in peace and make living worthwhile as other people elsewhere. The Igbo struggles since independence of the Nigerian nation has remained a perennial quest for freedom. But the situation today has a new sense of urgency, as there are unprecedented frustrations and dangers created by unprecedented plots and ploys of other Nigerians. As a matter of fact the observance of Igbo day, and the agitation for Igbo presidency in the 2003 general elections in Nigeria did stamp the consciousness of freedom in the minds of modern Igbo and points to it quest in Nigerian politics tomorrow. What is required presently is a self-conscious awareness of this human situation, condition or predicament in order to calm the turbulence and its other component forces.

At present, new anxieties and frustrations are churned out as the revolution in man's aspirations continues, and unprecedented choices are desired and required. In Nigeria, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the leaders, the means and measures the leadership has used to achieve the goals which are dear to it. Many values and standards have disappeared; trust and honesty on which human relationship is based are disappearing altogether. Nigerians no longer feel but know that they have lost every sense of direction {with the unprecedented rigging of the 2003 general elections) as every old compass has proved to be a poor guide under the influence of the new forces designed, engineered and pulled at will by the leadership.

The Igbo need realize that they are living on the Planet - (Earth), and in Nigeria, that is where they are, and have their being. Problems which face Igbo people in the grand scheme of Nigeria include, ignorance, poverty, disease, marginalization, integration, lop-sided political structure in Nigeria, ethnic conflicts, development and fate of democracy in Nigeria etc. be it as it may, this is our matrix, they are some of the problems about which the Igbo people must tackle, think about, make choices and take action. These are the

Igbo people's concerns and responsibilities.

But despite popular yearnings for freedom by the Igbo people, the precise meaning of freedom in the Igbo context is most often elusive, and not properly articulated by Igbo thinkers and philosophers. Freedom in Igbo context deserves proper analysis, and its horizons identified to enable the Igbo populace to understand the character of their struggles in the Nigerian polity.

This paper is geared towards investigating freedom in the context of the Igbo people's struggles in Nigeria. Firstly, we have to undertake a brief philosophic exposition of and reflection of freedom: then point out the ingredients of freedom; and point out the main areas the modern Igbo people pursue and live out their freedom. As soon as occasion permits, we will hand in the conclusion to this paper.

Freedom: what is it?

Freedom is a slippery term, elusive indeed, not easy to define although it is a primary value among men and constitute a watchword among many people. Everyone wants it, labours for it and craves for it. It is the 'goose' that lay the golden eggs. It is a socio-political idea which is of great importance in practical action. According to Adler (1968) it has been the battle cry of revolutionists and counter-revolutionists, of reformers and reactionaries, of authoritarians and anarchists, of utopist and men who fear all forms of enthusiasm (5).

Grisez German et al (1974) are of the same view, they write:

Freedom; everybody wants it. Poets praise it. Politicians promise or proclaim it. Some people have given their lives to win it for themselves or others. (1)

The word 'freedom' has many nuances of meaning. Although its meaning is mostly academic and abstract in good many philosophical books, for the reformers, revolutionists and men along the street its meaning is not abstract for it is located within concrete situations. There are common elements in freedom; the difference is made by the kind of freedom one talks about.

Grisez et al (1974) hold

True, there are common elements: for example, as applied

to persons, the meaning of freedom includes at least someone acting, the activity, and something else - a factor potentially in opposition to the activity. (1)

You can then see that the meaning of freedom tend to coincide with effective action. Men see themselves as free in the words of Hannah Arendt, (1977) as long as they act, neither before nor after; for to be free and to act are the same (154)

The freedom most akin and proper to man is the freedom to determine one's self through choices. This sort of freedom is not abstract, academic rather it is concrete and practical. Little wonder, you see human history and world develop through the progress of human consciousness towards or of freedom. Is it not therefore self-evident that the reason or rationale for every human activity be it in politics, society etcetera is freedom. In short, human history dances the tune of freedom either in support or in denial. Ogugua (1993) captured it best when he scribbled that man is a 'yes' and a 'No' to situations which make him human and treat him as such and to situations which deny him of his humanity respectively.

It is because we hold freedom to be self-evident in social relations that laws, rules and regulations are laid down, to guide human beings in the exercise of their freedom in order not to allow it turn into license.

It is now time for us to distinguish between meanings of freedom and eventually see the level occupied by the freedom located in effective action. The simplest and 'lowest' kind of freedom is the absence of physical constraint that is 'freedom from'. It can be qualified as physical freedom. This freedom is common to all things and beings, inanimate objects, animals or infants have it. Where there is no constraint an action can be performed; where there is constraint no action can be performed. This kind of freedom is a matter of degree, a measure of this freedom is essential for one to act morally. But to talk of 'absolute physical freedom' is to show that one is confused.

Freedom can mean doing as one pleases in so far as there is absence of social demands and constraints. But it is limited to a sort of action. Grisez et al (1974) hold:

This kind of freedom is proper to action performed as a means to some end which is separate from the performance itself, an end not included in the culmination of the behavior (3).

At this level, one is free to do as he pleases to the extent that he desires the end to be achieved and that some measures and means be applied in order to achieve this desired end. There is need for calculation and reflection on the means and end(s) in question. This cannot be the highest kind of freedom as immature people may tend to think for it is in opposition to responsibility, which are obligations imposed on one by the society and groups or even one's humanity, but if everybody were to act as each pleases, then the society would collapse.

Freedom in action presupposes being free positively to be unrestrained by any kind of obstruction. It does involve freedom of choice; when it becomes effective, it can be transmuted, translated into action. It is not common to think of preventing one to do what he is physically able to do. According to Professor R.F.A. Moernle(1945), Having the power to do something means "social permission to do what on the psycho-physical plans one can do", (1)

Freedom has become an important value in every human society and man sees it as his right and an essential feature of his humanity. In short, an unfree man has little worth and no dignity. To deny man or groups freedom is a signpost that revolution, upheaval or crisis is in the pipe line; for men have resented impediments or constraints in form of laws, traditions, rules or even regulations moreso when they are anti- human.

A critical look at life shows that 'freedom from' though different from 'freedom to' is not inseparable from it. The later is positive freedom; it aids one to realize his potentialities through effective action (choices). At a higher level, there is ideal freedom, creative and political freedom, the first concerns freedom which aids one to act in accordance with an ideal or ideals. Ideal freedom and the freedom to do as one pleases are compatible; for one is both free to do what ought to be done and what he/one wishes to do respectively.

Creative freedom resides not in the agent it can involve emergence of something novel and outside the agent. Grisez et al write (1974) refers to the

freedom present when circumstances and factors which tend toward repetition are overcome and that which is new emerges.(6)

Creative freedom is distinguishable from political freedom as the latter concerns one doing as one wishes to do, when applied to peoples, groups, societies and not individuals. Groups, nations etc fight for freedom, the individual only participate in the struggle or fight for freedom, Political freedom concerns one's act as a citizen and not necessarily as an individual.

Freedom at a higher level means self-determination; this is the freedom ethics concerns itself as such with. It involves the freedom to shape, organize and determine one's self by one's choices. According to Grisez et al, (1974)

Self-determination refers instead to the state of affairs in which, despite external pressures and prior causes which can and do influence our choices, we retain at least some options of choosing or not choosing, of choosing one thing rather than another. (9)

It is only in cases one has the option to choose one and not the other that real choice exists, and that one can be said to have acted morally or not.

The Igbo quest for freedom is not academic and/or abstract, it is contextualized, within Nigeria, hence it is practical and in the concrete. Consequently, it entails 'freedom from' and 'freedom to', as both make up one thing, hence are sides of the same coin. To essay one's best to get at 'freedom from' introduces immediately 'freedom to'. Have you seen that 'freedom from' is weak, blind and blame, and only with meaning when it is matched or associated with 'freedom to'. Let us direct our gaze to our main area of concern, namely 'Igbo freedom'.

Igbo Freedom

Freedom has been the preoccupation of the Igbo man for donkey years, as it has been that of other people worldwide. It was a battle cry for the modern Igbo, this culminated in the declaration of republic of Biafra in the year 1967, and presently in the formation of Bakassi, Massob, and serious yearning for Igbo president in the 2003 elections. This inquiry will eventually boil down to x-raying 'freedom from' and 'freedom to' in the Igbo context.

There is no doubt that there is lack of proper understanding and articulation of what freedom means to the Igbo man in the 1920's, 1940's, 1960's, 2000, and even today. This lack of focus, vision and togetherness creates a kind of dilemma, confusion and chaos in contemporary Igbo society; and every other group has always caught on it to ride on the back of the Igbo nation and man. A pivotal question raises its head now, what is the Igboman or nation struggling to overcome since the independence of Nigeria till this day?

Freedom From

Professor C.B. Okolo writes: What rational beings resent are obstacles to effective choices (on their part), more so when the obstacles are as a result of the free actions of others (257).

Man regards himself as free when he effectively carries out his wishes and desires within a range of options without interference from others. When the range of one's effective choices is limited by any factor such as law, custom, tradition, authority or other people he sees himself as not free or caged.

As we can see there is 'freedom from' that is without, that is external and there is one that is within, that is internal., With regard to the former, we understand the Igbo man struggle in Nigeria, to involve struggle against hatred, marginalization, ostracism, intimidation, etc, this shows that the 'other' Nigeria is his enemy; in the North, the Igbo man is massacred whenever there is ethnic conflict among Northerners, as often as religious conflict springs up. In the South, he is not a bedfellow, Awolowo advised Gowon to face Igbo people with hunger, as it is a weapon of war. He did. Awolowo again, advised Gowon to force the Igbo people wretched, by freezing their bank accounts, and properties - this gave rise to abandoned property, he did. 'Freedom from' constitutes and remains till date a primary value for the Igbo man. Freedom is alive, and active. It is very dynamic, a struggle against odds. It is never gotten on a platter of gold. To Robert Hartman (1953), freedom progresses dialectically against its own obstacles. It is never given: it must always be fought for (xxvi).

It has now with the trend of things in Nigerian society, how the Igbo people fare in the scheme of things, often side lined, side tracked and humiliated as

if accursed, that they have come to believe that it is only in conditions of genuine freedom and 'independence' that these aspirations and dreams or even vision can be realized, and the genius of the Igbo people fully expressed.

Although the Igbo people have suffered so much from the 'other', the Igbo man is part of his problem for he is his own enemy. This idea is implicit in Chukwudum Ikeazor's (2003) statement below:

Few people in Africa have been as unfortunate as the Igbo by virtue of their relationships with other people. Misunderstood and misrepresented, they were also mismanaged, (by British, Nigerian and their own Igbo leaders). (15)

You see Igbo leadership is part and parcel of Igbo man's problem and heartache. The Igbo people therefore can only become strong for no other group can make them strong, by fighting doggedly against every obstacles to the Igbo mans' freedom.

We need to realize in truth, for the gospel of Jesus says the truth will set you (us) free, that there is marginalization, hatred, intimidation, ostracism that are internal or domestic. Again, the Igbo people have ignorance, disease, poverty as overgrown enemies. These enemies suck blood from the Igbo people and leave them anaemic. In Igbo nation, there has been concatenation of social and political aberrations, upheavals, corruption of different magnitude, suppression of democracy and voice of the people, oppression of the masses, deadly, inordinate, morbid and devilish calculated ambition for power, 'sit-tightism' in office, physical assassination of rivals in different sectors in the society most especially politics. (Imo State prior to the 2003 elections in Nigeria took the lead in political assassinations of politicians). Exploitation, domination, intimidation or enslavement irrespective of who does it is bad. Whatever therefore that works to prevent Igbo consciousness from actualization of the Igbo freedom and genius, be it self-created or imposed by the other is a barrier to our true freedom and real existence.

There is crisis of leadership among the Igbo people. The 'Nze na Ozo' traditional system has lost its grip. Leadership anchored on merit and proven track record of service has gone. Today, the financially empowered with a

craze for position and power, pushed by their complexes hijacked chieftaincy titles. Titlemania took over the Igbo society, many towns out of stupidity and lack of foresight crowned many dubious people 'Igwe.' This polluted the Igbo political firmament. The scripture says 'righteousness exalts a nation ... "How then can an unrighteous 'Igwe' exalt a community? Is it not to live in slavery?'

There is crisis in our organizational structure. We have failed over the years to organize effectively. Organizations are formed to enlarge individuals' abilities. Likewise if we cannot enlarge our abilities by coming together, we can become individual superstars, and yet fail as a people. If we cannot come together and discuss, then we are still 'children' because we have not mastered our egos, why should we allow our egos to collide and cause our people havoc.

The 2003 election proved that the Igbo leadership and organization do not have any backbone. In the words of Ikeazor (2003)

Without effective organization, the Igbo nation will continue to stagnate and lurch from one crisis to another while spouting the usual constellation of individual superstars (15)

There is no doubt there is crisis of relationship between the Igbo people and the other. A lot of reasons can be adduced for this; it can be enviousness, inability of the Igbo people to manage their relationship with others skilfully etc. The qualities of the Igbo people such as hard work, aggressiveness, arrogance, clannishness, community consciousness, egalitarian, individualism, competitiveness, desire for achievement and success, succeeding where natives fail, etc might be at the ground of this crisis, as the other might be less disposed to relate properly with them.

State creation fuelled the crisis of disunity among the Igbo people. Many see the states created as the basis for consciousness, and built real differences along that line. They are in error. Anambra, Imo, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu States cannot be a people, rather the Igbo nation is a people, and real consciousness should be built along that line. Some clever and self-centred individuals in Igbo nation merchant divisionism to get what they want.

As all these prevent the emergence of Igbo consciousness and independent

existence of the Igbo people, these factors or forces need be handled properly so as to make a way for self-actualization of the Igbo nation.

Freedom To

'Freedom to' is cannot be separated from 'freedom from', there are two sides of a coin. 'Freedom to' completes the dialectic. Freedom to' is concerned with the ability of man to actualize himself through effective action, ie choices, actions and self-determination. It is through this way that man obeys the injunction of God in Genesis, to subdue the world and have dominion. 'Freedom to' helps man .to cultivate himself, his world, master it and humanize it. Man struggles for freedom not only to overcome obstacles but to work himself and society (world) into fulfilment. Man is a dynamic being, hence is active and alive, he himself can make himself so. Man is a being that belongs to the kingdom of ends; it is not surprising Immanuel Kant admonished us to treat man as an end and never as a means. It is through the resources of the Igbo culture and with it that the Igbo man can actualize his potentials and tissue of possibilities he is.

In our context, for instance, the Igbo aspirations, dreams and goals point towards self-development, actualization and realization in the Igbo world. The Igbo people want to be independent, to be himself, and determine his destiny by controlling, developing, and shaping his world in tune with the Igbo Vision, dreams, resources and genius. It necessitates being on one's own, being responsible, and self- determination. To Erich Fromm (1973) freedom means independence which is based on man's standing on his own feet, using his own powers and relating himself to the world productively.(61)

Self-determination is the third level of freedom with regard to effective action. It involves owing one's existence, being oneself, acting for one's self and mastering one's self. This is what Hegel meant by "self- contained existence". For him, "I am free when I am within myself (23). The factors which militate against the realization of the Igbo nation are sources of unfreedom for the Igbo man.

For the Igbo man to define himself, actualize and be himself, he must be free from the obstacles within and without or else he cannot know the "self-contained existence" of Hegel which is imperative, in his bid to prove mastery and his ability to humanize his environment (world).

Shades of Igbo Freedom

Psychological Freedom

In Nigeria, the Igbo are hounded, hunted and killed at different points and time. It is common to hear that football and antagonism to the Igbo are things which unite Nigerians. Ikeazor (2003) pointed out poignantly:

At no time has Nigeria experienced the strength of national unity as it did during the Biafran-war-politicians, intellectuals, military officers of diverse and usually competing ethnic groups, large and small united to fight Biafra, which many perceived as an Igbo project (15).

Irrespective of other damages meted on the Igbo, the damage done to the minds of the Igbo is devastating and huge; as it had and still has its stultifying effects on the Igbo man's creative and imaginative resources and powers. Being side lined, side tracked, humiliated, marginalized, cheated, cajoled, made caricature of; and condemned to passive role, lesser social status; made to play the second fiddle the Igbo have developed all sorts of complexes and in the extreme fear (phobia).

The effects of the trauma the Igbo have suffered in the bid to hold Nigeria in unity are more insidious than every effect or combination of the social, political and economic effects of this maltreatment of the 'Ndi Igbo'. Because they are buried in the minds and consciousness of the people, it is always hard and more difficult to eradicate, as it has gone into the fabric of the Igbo peoples' constitution. It is not untrue that the other in the Nigerian polity has relegated the Igbo in every aspect of life. Or we can ask is the Igbo properly represented in the fourth republic for instance? Obasanjo refused to do it.

Problems connected with the political, social, economic etc aspects of our life, and those spilling from these areas remind the Igbo that they are inferior, the defeated in the civil war, the always cheated, toothless bulldog who cannot bite and already made bride of the other nationalities.

What else do we need to attest that a primary obstacle to the self-realization of the Igbo is lack of mental freedom. The Igbo need to get their minds fine tuned, ordered so as to have a vision and focus; for true and authentic

freedom is of the mind. What happens to one's mind is more important than what happens around somebody. When the Igbo have won psychological or mental freedom, they will be more poised and disposed to fight other obstacles and with enthusiasm and zeal already weaved, goals set out will be realized.

Political Freedom

The Igbo have not desirously pursued concrete freedom in all their political aspirations. It was the manifest determination of the Igbo in the year 1967 due to inhuman treatment the 'other' meted on them, to be completely and politically free that plunged Nigeria into a civil war that lasted for three long and gruesome years with its attendant evils.

The next time the Igbo thought of freedom with a political qualification is in the fourth republic. As the first tenure of Obasanjo was about to end, the Igbo made 'moves' for the emergence of Igbo president in 2003 election. As at the time I am writing, the presidential election has come and gone; and Obasanjo was proclaimed the winner in an election, that was Kangarooic, centrally, deeply and openly rigged.

The Igbo failed to read the hand writing on the wall, to understand the needs of the hour in Nigeria, interpret the mind of the other, and to articulate properly an Igbo agenda as the Yoruba, Hausa etc have done since decades. As such, the failure became a sore wound in the Igbo consciousness. The Igbo political elite have proved themselves selfish, over-ambitious, money minded, and lacking moral probity or any sense of unity of purpose. They were given porridge (Esau's Kind) and they sold their destiny. They were paid to fight, run down, and even murder one another and they did. (Tomorrow the expected goodies might not even arrive. Who loses? Of course, the greatest loser is the Igbo people).

The Hausa people, South-South people and others were shouting 'give Igbo people a chance', and some clever, money hungry billionaires and millionaires of Igbo extract, were busy sabotaging this clarion call for a new dispensation. Stan Chu Ilo (2003) writes; This is not unexpected among a people whose egalitarian nature is well etched in their mode of thought and in their social organisation (31) No state apparatus in the South East of Nigeria can feel that it is free and respected even if it is of the P .D.P; any state mentioned above can only be free if it has independent existence,

which it can only have in a healthy Igbo nation. Therefore political freedom for the Igbo is the primary and onerous task of every Igbo man and woman. (We have been in Egypt for long, the Pharaohs that knew our history are no longer around, as such we have as a matter of necessity to leave Egypt) and think along with MASSOB.

We need political independence in order to cater for all other aspects of our life that have been neglected by the 'other'. Nkrumah says "seek ye first the political kingdom and all else will be added unto you". There is no doubt, that existence in Nigeria had deprived the Igbo of effective, active and proper participation in shaping his own destiny, future and the world.

Presently, the Igbo carry their burden as objects and not even as subjects, because they have been made 'means' and no longer operate as 'ends', they are losing sense of what a participatory and democratic society their forebears practiced looked like, on this score they tend to think less of the prize of freedom; and cost and price for 'self-contained existence'.

The Igbo need not remain powerless in the political arena, for it has unsettling effects. The Igbo will rather create awareness among themselves, build up consciousness of their people and know and embrace their responsibility to rediscover "a new Igbo nation", though complex, difficult and cumbersome it is a task that must be done if the Igbo must know self-actualization and eventually serve as Messiah to the black world. Nigeria as huge as she is could not do this.

Economic Freedom

The Igbo know that the poverty and backwardness of the Igbo states in Nigeria are as a result of the inferior status given to these states by the 'other' in Nigeria. On this score, they see economic freedom as central to their struggle though they are aware that it cannot come save they are politically independent. When the Igbo seceded in 1967, the other Nigerians did not let them go because of the Igbo oil, which has served Nigeria for decades. (This oil developed Lagos, Abuja, Northern states, Western states etc. This same oil accounted for the trillions, billions and millions of dollars in the bank accounts of our ex- leaders in different countries of the world).

Is it difficult to see the Igbo states or states in the South-East of Nigeria robbed as they lay the golden egg (oil) which feeds the Nigerian nation and

yet these areas remain a sorry sight. Many of these people go to bed hungry though acres of their land have been relinquished for mining of oil, and others devastated by oil spillage etc.

It is an open secret that no real freedom exists where there is economic dependence. Do you know that hunger, poverty, disease, exploitation are indices of unfreedom? As the Igbo continue to be subject to these, they remain less free. The Igbo need a new socio- economic order that will be self-reliant. How would it come? It can only come about if Igbo succeed in being completely free, that is have a 'self- contained existence'. That is, have freedom from economic exploitation and strangulation of Nigerian nation.

Cultural Freedom

The Igbo also struggle to free themselves and their nation from the Nigerian cultural styles which have turned our values over board. There is need for urgent call to carry out a crusade for freedom in the bid to build up anew the Igbo culture.

Nigeria imbibed from the colonialists a lot of values which have imperilled Igbo culture, it is our responsibility now, to take active part in rediscovering our culture, and build up an Igbo destiny and personality. It is the duty of the Igbo to project the Igbo culture and world in the comity of nations; for we can only get at authentic development through the resources of our own culture. (Think of the Japanese revolution in organizational management. Think of the Ujamaa of Nyerere of Tanzania. There are all development based on cultural ideas or concepts).

Despite all the bewildering tendencies which hurt the Igbo, they have come out more forceful, and courageous. This is due to the Igbo genius which can be ascribed to the Igbo idea of 'Ikenga' and 'Ofo na ogu'. Stan Chu (2003) writes:

Ofo na Ogu is the creative genius of the race that has given birth to some of the greatest intellectuals and religious leaders of all time(31)

Ilo appears not to have taken the cult of 'Ikenga' which is the cult of the right hand into account. 'Ikenga' is concerned with success, achievement, greatness which is as a result of hard work. Hard work is positive in and by itself, even if 'Ofo' is downplayed, the Igbo genius will still emerge owing to

the fact that every race in the world has a sense of justice.

It is through the reliance on the 'cult of Ikenga' that the Igbo are said to be capable of teasing water out of stone. They are everywhere in the whole wide world. They are competitive, courageous and egalitarian individualistic in their operations. (Is it surprising then that the Lebanese could not pitch their tent comfortably in Igboland?)

If the Igbo must survive in the world today, they must develop and catch on this Igbo genius, which is an ontological and social construct which make Igbo people who and what they are. The Igbo cherish an array of values: love, truth, honesty, integrity, tolerance, deep sense of religion, enterprising spirit, respect for life, sense of community etc.

There is need to fine tune, and lay emphasis on these values as the Igbo people are far from prizing human life, or else why the incessant assassination of people in Igbo land? These values when practiced will supplant the insensitivity which has made us lose sense of not only our kinship, compassion and sense of solidarity but our naked humanity. Our struggle for cultural freedom will lay claim to our culture, destiny, and ideals as the true path to Igbo-identity, Igbo-self knowledge, Igbo- survival, and Igbo self-realization and actualization.

Conclusion

Freedom for the Igbo is not abstract or an academic concept. It is a practical thing, pursued in a historical setting or situation. It is pursued at every level of life.

Although the Nigerian nation has not recognized the worth and value of the Igbo, the Igbo know that they have value and worth, and crave to be seen as ends and no longer as means to an end, as already made bride for every Fala and Musa.

The Igbo want to belong to the Igbo nation as they do not seem to belong to Nigeria or else why the intimidation and marginalization? The Igbo want to be free, independent to run the Igbo nation, formulate visions, policies so as to control their destinies and realize the Igbo dream and goal.

Igbo quest for freedom need be properly grounded on self- determination.

No man or state is free to rule or determine the destiny of another without the other's consent. Tom Mboya (1963) pointed out: ... the right of self-determination is God-given and no man or nation is chosen by God to determine the destiny of others. (208)

The purpose of the Igbo struggle is the realization of the complete, unabridged and unconditional independence which will automatically transform the Igbo nation and build a richer society that would give the Igbo long awaited and solicited joy and happiness. This can then metamorphose into 'Igbo power' which will be a summation of all forces which the Igbo and possibly black world must use to survive in a world devastated by suppression and evil. The Igbo struggle for freedom is the move to be human in the world and be in a polity which will grant the Igbo, rights to life, property, free education; freedom of expression, right to work etc. It is indeed the struggles and efforts to actualize the Igbo dream, vision, personality and destiny; of course in an Igbo polity.

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