

ELITE POLITICS AND CULTURAL HEGEMONY: ENSLAVEMENT TO DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria as the most populous nation in Africa has a nascent democracy, but this democracy is at the brink of destruction as a result of elite politics and cultural hegemony. These play out scene in the activities of some northern and southern oligarchies via party politics, Boko-haram, Arewa Consultative Forum, Ohaneze Ndi Igbo, O’odua People’s Congress, Afenifere, Miyetti Allah, IPOB among others which has ensued in underdevelopment, unemployment, violation of human rights, bad governance and policies, destruction of lives and properties. This paper examines the concepts of elite politics, cultural hegemony and democracy in Nigeria with a view to showing the danger it portends to Nigerians. It will explore the drives of these politicians and hegemons to determine if they can coexist with democracy in Nigeria. The study adopts the methods of analysis and dialectics in order to clarify and understand the issues of discussion. It finds that the activities of some politicians and hegemons aim at enslaving Nigerians and her nascent democracy, since there is no sovereign consensus in the society and proper leadership election process. This paper suggests John Rawls overlapping consensus and proper leadership election process among the citizens will bring emancipation and restructuring of Nigeria to guarantee justice, peaceful coexistence, development, and sustenance of democratic values.

Keywords: Cultural Hegemony, Elite Politics, Democracy, Enslavement, Overlapping Consensus.

INTRODUCTION

African nations have been plagued with servitude since colonial and post colonial era (Chamberlain, 2013:1), this has brought underdevelopment, dehumanization and inequality in many African states. Little wonder Abubakar observes that “because of the prominence given to the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and slavery acquired a very bad name and many scholars, particularly Africans, call it the most inhuman action of man

against man ever witnessed in history” (1993:46). Nigeria with a population of 201,414,848 is Africa’s most populous country and the seventh most populous nation in the world (Worldometers, 2019). It consists of over 250 ethnic groups and languages (Falola, 2001:4). The major ethnic groups are Hausa and Fulani in the north, the Yoruba in the west, and the Igbo in the east, these ethnic groups were brought together by British Empire as a colony even though there is no correlation in their ethnic and religious boundaries (Gordon, 2003:33). Also Nigeria share a strong commitment to democracy, no wonder she is governed under the Constitution of 1999 with a President who is the head of state and government popularly elected for a four year term, and eligible for a second term. Nigeria has a bicameral legislature, the National Assembly consisting of 109 seats in the Senate and 360 seats in the House of Representatives. These legislators are elected through popular vote for a four-year term. Administratively, the country has 36 states and a Federal Capital Territory (Gabriel & Bingham, 1996:734).

Nigeria as an African nation is not excluded from the woes of colonialism and enslavement, the sadder is that the only socio-political system (democracy) acclaimed to be the best of all and only hope for common man in Nigeria has been bedevilled and enslaved by elite politics and cultural hegemony. This is perpetrated by some northern oligarchy (Hausa-Fulani hegemons) and southern oligarchy (Power Elites in some southern states), who believe that mantle of leadership belongs to them while other citizens become their slaves. This elite politics and cultural hegemony manifest in the activities of Boko Haram, Miyetti Allah, Arewa Consultative Forum, Afenifere, Oodua People’s Congress, Ohaneze Ndi Igbo, and IPOB among others. Thus, the activities of some of the aforementioned has ensued in underdevelopment, unemployment, violation of human rights, electoral malpractice, violence, bad governance, destruction of lives and properties. The goal of this paper is to show how elite politics and cultural hegemony has been detrimental to Nigerian democracy, thereby enslaving citizens in the hands of some ethnic group and their leaders. It also suggests a way forward through John Rawls overlapping consensus and proper leadership election process to guarantee democratic values in Nigeria. Accordingly, the paper is divided as follows; conceptual discussion of elite politics, cultural hegemony and democracy; exposition of elite

politicians, cultural hegemons and their drives; manifestation and effects of the hegemons on Nigerian democracy; recommendation and conclusion.

Conceptual Clarification of Terms

Elite Politics

This refers to a situation where individuals, group of people, political party, corporations, or civil organization manage and organize political powers of a government. These people are very powerful and wealthy, and by virtue of their education and position, they acquire, maintain and control political power. They may be known as Cabals in the common parlance. According to Amurov (2020), elite politics refers to a society of people who are superior to others, authoritative and are more competent in managing the state, but one may disagree with Amurov on the issue of being the more competent in managing the state, rather one sees them as opportunist who wants to remain in government because of selfish interest. Here, there is always a division in the society between the interests of the masses and them. In fact, these set of people can be seen in the various political region where they control political powers, especially in Nigeria. They also influence some of the actions of cultural hegemony.

Cultural Hegemony

Etymologically, the term ‘hegemony’ is derived from the Greek verb *eghesthai*, (meaning “to drive”, “to be the guide”, “to be the boss”), or from the verb *eghemoneno* (meaning “to guide”, “to precede”, “to drive”, and hence “to stay ahead”, “to command”, “to rule”. In classical Greek *eghemonia* has a military connotation meaning the army supreme direction. And *egemone* was a driver, guide and also the commander of the army (Cortes-Ramirez, 2015: 150). It is a “framing (of) all competing definitions of reality within (the dominant class’s) range bringing all alternatives within their horizons of thought. (The dominant class)sets the limits- mental and structural- within which subordinate classes ‘live’ and make sense of their subordination in such a way as to sustain the dominance of those ruling over them” (Hall, 1977:333). Here, the dominant class determines what happens in the lives of the subordinate class in the society. On the other hand the subordinate classes willingly or unwillingly accept their subservient roles in the society. Here, subordination means “the process through which a

more powerful fraction of the political class- e.g. incumbents, and ‘power brokers’- outwit the weaker and vulnerable elites or ‘scavengers for power’ in capturing, sustaining, consolidation and paradoxically, abusing powers” (Tar & Shettima, 2010:138). It also entails “a relation of domination by which the subjects are deprived of their self-reliance as persons as well as citizens. It denotes both a factual condition of powerlessness and a representation of oneself as an impotent hostage in the hands of ineffable destiny”(Urbinati, 1998:370). No wonder, Lull (1995:34) opines that hegemony implies a willing agreement by people to be governed by principles, rules, and laws they believe operate in their best interests, even though in actual practice they may not. Let’s examine an aspect of the above concept ‘cultural hegemony’.

Further, hegemony is attributed to Antonio Gramsci an Italian intellectual. Antonio Gramsci implored the concept of cultural hegemony in order to address the relation between the issue of power and culture under capitalism, and has no precise definition for it. In fact he sees it as “the ‘spontaneous’ consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is ‘historically caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production”(1971:12). From the above, the concept of cultural hegemony has a historical undertone whereby the great masses of a population give consent to the dominant group in the society to dominate and rule them. Thus, cultural hegemony in this paper deals with a rule or domination by a dominant group (ethnic) over other population of the society through social institutions, ideological and cultural means. Accordingly, the dominant group use coercion or consensus to strongly determine and influence the values, worldview, belief, behavior, expectations and thought of the rest of society.

Democracy

The word democracy etymologically stems from two Greek words demos (meaning ‘people’) and Kratia (meaning ‘power’) hence; it becomes “government by the people or power by the people”. There are two kinds of democracy; direct and indirect. In direct democracy men gather together to decide on the affairs of the state, and it was first practiced by Greek city states. On the other hand, liberal democracy is known as

representative democracy, western democracy or indirect democracy, which is the focal point of this paper. Abraham Lincoln (1863) in his *Gettysburg address* gives a popular definition of democracy as “the government of the people by the people and for the people”. Apparodai (1942:137) sees democracy as “a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by themselves”. It is seen as a method of government through which leaders are held accountable for their actions and in actions in the public realm, and by which citizens are actively involved in the competition and cooperation of their elected representations (John, 2016:105). Mayo (1981:72) observes some elements of democracy as; power being in the hands of the whole people; the state of ‘Isonomia’ that is equality before the law; political offices being open to the poor and rich; special devotion by the citizens to the state; and political debate being consensus oriented. For Adeosun the essential features of liberal democracy include; acceptance of capitalism, competitive party system as opposed to one party system, rule of law, pressure groups, separation of powers and checks and balances, emphasis on civil liberties or individual rights such as freedom of speech, assembly, press, and religion, free, fair and periodic elections based on universal franchise, abhorrence of revolutionary approach to change of government (2014:7). Following the above, democracy entails the rule by the people as opposed to dictatorship. As a social political system, it guarantees the participation of citizens directly or indirectly in government, human rights, and the rule of law, and equality of everyone before the law.

Elite Politics, Cultural Hegemony and Drives in Nigeria

In Nigeria there are elite politicians and well-known hegemonies such as Northern hegemony and Southern hegemony. This set of people or group rule and dominate other Nigerian population through social institutions, ideology, culture and religion. Let us examine them one after the other.

Hausa-Fulani Hegemony

The Hausa-Fulani are the dominant ethno-linguistic group in the northern Nigeria especially in the northeast and northwest. They are surrounded by smaller ethnic groups viz. Kanuris, Tivs, Igalas, Junkuns, Nupes, Zango-Katafs, Biroms in the north central.

The Fulani are nomadic in nature and their cattle herding brought them close to Islamic religion. But the Hausa-Fulani Political hegemony started in the 19th century at Central Sudan with Fulani Islamic jihad. The consequence of this jihad led by Usman dan Fodio was the Fulani conquest of most of present-day northern Nigeria. Hence, Hausa states like Kebbi, Zaria, Katsina, Gobir, and Kano were conquered between 1805 and 1809, which marked the conquest of entire Hausa land (Okonofua, 2013) it would be interesting to know that before the Islamic jihad, the Hausa as a major ethnic group in northern Nigeria are known for their commercial ingenuity. No wonder “their weaving of religion with the political structure not only had a tremendous social influence of detaching them from people of other ethnic groups, but also strengthened their cohesiveness and cultural consciousness as well as political administration within their midst”(Alozieuwa, 2016:15).

Accordingly, the success of the jihad led to the establishment of Fulani empires in northern Nigeria, with its religious and political headquarters (Caliphate) in Sokoto. Consequently, all traditional rulers of Hausa were overthrown and replaced by Fulani under an emirate and caliphate with emirs paying allegiance to the Sultan of Sokoto and the head of caliphate (Alozieuwa, 2016), this became the fusion of Hausa and Fulani race, with one religious and political leader.

From the above, Hausa-Fulani hegemony in Nigeria started around 1804 and it has been a well articulated agenda by northern elites. For instance, the Sarduna of Sokoto Sir Ahmadu Bello (1960) told his people during the independence celebration thus “the new nation called Nigeria should be an estate of our great-grandfather Uthman Dan Fodio. We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We use the minorities of the North as willing tools and the South as a conquered territory and never allow them to rule over us and never allow them to have control over their future”. Affirming the Northern Nigeria cultural hegemony, Okonufua (2013) states that “the Hausa-Fulani political elite through the symbolism of the Sultan and the Sokoto Caliphate wield political power in Nigeria, while it is the Sultan and his council that pulls the puppets strings, it is the individuals who occupy key executive offices that are the puppets on strings. Although the suggestion that the Hausa-Fulani elite symbolized by the sultanate is the dominant political force in Nigeria may appear counter intuitive, the annulment of June 12, 1993, presumably won by Abiola, a Yoruba supports this thesis”. This, attest to the fact, that

the presidential election of MKO Abiola was annulled because he is not from northern Nigeria.

Further, the attempt to impose Sharia law (Islamic law) on all Nigerians, and a large number of Hausa-Fulani officers in Nigerian military and paramilitary forces are evidence to dominate and subject other ethnic group to servitude and Islamize them. No wonder Akinyetun (2016:40) observes that “there are indicators everywhere that point to their propensity to dominate the other ethnic groups. One clear example of this, is the large number of Hausa-Fulani officers in the Nigerian military who have, since the end of the civil war, dominated the power structure in the country...another evidence of their covert or overt intention to dominate the other ethnic groups and cultures is their attempt to impose the Sharia as an official legal system in Nigeria”. Also, some organizations have been used to actualize this agenda of cultural hegemony, they include, Boko Haram, Miyati Allah, and Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) among others.

Boko Haram

It is a jihadist militant organization and Islamic movement based in the northeast of Nigeria and northern Cameroun. It was founded in 2001 by Mohammed Yusuf and has a mission which is to overthrow the Nigerian state, improve the interpretation of Islamic law, and put an end to “western-style education”. Boko-Haram has led to loss of many lives and properties, investments and income in Nigeria (Ofoegbu, 2014:47).

It has been seen as an instrument created by the Northern oligarchy to take political power from the South since 1999. Thus, Okonofua (2013:5) rightly states: “also, the recent extremist violence in Northern Nigeria by Boko Haram is partly an attempt to reverse the north’s loss of political power in 1999 and the series of minor social and political revolutions that have taken place since then, which threatens the political and cultural hegemony of the Hausa-Fulani elite”. Thus, the Boko Haram crisis is a strategy by the northern elites to regain political power lost to the southern Nigerian in 1999 and to Islamize Nigeria.

Miyetti Allah

It is known as Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), an advocacy group that promotes the welfare of Fulani pastoralists in Nigeria. It aims to

liaise with government on behalf of Fulani herdsmen, in issues concerning land use act, pastoralists' education, and conflict reconciliation between the farmers and herdsmen in Nigeria. The Hausa-Fulani leaders like Sultan of Sokoto, Emir of Kano, Emir of Zazzau and Lamido of Adamawa among others are their patrons (Emir Sanusi, 2019). The Fulani herdsmen in order to carry out their economic activity or occupation by rearing cows have become harmful to the various community they visited. Hence, Unameh (2019) decries on their activities thus; "The catalogues of killings are stacking up still. They have killed raped and pillaged unarmed defenceless farmers in Adamawa and Zamfara, on the Plateau and in southern Kaduna, in Taraba and in Nasarawa and the Benue Valley. These terrorist herdsmen have gone as far as south and west as Enugu, Calabar, Akwa-Ibom, Edo, Ondo, Oyo and Ekiti states respectively. Armed with sophisticated weapons, they have killed women and children and burnt down entire villages in a kind of blitzkrieg that would have impressed Stalin and Hitler- an undeclared, one-sided war against an unarmed and defenceless people".

Further, the Miyetti Allah activities have serious support from the Northern elite that nobody dares penalizing them even the government of Nigeria under the leadership of a northerner. Corroborating the above, Unameh (2018) affirms that "more recently in the face of the national outcry and mourning precipitated by the terrorist herdsmen's killings in the middle belt states, Gov. Yahaya Bello kowtowing to the northern sentiments and in a self-serving manner has offered Kogi state as fertile place for cattle colonies, without any form of community representations and robust consultation this imprudent reaction is courting tragedy". As if their inhuman activities are not enough, Miyetti Allah proposed an establishment of northern vigilante group in the southern Nigeria in order to finish up their secret agenda. Upon all these, the Federal Republic of Nigeria under the leadership of Muhammad Buhari is offering 100 billion naira to them to end killings and kidnapping of Nigeria. Also, he has planned to implement Rural Grazing Area (RUGA) in all parts of the state in order to settle Miyetti Allah group without due consultation and amidst resistance from Nigerians. This show the kind of support received by this notorious organization even though their activities are calamitous to Nigerians. The support has been the reason they have not been declared a terrorist group by the government of the day. Hence, one may wonder the reason why they receive such patronage from our leaders. Is it because there is a hidden agenda to

dominate the other ethnic groups or to obliterate and Islamize them as against the democratic values that will ensure coexistence and development?

Yourba Power Elite

In the modern Nigeria, Yoruba is among the major ethnic groups and they densely occupy Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, Osun, Oyo, Lagos and some part of Kwara, Edo and Kogi states. It lies between “the latitudes 6° and 9° North and longitudes 2° 30¹ and 6° 30¹ east and has estimated area of about 181,300 square kilometers” (Atanda, 1980), in describing the Yoruba society Ajala (2009) observes that “Yoruba is a hierarchical society with a centralized political system. The people are not only fond of an ancestral cult, but are also engaged in reworking local history to suite their political expediencies. Thus, the political power of the ancestors is often perceived to be reincarnated in living persons. As the people respect their ancestors, creating an idea of common ancestry binds the people together and political elites can use this for their nationalist project” The above observation by Ajala gives an insight to the hegemonial practices in Yourba land, which will now help us in examining the Yourba power elites.

One of the elements that gave the Yourbas sense of belonging and influenced their project to gain political control and dominate Nigeria is the creation of socio-cultural association. This association is linked with the Yourba mythological ancestry and has Yourba political elites as their leaders. Ajala (2009) identifies the associations thus, “Egbe omo Oduduwa founded in London in 1947 and launched in Nigeria in 1949, Afenifere in 1966 and O’odua Peoples’ Congress in 1995. All of these groups pursued a Yourba social, cultural and political agenda”. Another is the formation of Yourba dominated and controlled political parties like Action Group established in 1951, the Unity Party of Nigeria created in 1978 and the Alliance for Democracy founded in 1999. The essence of the political parties is to advance the course of Yourba nationalism and politics, and by acting as organs of political and grassroots nationalist mobilization. Let’s examine the two main cultural and political movement and power elites in Yourba land; Afenifere and O’odua People’s Congress.

Afenifere

It was formed as a Yourba socio-cultural organization with Pa Abraham Adesanya as its leader. At its inception the members include Pa Onasanya, Bola Ige, Reuben Fasoranti,

Adegbonniire, Okurounmu, Ganiyu Dawodu, Olanihun Ajayi Olu Falae, Adefarati and Ayo Adebajo. Their political agenda are; enthroning a true federalism, resource control by states and calling for sovereign national conference. In order to achieve this, they floated a political party “Alliance for Democracy” (AD) in 1998 and it automatically adopted Afenifere agenda as a manifesto (Tytler, 2007). It might interest one to know that Chief Obafemi Awolowo founded this organization, that come to be known as “Egbe omo Oduduwa” (Society for the Descendants of Oduduwa) (Adebanwi, 2007). Afenifere as a group of Yoruba political elites are known to play politics of opposition and radicalized nationalism which led them to form political parties along ethnic lines which has caused a lot of tensions among various ethnic groups in Nigeria. The political party helps the Yorubas to maneuver, resist, and appropriate all that is needed in their favour in Nigeria political society. One will make no mistake if he opines that the Yoruba political elites introduced violence in Nigeria party politics. Thus, Ajala (2009) affirms that “the political elites across Nigeria created mutual distrust among the competing communities. In their bids to use regional affiliation to access political power, conflicts of interest often escalated into political violence. The tensions were perpetuated even beyond the civil political space, as military governments in Nigeria have also featured spates of violence linked with ethnic tensions. As such incidences are more common in South-western Nigeria; it is likely that Yoruba nationalism ‘infected’ national politics with violence. On some occasions such political violence led to fundamental shifts in the Nigerian political system and caused political instabilities”. Here one can see that the activities of the Yoruba political elite are a threat to Nigeria democracy.

O’odua People’s Congress (OPC)

It was founded in 1995 by Fredrick Fasheun as a militant socio-cultural Yoruba organization. It was formed to resist June 12 annulment and the need to unite Yorubas by creating an “Oduduwa Republic”, and to serve as a violent Yoruba socio-cultural organization to stop the excesses of Abacha regime against the Yoruba (Ajala, 2006:140). Ajala further observes that OPC operate under 5 levels; first ward level, where each local government area is broken down into five to ten units ward; Local government unit, where local government areas makes zonal unit of OPC; State level and National body.

OPC in a bid to pursue Yourba agenda, has caused more harm than good in Nigeria, thereby engaging in kidnapping, killing of many people and destroying of peoples' property. Thus, Ajala (2006:141) corroborates this, "Since 1999, the OPC has become more violent in its approach to pursue Yourba agenda. The focus completely changed from persuasive to conflicts and using its activities to hold both the governments and the people in the South-west as hostages through their frequent clashes with other ethnic groups, their factional groups and with law enforcement agencies especially in highly urbanized cities of Lagos, Ibadan and Ilorin". This shows that O'odua People's Congress has been violent in pursuit of Yourba cultural nationalism at the detriment of Nigerian democracy.

Elite Politics, Cultural Hegemony and Nigerian Democracy

Following the above, we have seen how two dominant groups influence that determine what happens in Nigeria. Hence, one may ask what does elite politicians and cultural hegemony entails to democracy. Can they coexist with democracy in Nigeria and are they same as sovereign consensus? The issue of two ethnic groups through their leaders uses the social institutions, ideology and cultural means to dominate other people in Nigerian democratic society has done more harm than good, by enslaving the nascent democracy in Nigeria. Democracy gives people of a state an opportunity to directly or indirectly to engage in the governance of their society. Whereby there are political elites and cultural hegemony the people will not be able to exercise their civic responsibility. This is because in electoral matters they will force the people to vote against their will by enforcing traditional and religious rules. Most times the use societal institutions to impose political candidates on the people and also rig elections in order to acquire and maintain power.

Democracy provides opportunity where there is equality and fairness in making decision as it pertains to governance. In Nigeria this golden opportunity has been lost and only the hegemons and politicians decide what happens in the country. Hence, they run it as their personal property without being accountable to anyone at the detriment of Nigeria society. No wonder in Nigeria people are complaining of unemployment, underdevelopment, bad economy etc. One of the annoying situations is that most of these people do not have the skill and art of governance. This made Eyisi (2019:265) to

observe that: “since July 1966, Nigeria has been under the dictatorship of a tiny minority with majorly military background. They have assumed different names; Kaduna mafia, cabal, king makers, power elite. Astute and legendary at political maneuvering and malfeasance but very low on development-oriented intellectualism; this tiny minority has surreptitiously directly or vicariously installed all governments in Nigeria in the last fifty-two years. Most often they assume sovereignty without the peoples’ mandate and are not accountable to anyone but to themselves”.

Another disturbing aspect of the activities of the elite politicians and hegemony is the effect on human rights. Democracy guarantees civil liberties and individual rights but in Nigeria they have privatized violence as a means of asserting might and right. This is the reason why there are a lot of killings and destruction of properties by the Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria in their bid to take over all the nooks and crannies of Nigeria. As a result of this many Nigerian citizens are homeless and the government of the day has refused to penalize them.

From the foregoing, one will observe that elite politics and cultural hegemony cannot coexist with democracy and it is never a sovereign consensus, rather it has enslaved democracy at the detriment of human rights and development in Nigeria. This makes one to suggest John Rawls overlapping consensus to Nigerian society for peaceful coexistence and development.

Overlapping Consensus and Nigerian Development

John Rawls as a proponent of justice as fairness in the society advocates in his concept of “Original Position” that citizens should act in a “Veil of Ignorance” where nobody has the right to change his position. Thus, for Rawls (1971:302-303) “nobody knows his society, his class, position, or social status; nor does he know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence and strength and the like”. This brings about an overlapping consensus that is a “consensus in which it is affirmed by the opposing religious, philosophical and moral doctrines likely to thrive over generations in a more or less just constitutional democracy, where the criterion of justice is that political conception itself”(Rawls, 1987:1). Here, all doctrines that are reasonable and comprehensive will be adopted by various parties to bring about justice and

fairness. While doing this, Nigerians will be come out with a brand new constitution, which will guide them to a positive nationhood.

Contrarily, elite politics and cultural hegemony brings domination and rivalry among various ethnic groups and citizens, to ensure peace, social stability and development, we must adopt Rawls concept of overlapping consensus. This will bring about a new constitution, so that the ethnic groups/citizens that have interest of identity and conflict of interest will come together in the light of reason and morality to adopt democratic values that will better the Nigerian society. This sovereign consensus will bring forth restructuring of Nigeria where human rights, justice and development will be guaranteed and flourish.

Conclusion

This paper examined elite politics and cultural hegemony as enslavement to Nigerian democracy. It argued that in elite politics group of people control the powers of government because of selfish interest as against wishes of the masses. It also viewed cultural hegemony as domination by a dominant ethnic group over other population of the society through social institutions, ideological and cultural means. It identified various elite politicians and hegemons in the Northern and Southern Nigeria and their drives and activities which include islamization agenda, control of natural resources, and political control of the nation. This work observed that the activities of these political elites and cultural hegemony are detrimental to Nigerian nascent democracy, which has ensued in underdevelopment, bad governance, violation of human rights, destruction of human lives and properties. Hence, there is no positive relationship between elite politics, cultural hegemony and democracy rather it enslaves democracy. So, to guarantee sovereign consensus, the paper suggests John Rawls overlapping consensus among various ethnic groups and citizens in Nigeria that will bring about a new constitution and ensure emancipation and restructuring of Nigeria for justice, peaceful coexistence, development, and sustenance of democratic values

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