The Relevance of "Iwa Omoluabi" in Nation Building

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ABSTRACT

Nation building is one of the utmost concerns of every ideal nation. An ideal nation aims at growth; socially, politically, economically, and in no exception morally. If a nation claims to have grown by other standards but remains deficient in the moral aspect, it will definitely lead to the destruction of all other aspects of perceived growth. This is because morality is the pillar that binds the society of individuals together. This thus means that the prevalence of immoral characters in their various forms will inhibit national development which includes violence such as hooliganism, cultism, sexual assaults, thuggery and armed robbery/banditry etc. corruptions perpetrated in guises of nepotism, fraud, favoritism, tribalism, embezzlement of public funds, and political god-fatherism amongst many others are negative work forces that restricts nation building. The prevalence of these crimes and vices listed above is a sign that the reasons for a retarded nation are not far-fetched as they are agents of retrogressions. Several challenges plaguing the Nigerian nation are as a result of the consistent perpetration of crimes in its various patterns and façade which are eating deep into the fabrics of the nation such that she is classified as one of the most corrupt and under-developed countries. In bid to cushion the rate at which the nation is deteriorating, there is need to implement a moral system that prescribes the right kind of actions and proscribe the wrong kind of actions; if the objectives of nation building will be achieved. The crux of this paper is to offer the African

system of morality in view of the Yoruba quintessential iwa Omoluabi as a therapy and panacea for nation building.

INTRODUCTION

As perceived from the epoch of the 1990s, "nation building refers to the set of actions undertaken by national and/or international actors to establish, reform and strengthen state institutions where these have seriously been eroded or are missing" (Caplan, 2005 cited in Nwokedi and Ngwu, 2018: 6). Brinkerhoff (2007 cited in Nwokedi and Ngwu, 2018: 6) highlights that "key goals of state building include provision of security, establishment of the rule of law, effective delivery of basic goods and services through functional formal state institutions, and generation of political legitimacy for the (new) set of state institutions being built." Nation building is also the formation of national identity using the power of the state. It aims at unifying the people within the state, such that they remain politically, socially, economically, etc. stable and viable. Any nation that is not growing is known by its drastic level of backwardness in their social, economic, political etc. spheres.

Nation building is a task towards an all round national development. Development in this wise, is a procedure whereby an institution is transmogrified into a more firm and structured, competent and effectual form such that it is capable of meeting human desires and wants. In other wise, it is perceived as a premeditated process set up by groups of people, society and country to acquire transformations economically, socially and politically in bid to strike a mutual goal (Gauba, 2003). More explicitly, Von Bogdandy *et al.* (2005: 586) define nation building as:

> …the most common form of a process of collective identity formation with a view to legitimizing public power within a given territory. This is an essentially indigenous process which

> often not only projects a meaningful future but also draws on existing traditions, institutions, and customs, redefining them as national characteristics in order to support the nation's claim to sovereignty and uniqueness.

Though nation building is rather a complex and not a complicated task, it is expected that the Nigerian nation over the years since her political attainment of independence from the British monarchical system would have grown to be a sturdy industrialized nation that would grasp the attention of other nations. However, paradoxically, since independence, the Nigerian nation has been pulling all gears to build her nation but to insignificant echelon. While the factors militating against nation building vary and are vast, they are not farfetched and exhaustive to ethno-religious conflicts, gender inequality, boarder crises, poverty, natural disasters, inadequate infrastructures, corruption, bad governance, crimes, violence and insecurities. Much more underlying for national deterioration are morally inclined exhibitions. This is because humans are moral agents and are to be held morally responsible and accountable. The task of nation building is the responsibility of every member of the Nigerian nation but in instances whereby the moral agent that should build the nation is morally corrupt, it will be impossible to build a morally upright nation. In this wise, a morally sick man will make up a morally sick nation and a morally sick nation will inhibit nation building.

However, there has been an unrelenting attempt to checkmate the perpetration and prevalence of immorality in the society by the various strata of government but seldom proactive steps has been taken to curb it even as agencies set up to look into the menace are guilty of immoral perpetrations. Turaki (1989) highlighted that right from 1975 to the contemporary there has been an increasing national anxiety over the question of morality and ethics. Olubunmi (2011: 4) cites that:

> General Obasanjo's Jaji declaration was more of a treatise on moral, political and philosophy. This declaration is a call to all Nigerians to take national morality and ethics seriously. In contrast was President Shehu Shagari Ethical Revolution, also General Buhari tried to checkmate immorality with War Against Indiscipline (WAI) but it is sad to note that this evil still persists. These moral crises have eaten deep into the fabric of the nation and pose tremendous barrier to the moral, spiritual, social and economic development of the Nigerian populace.

The rate at which moral values are been trampled upon without sense of remorse is indeed symptom that the moral judgment of the moral agents who make up the society is sick and needs a moral therapeutic care. The hallmark of its effects is the destruction of lives and properties which in turns limit the extent to which the citizens of the nation can offer their potentials to build the nation. The level of corruption and crimes has increased to the extent that calling for a change will be the vulnerability of being termed an enemy.

Moral Decadence: The Nigerian Situation

Succinctly, moral decadence as it name implies means moral decay or depravity. It is the failure to adhere to the codes of conduct of a society (Odeh, 2013). In similitude, Muraino and Ugwumba (2014) affirm that moral decadence is the process of exhibiting characters that expresses low moral standards. It suffices for the non compliance with the moral values in a particular society or defiance from the accepted code of conduct; a collapse in keeping the societal traditions, values, beliefs, norms and ethical standards. Defiance from moral codes hampers the progress, peace, unity and development of the nation. Wherever, moral codes are not strictly adhered to, destruction is not far-seen and this is not distant for the

Nigerian state. In attempt to catch a glimpse of what moral decadence is using the Nigerian situation, it is expedient to offer an ophthalmic survey to the assertion of Ilori (1992: 58) who posited that:

> Moral integrity is going down through bribery and corruption, nepotism, organized robbery, violence, forgeries in financial institutions, examination malpractices in schools. Indiscipline has become conspicuous in natural life through absenteeism and lateness to work, lack of dedication to duty, discourteous in hospitals, shops and public offices, disrespects for law and order in various sectors of the economy, organized thuggery and drug abuse. A materialistic outlook is permeating national life, showing itself in cheating, hoarding and selfishness, while the nation as a whole continues to be poorly fed, badly housed, raggedly clothed and ridden with diseases. These developments have crept into our national life.

However, decadence in morality is a social problem. Moral decadence in the Nigerian context is such that leaves no exception of either public or private institutions. "The cankerworm of corruption and other fraudulent practices has permeated all nook and corners of most Local Government Areas. Most people are engulfed in the problem of corruption has eaten deep into the moral fabric of our society and has become so passive and intractable" (Mahuta, Abdullahi and Aliyu 2013:111). In Nigeria contemporarily, it is all evident to find from the various news outlets of how corrupt the country is; proving the low level of compliance to sound moral standards. According to World Bank (1997 cited in Awojobi 2014:152) Corruption is "the abuse of public office for private gains. Public office is abused for private gain when official accepts edicts or extorts a bribe. It is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public

policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Public office can also be abused for the personal benefits even if no bribery occurs through patronage and nepotism, the thief of state assets or the diversion of state revenue." Ofoeze (2004: 20 cited in Idris and Salisu, 2016) defines corruption as "any action or inaction of any person or group (public or private) deliberately perpetrated to secure advantages for oneself, a relation, associate or group(s) in a manner that detract from the accepted regulations, morals, and/or ethical standard or code and hence constituting a travesty of injustice, equity and fair play."

Corruption in Nigeria did not just start in present days, what is seen contemporarily are a shadow of what has been perpetrated right from the inception of the nation. According to Ogbeidi (2012) "the First Republic under the leadership of Sir Abubakar Tafawl Balewa, the Prime Minister, and Nnamdi Azikwe, the President, was marked by widespread corruption. Government officials looted public funds with impunity. Federal Representatives and Ministers flaunted their wealth with reckless abandon. In fact, it appeared there were no men of good character in the political leadership of the First Republic. Politically, the thinking of the First Republic Nigerian leadership class was based on politics for material gain; making money and living well." sequel to the rate of corruption and other reasons, the military took over the hem of government. However, this continued until the nation attained the fourth republic in 1999. This was celebrated because the country returned back to democracy which was also the rebirthing of corruption. Ogundiya (2012) asserts that corruption was rampant in the fourth republic to the extent that in every newspaper, the front page cover always features news about financial corruption by politicians.

However, Fabayo et al. (2011 Cited in Awojobi 2014:152) took a critical look at the impact of corruption on investment in Nigeria using the Ordinary Least Square modus operandi and the Transparency International (TI) corruption index between

1996 to 2010. In their analysis, they revealed that Nigeria is always at the bottom of (IT) rankings which indicated that the increased high-level of corruption in Nigeria leads to lower investment drive and slippery economic growth. However, in 2020 Transparency International (TI) corruption index suffices that Nigeria is now ranked 146 out of 180 countries surveyed. The country scored 26 out of 100 points, a drop from the 27 points that it maintained since 2017. Corruption in Nigeria is exhibited in forms of bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, selfishness, tribalism, dishonesty and the likes. These immoral behaviors are suppose to be punishable by the law but the level of impunity will not justice be served. All forms of electoral fraud are fundamentally a rebellious felony. Rigging of elections is morally equivalent to coup d'etat, and much worse than a coup. A coup is often staged against a government, but electoral rigging is a coup staged against the entire population.

Angela and Okorie assert that “the magnitude of corruption in Nigeria is alarming and disheartening. Corruption permeates every sector of the Nigerian economy and is found among the educated as well as the uneducated, among the rich and as well as the poor” (2014: 12). It has been undisputed overtime that corruption is the nuisance to Nigerian development and it retarded economic growth. Sule and Shettima (2018: 51) conclude that “the unwholesome consequences are myriad. Corruption, an offshoot of moral decadence breeds inefficiency and diminishes productivity in both private and public sector of the economy. It discourages investment, fuels capital flight, increases unemployment and inflation, creates an acute degree of poverty and reduces the quality of life and life expectancy in Nigeria.”

Moral decadence is also featured in various kinds of violence perpetrated all over the country. Defending Human Rights (2005:2) that “…the breakdown of traditional social structures has led to an upsurge of violent crimes in recent years…” for instance, citing Von Hentig (1947:329), Nkpa (1976) notes

that, "war has its effects of weakening norms of behavior; consequently, many people participate in criminal activities which they never would have engaged in during peace time". According to Centre for International Cooperation and Security, (2005:14), "the youth population in Nigeria estimated by the United Nations to be 25 million which is economically, socially and politically deprived are among the main perpetrators of armed criminality and 'gangsterism'". Kayode and Adeyinka (2009: 38) also points out that:

> The majority of youths who are currently engaged in militancy, thuggery, gangsterism, cultism and other forms of anti-social behavior are usually people who are aggrieved with the social system and who are deprived one way or the other. The provision of access to quality education is thus one of the ways of curing the social ills of the society and better regime of human development.

Most youths have resolved to various violent crimes against persons. Rothberg (2007:33) "crime against persons, including murder, rape, and robbery has grown in scale and viciousness in Nigeria since 1999" such that "in 2018, the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) ranked Nigeria the third most terrorized country in the world as a result of Boko Haram terrorism and nomadic herders' attacks" (GTI,2018 in Luke et al. 2019: 53). Defending Human Rights Report (2002:2) states that, "crime rates and proliferation of crime have been exacerbated by the high proliferation of small arms throughout the country". Agbotan-Johnson *et al* (2004:31) also noted that, "small and light weapons proliferation is particularly significant with regard to banditry, theft of cattle, poaching and robbery along main roads. Firearms are also widely used in conflicts between farmers and cattle breeders".

The prevalence of violent crimes leads to insecurity of lives and properties. When the security of the populace of a nation

is threatened, they will not be able to divulge their quota needed for national development. It will also restrict foreign investors from coming to the nation which further leaves the country in a poor state economically. Crimes inhibit the pace in which developmental expectations are met. The menace of crimes has eaten deep into the fabrics of the nation and it has become an enormous source of concern to everyone at large. The immoral activities negate the societal norm and standard of the society. If these activities are allowed to continue to linger in the nation, it will in sooner time gravitate towards a thick torn in the flesh that will lead to grave consequences to the members of the nation in general. As part of the consequences that will surface, there will be breakdown of law and order.

Morality and African Moral System

"The word morality is derived from the Latin word '*Moralitas*' meaning 'manner, character, and proper behavior'. It is the differentiation of intensions, decision and actions between right and wrong" (Ebele and Chinyere, 2014: 164) Okafor (2004: 264) explains that, "morality is the attitude of man with regard to the moral law which is based on his free decision. Morality sometimes is taken to mean definite character, based on the predomination of one particular value of the moral attitude of a whole people or a social group..." in the same vein, Agha (2003: 35) maintained that, "an act is right if it conforms to the society by which it is judged. Therefore, moral conduct of a man is that which produces the greatest possible good in the situation. It means that the conduct has desirable qualities which satisfy some valuable need. A thing can only be said to be good when it makes for social welfare."

Ezekwu (2008:16) offers that "morality is used to denote a generally accepted code of conduct in a society or within a subgroup of society that comes to be regarded as essential to its survival and welfare". Beyond, these codes of conducts in focus are such that appeals to moral nature of man this

because “the human nature is a moral nature, and the moral sphere is exclusively the human sphere” (Omoregbe, 1993: 102). Agha (2003:35) further expressed that, “action is right if it leads to physical, intellectual and spiritual development or to a more harmonious personal and social life. Action is wrong or bad, if it is detrimental to the individual or society. It is an observance of the laws of wholesome living. To be moral is to be intelligent and to be sociable in the process of living. The right choice is the selection of the greater or greatest value. The wrong choice is the selection of some lesser good or value.” Morality is a necessity for a well structured society of humans. Higgins (1956.3) states that, “it is for the welfare of all individuals and society. For failure to do good and failure to avoid evil would inevitably lead to chaos and to the decimation of the human race.” In the perception of Okafor (2004:268) “the purpose of morality then, is to teach a man how to live aright, and by right living he may attain the full structure of his ultimate perfection” which in turns translate to nation building.

African moral system is thus, African disposition on morality. African societies especially Nigeria have a very rich cultural heritage that emphasizes sound moral values among her people, though much of it has gone into oblivion given way to westernization which is playing a critical role in the prevalence of immorality. The communal nature of the Africans makes it possible for them to formulate their system of ethics that is binding on them all. Fafunwa (1974) opined that, traditional education which places emphasis on moral and character training is the corner stone of African education. Traditionally, the inculcation of appropriate and culturally approved behavioural patterns in the child is a joint responsibility among the parents and adult members of the community.

African moral system is religiously guided which makes the indigenous religion an essential necessity at arriving a state of morality and nation building. Morality has been conceived by many people from different perspectives and this is relative to

different people, culture and places. Every human society, developed or underdeveloped has its approved standard way of human relations. Such standards are based on a positive behaviour guided by traditions, norms, values and rules that reflect in the manner of speaking, decent way of dressing, honesty, love, cooperation, hardworking, patriotism and a lot of others. It is a fact that smooth running and healthy relationship cum development of any given society depend on those esteemed moral values and cultural traits (Idowu 1996).

For instance, in the Yoruba ethnicity there is a concept of morality that is peculiar to them from time immemorial; passed down from generations to generations through various means. This system of morality peculiar to the Yoruba is necessity for national development which has been from time in antiquity and is still in place. It is important to state at this juncture that morality from the Yoruba perspective is basically derived from its indigenous religious affiliation (Mbiti 1982). The Yoruba believe in *Olodumare* has the ultimate source of mankind and the universe. He alone created mankind and has put man in the universe to live. *Olodumare* remains the deity the Yoruba worships and owes allegiance to. The religious affiliation of the Yoruba is also the definitive source of their perception of morality (Idowu 1996).

In the perspectives of the Africans, *Olodumare* is the giver of morality to humankind, so that man can live to please him and in peaceful co-existence with his neighbors. *Olodumare* has also bestowed upon the divinities and ancestors the obligation to be custodians of morality. These beings are to make sure that morality is achieved in the nation. They do this by apportioning disciplines on individuals who go contrary to the moral dictates of *Olodumare*. *Olodumare* has also put in man a checker called *Ifa aya* this is to guide man's intentions and actions (Idowu 1996). The *Ifa aya* is the equivalent of conscience. The conscience is a way in which *Olodumare* communicates his moral injunctions to man. In this wise, anyone who is obedient to the morals communicated

in his conscience is an *Omoluabi* while the person who is disobedient is labeled *eniyan keniyen.* However, both ends are a judgment based on an individual's "iwa" – character.

"Iwa" in Yoruba Ethos

Concerning discourses about the subject of Iwa Bolaji Idowu (1962: 154) unveils that:

> To the Yoruba, man's character is of supreme importance, and it is this which Olodumare judges. Thus the demands which Olodumare lays upon man are purely ethical. Man's well being here on earth depends upon his character… therefore Morality is summed up in Yoruba by the word Iwa which can be translated by the English word character. Iwa according to the Yoruba is the stuff that makes life a joy because it is pleasing to God. It is therefore stressed that good character must be the dominant feature of a person's life. In fact it is the one thing which distinguishes a person from a brute.

While iwa mean character generally, Balogun (2013: 112) opines that "within the Yorùbá moral context, there are two types of *ìwà* (character): *ìwà rere* (good/positive character) and *ìwà buburu/ìwà buruku/ìwà ibaje* (bad/negative character)." "Iwa rere" which qualifies good characters; this includes inu rere (having good intentions towards others), otito (being truthful), akinkanju (being brave), opolo pipe (exhibiting intelignece) while "iwa buburu" or "iwa ibaje" which qualifies bad characters which includes the following components iwa buburu (wicked characters), ole (Laziness), iro pipa (telling lies), ole jija (stealing) and ojukokoro (covetousness). A person is virtuous and morally upright when he is honest, truthful, not cunning, hardworking, trustworthy, fair and practices equity, respect other individuals, has a sense of integrity, responsible to given task, competent, accountable and tact.

A vicious person is one who falls short of the components of good character. Such person in the Yoruba moral system is not qualified to be a person. This is because personhood is qualified from the spectrum of how one submits to the moral codes of conduct of the society. Abimbola (1975:393) proposes "*ìwà* (good character) as the essence of being, and that man's character is what can be used to characterize his life especially in ethical terms." A vicious individual is rather seen as brute, one who only puts on the skin of a person but ideally does not exhibit the characteristics of a person. This is why Oyeshile (2007: 87) maintained that "*ìwà* is the determinant of moral personhood as *ọmọlúàbí* (one who is well-born or morally upright) in Yorùbá perspective. For an individual that lacks *omoluwabi*, the Yorùbá sums up that '*ki seniyan, nise lo fawo eniyan bora*' – he/she is not a human being, he merely assumes the skin of a human being."

The behaviors exhibited by individuals within the nation are due to the side of character they choose either good or bad. For character is the sum total of a man's being. In view of the Yoruba, the knowledge of the importance of good character makes man morally responsible for his actions and intentions. Dzurgba (2014: 114) explains that:

> …an action performed by man concurrently is called is a human conduct or a human behaviour because a person does it with a proper knowledge, willingness, personal decision and freedom of choice. He is free either to agree or to refuse to act in a particular way. He is free either to avoid delay, postpone or change an action. Thus an action which is done under these conditions is a voluntary action. For such an action, a person is held responsible and accountable.

It thus means that no individual becomes corrupt by mistake or without a full knowledge of what is been done and its

consequences on the society at large. Individuals become corrupt and perpetrate all sort if crimes because they chose to exhibit bad characters in place of good characters. For instance, if one by the virtue of his public office siphon public gains for his personal engagements, such an individual cannot say it was a mistake because he is fully aware that the gains belongs to the public. Rather he resolved to ole jija (stealing) which is one of the components of bad characters. Exclusively before one will resolve to ole jija (stealing) his heart must have also bred ojukokoro (covetousness) and greed. This accounts for why most of the Nigerian politicians are thieves. They get into positions just to be on the lookout for how they will satisfy their bellies. They are full of bad characters. Corruption is not limited to politicians alone. It has eaten deep into the blood vessels of every part of the nation.

Law enforcement agencies that are supposed to make sure that the laws are strictly adhered to are also not free from the shackles of bad characters. Police take bribes on the way and the justice systems receive grants to pardon law breakers. Positions are used to enrich one's family at the detriment of the public such that the problem of unemployment lingers. Approaching a public office for job placements will pose the question of who you know before you can be considered. God fatherism is also a highly priced commodity. This is often as qualified as "leg". That who do know that can fix you into positions without the mutual consent of the public who you should represent by occupying such office/position.

Iwa ibaje (bad character) is also not far-seen from the youths. For instance, many youths are lazy; ole (Laziness). This is why they break into people's home, carting away with materials that do not belong to them; destroying lives and properties… making both homes and the highways safe for people. The efficacy in hard work is no longer appreciated. Youths are on the lookout for painless gain. They want to perform small work but expect huge returns which they will violently seek. They also resort to gangsterism and cultism in place of iwa irele

(meekness), they waylay others for their properties and also murder them in attempt to either cover it up or when they refuse to obey. Education is no longer the focus of the youths. Such that the slang "school is a scam" is almost becoming a maxim. Those that are even in school are engaging themselves in variously vices ranging from theft, examination mal practices and hooliganism.

With the above, one cannot underestimate the role that character plays in any given society. The life of a nation is in the character of its occupants. If they exhibit bad characters, the nation will experience the adverse consequences of those characters. Awolalu and Dopamu (2005: 234) opine that "the action or conduct of one man within the community can affect the other members for good or for evil. In order to prevent man from becoming rebellious and thus endangering the welfare of the society, there are se patterns or code of behaviour for the individual and the community as a whole." This accounts for why the Nigerian nation is experiencing an all-round deterioration. Bad characters perpetrated by every individual have a lasting effect on not just the individual but the society at large. For instance, a corrupt individual who siphons the public fund that is supposed to be used for public project such as to fund education but diverts it for his own personal gain… the educational sector that should use that fund for its betterment will suffer loss and will in turn lead to a low productivity, thereby causing students to lookout for other engagements since schools are poorly managed. Such students will grow morally bankrupt such that they will become torn in the flesh of the nation. With this one can say nation building for the Nigerian nation will remain a mere wish and not a reality until everyone strives for moral excellence. This is because, whatever is done get the nation industrialized will be pulled down by level of moral decadence.

"Iwa Omoluabi": a panacea for Nation Building

In the face of the adverse consequences of bad character plaguing the Nigerian nation, the quintessential omoluabi is a therapy for nation building. The term omoluabi has been analyzed in different ways. Fayemi (2009) considers omoluabi as a compound word and breaks it down for vivid understanding.

> *ọmọ* + *tí* + *Olú* + *ìwà* + *bí*. Literally translated and separated, *ọmọ* means child, tí means that or which, *olú-ìwà* means the chief or master of *Ìwà* (character), *bí* means born. When combined, *omolúàbí* translates as "the baby begotten by the chief of *ìwà*." Such a child is thought of as a paragon of excellence in character (Fayemi, 2009: 167).

In similitude, Oluwole (2007:12) makes a critical thought of the word by subjecting it into an interrogative analysis in different semantic perception in bid to reflect the Yoruba moral value of good characters by rendering the phrase omoluabi as a child whose character takes after…, which is an incomplete sentence. She then quests in bid to make the sentence a complete one that omo ti o ni iwa bi tani? – a child whose character takes after who? She then concludes the interrogative analysis by restructuring omoluabi as "omo ti o iwa bi eni ti a ko, ti o si gba eko" which means an individual acting as someone that is well nurtured and lives according to the precepts of the training received. In summation, she offers three deductibles from her analysis where are:

> *Ọmọ tí ó ní'wà bí* – a person who behaves like…
> *Ẹni tí a kọ́* – someone properly nurtured
> *Tí ó si gba ẹ̀kọ́* - and who behaves accordingly (Oluwole, 2007:13).

This suffices that "the end of Yoruba traditional education is to make every individual 'Omoluabi'. That is why the goal of

Yoruba traditional education has always been to foster strong character in the individual and to prepare each person to become a useful member of the community" (Jekayinfa, 2016:13). However, on a plain note, Goke (2017: 198) unravels that "without unnecessarily dissecting their semantic meaning, we can summarise that the moral virtues of the *Omoluwabi* on the scale of the Yorùbá value system are: wisdom (intelligence, knowledge, prudence); integrity (truthfulness, fairness, justice); courage (valour, bravery, fortitude); industry (hard work) which brings wealth."

Components of "iwa omoluabi" include hospitality not just to one's kindred but to other individuals regardless of the differences that may exist; either in terms of ethnicity, religion, race, color, gender and others. One of the maxims the Yoruba uses to teach hospitality is "Omi le' eniyan" (a person is a stream which flows and thus can be found anywhere anytime). If hospitality is found in every sector of the Nigerian nation, it will solve most of the violence that persists which inhibits nation building. The major reason why violence persists is hostility towards one another by the virtue of difference. Part of the violence includes but not exhaustive to ethno-religious crises and militancy. According to the Yoruba, the principle of hospitality states that "eni ti o bad a omi siwaju a tele tutu" (one who throws water in front will surely step on wet ground) a hospitable person will surely receive hospitality.

"Omoluabi" is not selfish. Unselfishness is a key component of the "iwa" of an "omoluabi". One who seeks his own gains alone will come to ruin but one who puts the wellbeing of others at heart will be greatly rewarded not just in this world but also in afterlife by God. If everyone decides to put the good of others in focus, the nation will experience a collective growth. But the nation will dwindle if public goods are shortchanged for personal gains. Beyond being unselfish is the admonition to be kind and generous. This is because the act of selfishness is seen as wickedness and wickedness is not a character of

"omoluabi". So in this wise, stealing is prohibited. In Yoruba moral system both a thief and his/her accomplices are both evil. "Iwa rere" good character preaches that "eni ti o gbe epo laja ko jale bi eni ti o gba a sile" he/she who picked the oil pitcher from the ceiling is not as guilty of stealing as the person who helped him/her to bring it to the ground level. This is seen as utterly wickedness to the common good of the society. Some persons in the name of godfatherism and thuggery override the vote of the masses to put on the throne thieves who would later siphon public funds for personal gains. In this wise, the maxim "eni ti o bag bin ika ori omo re ni yoo hu le" suffices that he/she who sows the seed of wickedness, it is on his/her children's head that it will grow. Children will reap the harvest of suffering. More also, "Ika a to nika, re re a ba eni rere" wickedness will follow the wicked and goodness will come to the good. In the midst of nemesis there will not be space for collective growth.

"Omoluabi" is one that is truthful, honest and sincere. "Omoluabi" does not call a black grey he calls it its real color. If everyone imbibes this character the nation will experience a rapid growth. It is prescribed in the principles of "iwa" that "Otito ki i sina iro ni i fori bogbe" truthfulness does not miss; it is dishonesty that goes astray. Corruption lingers in Nigeria because both the leaders and the followers are not truthful, sincere and honest to themselves. People are living the life of a lie. Insofar it suffices for the day, they lay wait for another the next day which accounts for the day by day deterioration… a much more reason why the Yoruba moral system condemns hypocrisy. A hypocrite is called "Alagabagebe" one whose character is unpredictable. During campaigns for positions people promise heaven on earth but unleash hell as soon as they assume their desired position. They are hypocrites. They will move to the streets in guise of identifying with the masses, promising liberation but to no fulfillment when they get the votes. This is why quintessential omoluabi preaches that "bi o ba man je Osaka. Ki o je Osaka; bi o ba maaje osoko, ki o je

osoko; Osaka-n-soko ko ye omo eniyan" let people know your true color, dissembling does not befit a person.

"It is part of their beliefs that *iwontun wonsi lo ye ọmọlúàbí* (moderacy should be practised by a virtuous person)" (Lawuyi, 1988:29). It is "iwa omoluabi" to maintain moderacy in the midst of plenty. It is quite understandable that some positions grant one the access to many resources to be managed. If one does not practice moderacy one will go beyond bounds. Oyebade and Azenabor (2018: 48) corroborates that "The making of an *Omolúàbí* is averse to excesses, in cognizance of the saying that too much of everything is bad." Bearing in mind that:

> The action or conduct of a person within the community can affect the other members for good or for evil. In order to prevent members of the society from wrongdoing and thereby incurring its consequences, there are set patterns or codes of conducts for the individual and the community as a whole. If one observes the norms faithfully, it will be to the good of one and one's society; but if otherwise, it will bring disaster not only to one but also to those in the community (Awolalu and Dopamu 1979: 211-212).

To be "Omoluabi" is to be of good character all-round which is essentially a necessity for nation building.

Conclusion

In Yoruba moral system, "iwa" (character) cannot be overstated and should never be undermined if objectives of nation building will be achieved. In this wise, there is provision for moral concepts like good, bad, right and wrong in the Yoruba moral system exemplified in "iwa rere" (good character) and "iwa buburu" (bad character); "iwa toto" (rightness of behavior) and "iwa tikoto" (wrongness of

behavior). Whichever class of character that finds predominance in any given society will determine whether the nation will experience development or not. All behaviors have unavoidable consequences. Bad characters breed more adverse aftermaths while good characters create a credible platform for nation building.

In the face of stunted development in the Nigerian nation, the Yoruba moral system exemplified in "iwa" potentially possesses a universal application. This is because, the exhibition of the "iwa omoluabi" will not only benefit the moral actor but other members of the society which he belongs. Good character boosts credible nation building.

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