

Northern Nigeria: History, Politics, Culture

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Abstract

This study relies on an assemblage of theories to decipher the historical and cultural dynamics of Northern Nigeria, as well as to discern cross-cultural lessons for global social and organizational leadership. The research method is Critical Literature Analysis. The theoretical assemblage used for analysis combines Foucault's genealogical method, Marx's theory of alienation, Freeman's stakeholder ethics, and agency theory. The authors view the mechanisms that have shaped Northern Nigeria's history and continue to influence its present realities. Ultimately, the study reveals insights into the complexities of power, governance, and societal norms that can guide global cross-cultural leadership towards achieving balanced and beneficial outcomes. A line manager coming into the area from overseas should be willing to deal with and delve into this region's heritage, because culture remains influenced by history especially when that history involves trauma. The new manager may be able to manage the workplace in a technical and functional sense, at least in the short-term, but stronger relations with local workers are often achieved through after-hours social functions. Through intensive and sincere interaction, the foreign manager must be able to build relations based on trust.

Keywords

Alienation, Foucault, Genealogical Method, Marxism, Northern Nigeria, Postcolonialism

1. Introduction

In this introduction, we introduce to readers the topics and themes that will be explored in depth in the subsequent discussion, with emphasis on the main research aim and the method of inquiry (theoretical synthesis (Foucault, Marx, and Stakeholder, Agency) and literature survey of Northern Nigeria history, politics, and culture). The problem is to contextualize and explain Northern Nigeria culture and relate this to historical developments which are divided by era-precolonial,

colonial, and postcolonial. We draw on implications of postcolonial scholarship which asserts that colonialism does not end when the foreign governor leaves, because the implications and ramifications continue to be felt in the society and weigh heavily at times on people's consciousness and actions.

A line manager coming into the area from overseas should be willing to deal with and delve into this region's heritage, because culture remains influenced by history especially when that history involves trauma. The new manager may be able to manage the workplace well, in a technical sense, at least in the short-term, but stronger relations with local workers are often achieved via after-hours social functions. Through intensive and sincere interaction, the foreign manager must be able to build relations based on trust. This will require knowledge of culture and history, not just to avoid basic gaffes (e.g., wearing a hat in an Indigenous Fijian village or sitting with one's legs wholly or partly raised off the floor at a village function), but to understand locals' aspirations and fears, which will need to be managed and assuaged successfully. These factors will be closely connected to individual and group identity, and this is a function in part on positions taken in historical struggles and the effects of these struggles.

The present-day nation-state of Nigeria is arguably a British colonial creation, as it draws together two regions with different cultures and religions. Global movements such as The Olympics, The World Cup, the UN, the IMF, and World Bank reify the concept of the nation-state and this may obscure the extent to which boundaries are often contingent and reflect lines drawn on a map and enforced by a conquering power. Underlying tensions between ethnic and religious groups can break out in riots and wars, such as the 1987 and 2000 military coups in Fiji or the 1990s wars in the Balkans. We cannot always assume that unresolved tensions will stay buried within the ideology and practices of the unitary nation-state. Furthermore, the ideology disseminated by and through what Althusser (2001) termed the ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) will only be effective to a certain extent.

The method of inquiry used to address the research problem is to provide a theoretical synthesis of some of the most pertinent and interesting ideas of Marx and Foucault along with more mainstream concepts from Freeman's (1984) Stakeholder Theory and Jensen and Meckling's (1976) Agency Theory. The method used is Foucault's genealogical method, used within a worldview that accepts and understands that wherever we go Marx has been there before us, including his theories of dialectic, historical materialism, and alienation. Hence, we work *after Marx* and not *instead of Marx* (Laffey, 2004: p. 460). In terms of his genealogical method, Michel Foucault encouraged us to meditate on and respond to six fundamental questions: 1. *Who is rewarded and punished and for what acts?* 2. *Why are these acts viewed positively or negatively by the rule making bodies?* 3. *How do the current rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour reinforce existing notions, meaning, good and bad, truth and falsehood, normal and abnormal?* 4. *How did the rules emerge in their historic context, and could events unfold differently?*

5. *What practices, disclosures, and classification schemes serve exactly which vested interests, and how can, we be sure?* 6. *How can decentering the subject and resisting classification create a new anarchy or allow other sets of meanings and values to emerge?* These are questions that when reflected on may reveal how truth is a function of power and how power/knowledge works in a given configuration due to a unique set of historical factors. History is characterized by discontinuities and abrupt leaps and reversals. It is always worth looking at alternative paths that might have been taken and this can suggest concrete courses of action in the present. If we look at Nigeria, it is a concept known throughout the world, but it is a historical creation of the British colonizing power as they united the Muslim North with the non-Muslim South. Today, in Western countries, you are more likely to come across Christian Southern Nigerians and it is easy to presume that they are the “classic” or “typical” Nigerians. As the Northerners resisted Western education and lifestyles for longer, they are less well represented in Western countries and can be easily removed from consciousness both in the West and even in Africa. This is because they are not commonly sighted in the West. Furthermore, many people tend to think of identity, culture, and religion in terms of the majority identity, culture, and religion of a nation-state.

The other main theme that emerges from this article, after we apply the theoretical synthesis to the historical story, is the alienation experienced by Northern Nigerian citizens during each of the three eras, alienation from 1) the mode of production or economic power, 2) political or military power, and 3) social, cultural, and religious power. While the alienation theory formulated by the Young Marx (Marx, 1994) in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844 focused on economic alienation faced by the *proletariat* or working-class within capitalism, the theory can be applied, with skill and care, beyond the economic to areas of political and cultural/social power. This is based on Lenin's (1975: pp. 13, 16-17, 40) concept that everything is connected to everything else within the dialectic of history. In *The German Ideology* of 1845-1846, Marx and Engels (1972: p. 44) wrote that the class that controls the material means of production also exercises dominance over intellectual production.

While wanting to avoid mechanical understandings of the base-superstructure model of Marx's (1972) 1859 *Preface to A contribution to the critique of political economy*, it is not a stretch historically to note that very often the holders of political and cultural power are also the holders of economic power. Where this is not obviously the case, we can still often talk about alliances between segments of the ruling-class, as occurred historically in Britain with the alliance between the landowning aristocracy and the industrial bourgeoisie. We show how in Northern Nigeria, ruling powers changed over time, as did power/knowledge networks and dominant ideologies. The British in the North set up a dominant and oppressive discourse that separated out “good Muslims” from “bad Muslims”, and treated each group differently according to how they were classified. “Good” was a code-word for co-operative and “bad” was a code-word for independent-minded. The

authors' intention here is to explore relations between dominant discourses or ideologies, on the one hand, and oppression and alienation, on the other hand, in each era. For [Marx and Engels \(1972: p. 23\)](#), ideology has no “independent” “history”, but the ideology of a time and place represents imagined answers to questions that are perceived to be right at the time. So, the German Idealists, such as Hegel, saw the culmination of history as the Prussian state adopting reason as its governing ideal as they had seen reason arguably adopting such a role elsewhere. But they were disappointed by the actual development of the Prussian state. Marx saw a new way forward when he observed the reality of French politics in France while Engels learnt the same thing observing the real economy in England.

The remainder of the article is structured as follows: Section 2 is a Research Method section and then Section 3 is headed up “Composing the Theoretical Assemblage”. This third section begins with overview paragraphs explaining why and how the included theories were chosen and how they contribute to the gaining of insights that address the research aim. Afterwards, the separate theory discussions follow in Section 4. Section 5 is a “Survey of Historical Literature”, while Section 6 is the result of applying the theories to the historical literature and is titled “Critical Literature Analysis”. Lastly, we end with “Implications for New Line Manager”, “Conclusion”, and “Leadership Implications: Further Reflections”.

2. Research Method

The aim of this section is to describe and explain the choices and reasoning behind the construction of the theoretical assemblage used to analyze and decipher historical literature accounts. Of course, choosing a different focus for study and/or choosing different theory frameworks would have yielded different results. The story is told from a Northern Nigerian perspective because, firstly, such an account seems to be largely missing from conventional understandings of Nigeria in the Global North countries even within academia. Secondly, the first-mentioned author is from Northern Nigeria and spent his childhood and youth there. We operate from the principle that it is always best to write about what you know.

The two authors perceived that the best approach was to study the history, politics, and culture of Northern Nigeria and divide time into three broad, insightful albeit conventional epochs—precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial. This is an oversimplification, but was necessary in order to structure the analysis and discussion in a way that would make intuitive sense for the readers. There is a clear focus on Northern Nigeria and the South is only mentioned for comparative purposes and when the events in the South clearly impacted on events in the North. Ultimately, though, we aim, in Marxist dialectical spirit to reveal contradictions as they emerged over time, both antagonistic and nonantagonistic ([Mao, 1971a: pp. 125-127; 1971b](#)). We don't answer directly the question of whether the Nigerian state of today is an artificial creation of the British colonizers firstly because the terms of the debate are too unclear. Definitions of an “artificial state” or an “authentic state” would be subjective and divide opinions. Secondly, it is better to

pose the question and then let readers reflect on the answer that they want to give. Of course, there are other research methods that we could have used, e.g., ethnography, questionnaires.

3. Composing the Theoretical Assemblage

One important initial decision revolved around which theory frameworks we should use to situate the historical literature and our later critical analysis. They had to be interesting and important, but also relevant to the purpose of this article, that is, to guide new line managers operating cross-culturally. Firstly, we chose Marx and Foucault as arguably the most important philosophers of the nineteenth and twentieth century respectively. Although it might be said that they are Eurocentric, Marx was one of the first to analyze global capitalism in the age of imperialism and he envisaged a global working-class that could eliminate capitalism's tendency to divide workers according to rank, trade, seniority, and race/ethnicity. He was very concerned about British imperialism in Ireland. Foucault wrote in the specific historical context of being part of the French Left that opposed French colonial attitudes and actions in the context of the Algerian Civil War or War of Independence (1954-1962). There is also the advantage that either one or the other wrote at approximately the same time as many of the events we discuss.

The advantages of Marx's work, and especially the alienation theory of the Young Marx (1994), contained in *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of 1844, is that it allows us to use Marxist dialectical reasoning (the "struggle" between opposites or the 'unity of opposites' as Lenin (1977: p. 379) and Mao (1971a: p. 128) put it) to arrive at clear conclusions about which social actors are exploited and alienated in which epoch, by whom, and how. At times we tentatively move beyond economic alienation to look at other types, but on the presumption that everything is connected to everything else and that base and superstructure are not discrete entities that can be separated, even mentally, from other parts of society (Smart, 1983: pp. 24-26). Using this theory means that we view alienation both as objective fact and morally questionable, consistent with what nowadays is termed critical realism. Hence, we view empowerment or the overcoming of alienation as morally good, other things being equal. The "mature Marx" tended to avoid morality discussions, because he thought that morality and ethics are part of the ideological superstructure and controlled by the ruling-class. However, we can argue that his chapter on The Working Day in *Capital* Volume 1 (Marx, 1976) simply has righteous indignation contained in and overflowing from the very words of the page. So, we take an ethical perspective in the sense that Marx did in that chapter. While Althusser (1965) claims that in the *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx still thinks in the thoughts of Feuerbach, and not in a Marxist way, it took years for Marx to free himself from the ideological mystification of his time and place, i.e., German Idealism philosophy. Nonetheless, from very early on, Marx was sensitive to the situation of those people who owned nothing, the *proletariat*, as evidenced by his article on the law of the theft of wood (Marx &

Engels, 1975: pp. 224-263) and letters to Arnold Ruge. As early as 1842, Marx (in Marx & Engels, 1975: p. 394) was writing that “religion should be criticized in the framework of criticism of political conditions rather than that political conditions should be criticized in the framework of religion”. Lenin (1964: p. 80) writes that in Marx’s articles in the *Rheinische Zeitung* between 1842-1843 one can observe “Marx’s transition from idealism to materialism and from revolutionary democracy to communism”.

We draw upon certain aspects or style of Foucault in his continuing desire to interrogate why current discourses and practices are as they are, whose interests do they serve, and how did they emerge historically? How could things have turned out differently? What can we learn from discourses and practices that have been superseded? The late Engels (1972: p. 295), in his 1890 letter to Bloch, seems to head in this direction when he talks about a multitude of ‘individual wills’ clashing and creating historical events. This allows for reverse causation and we observe the ‘relative autonomy’ (Althusser, 1965: p. 111) of the superstructure. Engels still argues for the *determination by the economic in the last instance* as he says that many circumstances of individuals that lead to action are economic. Foucault asks: What realms of life and thought, *épistème* and discursive formations, determine what can be said and what cannot be said and by whom at particular historical moments, even preceding the very acts of thought and speech? For Foucault, they determine the limits of the possible either in society as a whole (*épistème*) or in particular bounded fields of social life (discursive formations). We want to interrogate why things happened in certain epochs, why things did not happen, and how the things that did happen were justified by the powerful social actors of that time and place. In our account, we see a clash of military and ideological power as one epoch gave way to another—precolonial Indigenous rulers (or at least some of them) were co-opted by the British, who had ultimate control, and then, with independence, we see powerful forces in the North and South, in military, government, and business circles, attempting to gain ascendancy within their areas of influence.

4. Theoretical Framework Section

4.1. Foucault Theory

According to Rouse (1994), Foucault sketched a dynamic of power and knowledge. Foucault suggests that power is everywhere and takes this further by noting that power produces knowledge, (and not easily by stimulating it because it acts on power or by implying it because it is valuable); that power and knowledge directly mean one another; there is no power connection without the corresponding structure of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not assume and establish at the same time power relations (Gloria et al., 2010). Gutting (2005) argues further that Foucault’s aim was limited to understanding an aspect of society and how things were different in the past. In response to these complex dynamics, this article applies Foucauldian genealogy to answer the six key questions introduced previously.

The concept of decentring the subject comes from Foucault's late-period work on ethics as care of the self (Foucault, 1987; Foucault, 1997). It refers to his idea that we need to choose beliefs and actions according to situation and be willing to strategically change and modify our views not only to address each situation according to its uniqueness but so that we are not easy to categorize. Foucault mentioned to a magazine about different sexual orientation that he felt that the women's movement had been more successful than the sex liberation movement in decentering the subject as it was willing to address a wide variety of issues rather than just reasserting one's rights.

4.2. The Young Karl Marx's Theory of Alienation

Another theory that this article seeks to use is the alienation theory. Marx defines alienation theory within the context of the capitalist mode of production. It can also be understood to be the transformation of people's labour into labour-power (Marxists.org, No Date). Research suggests no society can exist without alienation (Horowitz, 2010). Marx takes this further by describing alienation under capitalism under four headings: the alienation of the worker from the products of her/his labour, the alienation felt during production or labour, the alienation from the nature of our *species-being* or human existence, and, finally, the alienation of people from other people or society (Mukhopadhyay, 2020). It is for this reason that this article seeks to explore how Foucault's genealogical questions and Marx's theory of alienation applies to the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods of Northern Nigeria.

At this point, this article begins to explore the historical periods of the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods of Northern Nigeria, to examine the historical transformations, before proceeding to apply the chosen theoretical frameworks across each historic period to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in Northern Nigeria.

5. Survey of Historical Literature

5.1. Introductory Remarks

We begin this section with an overview paragraph explaining what is selected and why it is relevant for the research aim. As with a data survey, this literature survey should have representativeness and prevalent patterns that validate their use for deriving findings. Our goal was to research scholarly sources on history, politics, and culture of Northern Nigeria relying upon, but not put in a straitjacket by, our decision to classify past events into the three useful classifications of precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial. We located sources via systematic Google Scholar searches, and decided that it was more practical to focus on journal articles rather than on edited book collections as these can be expensive to buy. The first-mentioned author also drew upon his knowledge and experience growing up in Northern Nigeria to help him contextualize and synthesize the results of journal articles. We were guided by several other principles in our research and writing. Firstly,

we began to identify important and trustworthy authors, such as C.N. Ubah (1976, 1991, 1994), and we consciously sought out more articles by these individuals. Because an author such as Ubah wrote about long time periods (at least 1897-1918), over consecutive articles, we perceived that we could learn from this writer due to the writer's interpretations having internal consistency. Lastly, discussion of colonialism and *jihad* does not indicate support for these ideas or historical events. Within each of the three epochs, the treatment of events largely follows chronological order.

5.2. The Precolonial Period of Northern Nigeria (Hausa Kingdom & Sokoto Caliphate)

The Hausa Kingdom was founded by the sons of the legend, Bayajidda, who established the seven states of Daura, Zaria, Rano, Kano, Biram, Katsina, and Gobir. And via his illegitimate sons he had out of marriage, founded seven other states called the bastard seven states which include: Zamfara, Gwari, Nupe, Kebbi, Yauri, Ilorin and Kwararafa (Mahamadou, 2022). The rule of governance was by division of labour in the Hausa kingdom. For instance, Kano state oversaw growing and producing cotton. On the other hand, Biram became the seat of the Hausa government and Zaria oversaw supplying labour through slavery (McIntyre et al., 1998).

By the thirteenth century, some Fulbe (Fulani) herders who happened to be Muslim arrived from the Senegal river valley and settled in the Hausa states and gradually converted some of the population to Islam through cattle and sheep trade (McIntyre et al., 1998). Soon, most of the Hausa state became Muslims. However, in the nineteenth century, there was a religious-ethnic movement by Fulbe Jihadist, Uthman dan Fodio, who invaded the Hausa states, created a Fulani aristocracy, and replaced the 14 Hausa states with Islamic structures (King, 2001).

This invasion by Uthman Dan Fodio suggests that there was a significant shift of power from the 14 independent kingdoms. This was a transition from a decentralized form of government to a centralized system, making the precolonial era of the Hausa kingdom of Northern Nigeria witness a meaningful change. It is at this point that this article begins to explore the new era and events that emerged from the conquest of the Hausa states by Uthman Dan Fodio.

The Invasion of the Hausa Kingdom led to the reform of the 14 states into the Sokoto Caliphate whose vision was to create an Islamic state that was not inclusive of polytheistic culture and traditions like the ban of head veil for women and the consulting of magicians, and deities like Uwandawa, the goddess of hunting, and Uwargona, goddess of agriculture (Adam, 2014). This would suggest that the establishment of the Islamic Sokoto caliphate was a reform by Dan Fodio. Additionally, Adeleye (1971) takes this further to suggest that the reform by Uthman Dan Fodio was to achieve domination by the Fulbe (Fulanis) who were immigrants over the Hausa land. However, other researchers argue that Dan Fodio's reform was to foster an Islamic community of Muslims (*ummah*) and create an effective

administration (Audu & Osuala, 2014; Tukur, 1999). They deduce that the invasion of the Hausa kingdom was the desire for political, religious, and ethnic dominance. On getting into power, Uthman Dan Fodio established the Sokoto Caliphate as the headquarters of his administration and lived a customary life where he was surrounded by hundreds of students (Hodgkin, 2024).

As time went on, Usman retired and left the administration of the Islamic empire in the hands of two Shaykhs: Abdullahi and Bello, with Abdullahi later becoming the Sultan of the Sokoto Caliphate, on the passing of Uthman Dan Fodio, and Bello overseeing some of the bastard states, like Nupe and Ilorin (Sharif, 2008). The Sokoto Caliphate became one of the most powerful empires in Sub Saharan Africa, until the end of the 1890s, when an internal rivalry began within the empire, leading to disintegration of the centralized system of governance. This disintegration provided an opportunity for the European colonial armies to gain access to the empire.

By 1903, the Sokoto Caliphate fell to the British colonial armies who controlled over eighty per cent of the empire. It is at this point that this article begins to explore the effects of colonialism on the Sokoto Caliphate of Northern Nigeria.

5.3. The Colonial Period of Northern Nigeria

A century later, the Sokoto Caliphate became fully under the control of a foreign government, the British, led by Sir Fredrick Lugard who declared protectorate over Northern Nigeria (Ubah, 1976). The Sokoto Caliphate was now renamed 'Protectorate of Northern Nigeria.' This shift in power from the centralized system of government by the Sokoto Caliphate to the hands of the British suggests a change in the system of government. The system of governance introduced by Sir Fredrick Lugard was known as the indirect rule system (Falola et al., 2024). Indirect rule is a system of governance in which the agent delegates power to local holders (Furnivall, 1956). In the case of Indirect rule in Northern Nigeria, the British delegated power to selected traditional chiefs (Falola et al., 2024; Furnivall, 1956).

With the conquest of Northern Nigeria by Britain came some changes like Western education, English language, and Christianity. However, the spread of Western education and Christianity was resisted by some Muslim leaders in the North (Falola et al., 2024), but embraced by non-Muslim traditionalists who saw it as liberation from the hands of Muslim leadership. While the British ruled indirectly, some of the power of Muslim Sufi leaders from the previous Sokoto Caliphate administration was strengthened—these leaders were tagged as “good Muslims” by the British for embracing the Western colonial rulers and rejecting religious practices the British determined to be fanatical. On the other hand, members of the Tijjaniya and Mahdiyya sects of Islam were labelled by the British as “bad Muslims” since they opposed British rule.

Also worth noting is that at some point in the British invasion of Northern Nigeria, it expanded the African slave trade internationally, thus making substantial profit for Europeans, but few Africans benefitted (Harvard Divinity School, 2024).

Despite witnessing the operations of the slavery market in Northern Nigeria, Lugard did not see it as an issue that might affect his administration (Ubah, 1991). This suggests that slavery would continue from precolonial to colonial periods. For instance, the Bauchi region of the present-day Northern Nigeria was where slaves would be transported to other Hausa states. However, as time went on, Lugard halted the slave raiding, which Blue (1996) argues was only done to bring peace to his territories.

With the pressure from the League of Nations, Lugard was forced to formulate policies that declared slave trade and enslavement illegal (Lovejoy, 2012). For economic benefits, Lugard amalgamated the Northern Nigeria Protectorate with another region it had colonized in West Africa: the Southern Protectorate of Nigeria (Ajaebili, 2015).

With the Northerners described as “black-faced Mohammedan Arabs with a blend of African descent” and the Southerners as “cheerful, laughing, trading black men”, and both regions having distinct governments, customs, and culture, it would be like having China next to Britain (Teniola, 2021). The amalgamation would make national unity difficult, thus acting as a catalyst for ethnic differentiation in the postcolonial period (Ochonu, 2008).

Years later, there was a clamour for independence for the entire area of what is now known as Nigeria. In Northern Nigeria, nationalist parties like the NEPA were inspired to reform their region and they were championed by the educated and privileged (Olusanya, 1967). Members of the public in Northern Nigeria also joined the nationalist movement; a man known as Mallam Sa’ad Zungur sent a message to the British-favoured Muslim leaders to be fair so as not to sing the song of “had-I-Known” through his published poem. Mallam Sa’ad also expressed his interest to reform Northern Nigeria starting with sex workers who made false money (Olusanya, 1967). There was a decolonization struggle to resist colonial domination, and achieve an independent Nigeria, alongside Southern Nigeria, despite the differences in culture, religion, history, geography, and climate. But, despite this alliance, came a stereotype from the Southerners who perceived Northerners to be uneducated and backward, as a significant proportion of the Northern population resisted colonial culture, i.e., Western education, English language, and Christianity (Mohammed, 2018).

Decades later, this stereotyping issue would still exist. In 1960, Nigeria was granted independence headed by an elected prime minister from the North, Sir Tafawa Balewa (Udo et al., 2024). This suggests that the British colony of an independent federation had now shifted to a parliamentary system of government. Additionally, the government of a country with diverse ethnic groups, cultures, and religions would be in the hands of a Muslim Northerner. It is at this point that this article seeks to explore the post-independence period of Northern Nigeria.

5.4. The Postcolonial Period of Northern Nigeria

The independence of Nigeria necessitated inter-relationship between the

Northern and Southern regions of Nigeria. There was a regional concentration of Hausa-Fulani and Muslims in the North, with Yoruba, Igbo, Christians, and some elements of traditional religions in the South (Badmus, 2009; Salamone, 1997). A significant legacy that British colonialism left in Northern Nigeria was Christianity, which witnessed a growth from 2.7% to 9.7%, while Islam witnessed a decline from 73.0% to 71.8% (Iwuchukwu, 2013). This resulted in the Northern Muslims seeing a need to Islamize the northern part of the country. For instance, the leader of the North, Sardauna, who happened to be the great-great grandson of Uthman Dan Fodio, championed conversion campaigns to convert the non-Muslims of Northern Nigeria to Islam and leveraged the assistance of Muslim-dominant countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Pakistan (Bunza, 2007; Iwuchukwu, 2013). A part of the Islamisation was to eliminate the difference between the Sufi sect, who had been labelled by the British administration as “good Muslims”, and the Tijjaniyya who had been labelled as “bad Muslims” (Paden, 2023).

However, the situation took a negative turn when the prime minister was assassinated in a military coup carried out by Chukwuma Kaduna Nze (Ogbogo, 2018), a soldier from the Southeastern part of Nigeria. This event halted the Islamisation agenda and united the Muslims and Christians from Northern Nigeria and led to a civil war from 1967 to 1970. While the civil war may have been perceived to have been caused by religion, researchers argue that a major cause was that the Southern region of Nigeria wanted more control over the government whereas the Northern region wanted a greater share of economic rewards (Iwuchukwu, 2013).

Since then, Nigeria has witnessed a series of military takeovers up till the Obasanjo administration of 1999, when Nigeria returned to a civilian government. Additionally, the Obasanjo administration was a government that was representative of Nigeria, irrespective of religion, or even of ethnicity. Obasanjo was of Yoruba descent and ruled between 1999 and 2007. He spent his administration travelling abroad to strengthen democratic ties with Western countries like Britain and the USA, as this was not feasible during the past under the military regime (Ogunjowo, 2021). Furthermore, the Obasanjo administration led to the rebalancing of power relations between the North and South, thus giving the Northern leaders more power and control over the government. However, his administration produced challenges as some Northern leaders began to implement Sharia law in some of their states, thus leading to a religious crisis in the North. Enraged Christian Northerners and Southern Nigerian activists became dismayed at the Obasanjo federal government (Vaughan, 2017). For instance, a popular attorney and a Catholic archbishop from the South went further to sue the President for his negligence and not providing security for Christian minorities in the North.

In 2006, Obasanjo selected Umaru Musa Yar’adua as the Presidential candidate to succeed him. Yar’adua ran against several Nigerian military leaders but succeeded in winning the election in 2007, which was characterized by widespread violence and alleged vote-rigging (Denzer, 2024). A significant policy implemented by the new administration was to seek the assistance of Nigerians in the

Diaspora to develop Nigeria economically, called the citizen diplomacy. However, a significant challenge the administration faced was the health of Yar'Adua (Dickson, 2010). In 2009, Umar Musa Yar'Adua was flown to Saudi Arabia for medical treatment for pericarditis, leading to uncertainty especially when a young Nigerian named Umar Faruk Abdulmutallab tried igniting an explosive device on an American Airline and no Nigerian head of state was available to engage with the American government.

On 5 May 2010, Yar'Adua passed away in Saudi Arabia, and his vice-president, Goodluck Jonathan, was sworn in as head of state (Tattersall, 2010). However, Jonathan's administration witnessed many challenges such as ethnic and religious tensions. For instance, there was the rise of an Islamist group in Northern Nigeria known as *Boko Haram* ("Western education is a sin"), which believed that Nigerian democracy and secular rule went against the Sharia (Pérouse de Montclos, 2014). Tensions escalated when hundreds of schoolgirls were abducted by this terrorist group in Northern Nigeria, sparking global outrage (Adeola, No Date). By 2015, over two million Northern Nigerians were displaced, leading to a refugee crisis (Adeola, 2017). This led to the fall of Jonathan's administration and defeat at the 2015 General Election to Muhammadu Buhari whose campaign manifesto was "change". Retired General Muhammadu Buhari was declared the winner at the 2015 General Election (Adeola & Jegede, 2018).

Muhammadu's administration was saddled with fighting corruption but also faced similar challenges to Jonathan's administration. Rule of law became a pertinent concern in Muhammadu's tenure, for instance, the illegal detentions of Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and a Shi'a Muslim leader, Ibrahim El Zakzaky. Additionally, there was another abduction by the Islamist group which abducted another set of schoolgirls in Dapchi, Northern Nigeria (Amaza, 2018). Furthermore, the Muhammadu's administration had proposed herders 'colonies' around Nigeria. However, this was resisted by most Nigerians especially in the North Central and Southern regions who perceived the colonies to be an ethnic domination by the Fulani population.

Muhammadu Buhari completed an eight-year tenure and handed power to the new democratically-elected president on 29 May 2023, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, a noteworthy politician who had governed Lagos State from 1999 to 2007 (Asanebi, 2023). While Tinubu's administration principles include 1) Respect of the fundamental law, 2) security, 3) boosting Nigeria's economy, 4) gender promotion, and 5) fight against corruption, his administration has also raised a lot of questions on religious matters despite Nigeria being a secular country. This is because both the president and vice-president happen to be Muslims from the Southern and Northern region of Nigeria respectively, with some research pointing out that no Christian from the North has ever been elected as president or vice-president. Taking this further, research also suggests that a relationship seems to exist between religion and politics in Nigeria.

It is also worth noting that the existence of Nigeria as a country has led to a

never-ending debate about whether it existed only because of the influence of the British colonial power (Oloidi & Ilechukwu, 2021). It is at this point that this article begins to explore dynamics across each period through the lens of Foucault's genealogical method.

6. Critical Literature Analysis

6.1. Introductory Remarks

The goal of this section is to use, firstly, Foucault's genealogical method and, secondly, Marx's alienation theory to produce a considered and reasoned analysis of each of the three eras, precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial. As we shall see, in each era, various policies, events, and thinking have long-term ramifications that last beyond the era in question. As many postcolonial scholars have pointed out, the effects of colonialism do not depart on the same day as the last governor. They linger, and these include ideas, worldviews, and habits of thought and ranking, just as much as they include institutions and written policies. When the governor is removed, these things linger as a kind of Freudian repressed other or, in Marxist terms, the opposite, now submerged side (Mao, 1971a: pp. 112-117), of the dialectic. Often tensions break out when the unresolved aspects of previous eras, once suppressed, burst back on to the scene, such as conflict among the various ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia, at the end of the communist era, or The Troubles in Northern Ireland. In a way, these were not new disputes, they were old disputes bursting back to life as circumstances changed-Althusser's (1965) "overdetermination" of a contradiction or the late Engels' (1972) clash of multiple "individual wills". Similarly, Lenin (1975: p. 17) talks about "the sum total of the strivings of all the members of a given society". In this section, we keep the analysis of Foucault separate from Marx and the analysis of the three eras separate from each other. This is done purely for ease of exposition. The results of our analysis appear in Table 1 and Table 2. Only the colonial-era Foucauldian analysis also appears here in the main text.

6.2. Foucault Genealogical Method in the Colonial Context of Northern Nigeria

1) Who is rewarded and punished and for what acts?

In the colonial period in Northern Nigeria, rewards and punishments were implemented by the British colonial offices. For instance, the Muslim leaders from the Sokoto Caliphate administration, who co-operated with the Colonial Offices and rejected some Islamic practices they once adhered to, were described by the British as "good Muslims", whereas leaders who opposed the British were called "bad Muslims". This was highlighted in the historical section. It shows a battle for control of language. "Muslim" was a word previously only associated with "the good," but the British opposed this by claiming that Muslims could be "good" or "bad" with them making the decisive judgement.

Table 1. Insights from using Foucault's genealogical method.

Question	Precolonial era	Colonial era	Postcolonial era
<i>1. Who is rewarded and punished and for what acts?</i>	The rule of governance was by division of labour, where states like Kano and Biram oversaw the cultivation of cotton and seat for governance, respectively. Kano, which was a major trading centre, would occasionally attempt to conquer its rivals. Regions in the precolonial Hausa kingdom of Northern Nigeria were rewarded and punished based on the impact that they contributed to the economy.	Rewards and punishments were implemented by the British colonial offices. For instance, the Muslim leaders from the Sokoto Caliphate administration who co-operated with the colonial offices and rejected some Islamic practices were described by the British as "good Muslims", whereas leaders who opposed them were described to be "bad Muslims". It shows a basis for control in language.	A part of the Islamisation strategy by Northern leaders was to eliminate the differences that existed between the Sufi sect who had been labelled by the colonial administration as "good Muslims", and the Tijjaniyya who had been labelled as 'bad Muslims.' Some initiatives it had put in place were the maintenance of Quranic schools and restriction of Christian activities. Christians in the North might well be the next group to be punished.
<i>2. Why are these acts viewed positively or negatively by the rule making bodies?</i>	Any dissent was perceived to be negative and a threat to the established power structure. For instance, prior to the <i>Jihad</i> by Uthman Dan Fodio, Indigenous Muslim scholars in Northern Nigeria used poetry to attack the dispensation. A line from a poem by Imam Muhammad Ibn al-Hajj Abd al-Rahmani al-Barnawi read "And everything taken from the Muslim by force in the market, what is taken thus is illegal." This suggests that some practices or acts emerged that challenged the political and economic structures within the Hausa Kingdom.	Events that did not affect the colonial administration were perceived positively. For instance, Lord Lugard who took control of the Northern region did not perceive that the existing operations of the slavery market were going to affect his administration. Thus he viewed it positively. However, the British perceived the united opposition of Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria to be a threat and so decided to implement the system of divide-and-rule.	The Islamisation agenda was to eliminate the difference between the good and bad Muslims. This was championed by the great-grandson of Uthman Dan Fodio who served in the postcolonial administration. This suggests that Islamic practices were viewed positively and unIslamic practices were viewed negatively.
<i>3. How do the current rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour reinforce existing notions, meaning, good and bad, truth and falsehood, normal and abnormal?</i>	We suggest that behaviours in precolonial Northern Nigeria were judged based on cultural and religious norms, emphasizing the notion of good and bad, truth and false, as well as normal and abnormal.	Colonial rule introduced Western education, Christianity, and English language and other forms of change in Northern Nigeria. Although some elements of the previous Sokoto Caliphate were strengthened, this led to the emergence of new rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. For instance, two women named Adama and Hassan were sentenced to six months imprisonment and twenty-four lashes for prostitution and stealing, after British Resident, Fitzpatrick, caught them in his residence (!)	The Islamisation agenda was to eliminate the differences between the good and bad Muslims. Additionally, the legacy of the British was considered unacceptable by some Muslim leaders. For instance, the criticism of sex workers by Mallam Sa'ad Zungur suggests this. The application of Sharia law in some Northern states during Obasanjo's administration reinforced religious practices while marginalizing non-Muslim minorities.

<p>4. <i>How did the rules emerge in their historic context, and could events unfold differently?</i></p>	<p>The invasion by Uthman Dan Fodio led to a transition from a decentralized system of government to a centralized form of government. For instance, in a conquest to turn less devout Muslims into orthodox Muslims, Uthman Dan Fodio established a non-exploitative system and a central bureaucracy limited to vizier, judges, chief of police and collector of taxes.</p>	<p>The colonial rule in Northern Nigeria emerged because of the exploitation of the African continent and imperialism. This was formalized at the Berlin Conference where European nations met to negotiate on questions related to the African continent. In the context of Northern Nigeria, had the Sokoto Caliphate resisted the colonial invasion, things would have unfolded differently.</p>	<p>Events took a negative turn when the Prime Minister was assassinated in a coup carried out by a military officer from Southeast Nigeria. This event influenced the dynamics of power. This event made some Northerners hold a kind of resentment for the Southeasterners, thus leading to killings of 30,000 Southeastern civilians who lived in the North, while 150,000 - 300,000 fled for their lives.</p>
<p>5. <i>What practices, disclosures, and classification schemes serve exactly which vested interests, and how can, we be sure?</i></p>	<p>The diverse practices in the precolonial Northern Nigeria served the interests of some classes of people. For example, it known that before the invasion by Dan Fodio, a traditional chief was saddled with the responsibility to maintain a shrine, thus benefitting chief priests across various clans. Furthermore, the invasion by Dan Fodio introduced Arabic literacy which benefitted learned scholars who were appointed as clerk and advisors to the King.</p>	<p>The colonial segregation and division schemes, such as “good” and “bad” Muslim distinctions, served the interests of the colonial power. For instance, the good Muslims were made to take an oath of loyalty to the British saying: “I swear, in the name of Allah and of Mohammed his Prophet, to serve well and truly his Majesty King Edward VII, and his representative, the High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria, to obey the laws of the Protectorate and the lawful commands of the High Commissioner, and of the Resident, provided that they are not contrary to my religion. And if they are so contrary I will at once inform the Resident for the information of the High Commissioner.... And as I carry out this oath, so may Allah judge me.” However, the Muslims labelled to be bad by the British, rebelled, leading to the killing of British Residents.</p>	<p>The imposition of Sharia law in some Northern states served the interests of Northern Muslim leaders and arguably the Muslim population. Additionally, as a result of the series of military takeovers witnessed in Nigeria up till the Obasanjo administration of 1999, the civilian Nigerian government practices were committed to defence of human rights like the investigation of mysterious deaths, assassinations, and human rights abuse.</p>
<p>6. <i>How can decentering the subject and resisting classification create a new anarchy or allow other sets of meanings and values to emerge?</i></p>	<p>Uthman Dan Fodio’s invasion led to creating a new type of anarchy thus challenging existing structures of less devout Muslims to become more devout Muslims. For instance, the Dan Fodio administration’s aim to eliminate diabolical beliefs and rituals contrary to the Quran and Sharia allowed other sets of meanings and values to emerge.</p>	<p>The British classified the Muslim-majority population based on its own perceptions. However, this classification had its consequences. For example, the Muslims who were labelled to be “bad” by the British challenged this categorization and formed a rebellion, burning down villages and wiping out many British</p>	<p>The existence of Nigeria has fostered ongoing debate about whether it existed due only to the British influence. In the North, an intense sense of religious and ethnic identity exists. For instance, the people of the North are referred to as “Hausa North” by those from the South, enabling religious and ethnic</p>

<p>troops. In conclusion, decentering the colonial subjectivity and classification led to the Northerners challenging the power of colonialism and allowed for other values to emerge.</p>	<p>separation to continue to prevail. We also note that decentering the subject and resisting colonial classification has led to new views on national identity of being Nigerian irrespective of religion or being a “Muslim from the North”.</p>
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2) Why are these acts viewed positively or negatively by the rule making bodies?

During the colonial period of Northern Nigeria, events that did not affect the colonial administration were perceived positively or neutrally. For instance, Lord Lugard did not perceive that the existing operations of the slavery market were going to affect his administration, thus he viewed it positively (Ubah, 1991). However, the British perceived the united opposition of Northern and Southern Nigeria to be a threat and so they decided to implement the system of divide-and-rule, thereby keeping groups separate from one another (Falola et al., 2024).

3) How do the current rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour reinforce existing notions meaning, good and bad, truth and falsehood, normal and abnormal?

Colonial rule introduced Western education, Christianity, and English language and other forms of change in Northern Nigeria, as noted in the historical section of this work. Although some elements of the previous Sokoto Caliphate were strengthened, as highlighted earlier, this led to the emergence of new rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. For instance, two women named Adama and Hassan were sentenced to six months’ imprisonment and twenty-four lashes for prostitution and stealing, after British Resident, Fitzpatrick, caught them in his residence (!); this led to further outrage (Pierce, 2024).

4) How did the rules emerge in their historic context, and could events unfold differently?

The colonial rule in Northern Nigeria emerged because of the exploitation of the African continent and imperialism. This was formalized at the Berlin Conference where European nations met to negotiate on questions related to the African continent (Berlin West Africa Conference, 2024). In the context of Northern Nigeria, had the Sokoto Caliphate resisted the colonial invasion, things would have unfolded differently. Due to the failure of the Banza states of the Sokoto Caliphate to resist the first attack in 1897, other regions of the caliphate became prone to attack (Ubah, 1994).

5) What practices, disclosures, and classification schemes serve exactly which vested interests, and how can, we be sure?

The colonial segregation-and-division schemes, such as “good” and “bad” Muslim distinctions, served the interests of the colonial power. For instance, the good Muslims were made to take an oath of loyalty to the British saying: “I swear, in the name of Allah and of Mohammed his Prophet, to serve well and truly his

Majesty King Edward VII, and his representative, the High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria, to obey the laws of the Protectorate and the lawful commands of the High Commissioner, and of the Resident, provided that they are not contrary to my religion. And if they are so contrary I will at once inform the Resident for the information of the High Commissioner.... And as I carry out this oath, so may Allah judge me” (Reynolds, 2001). However, the Muslims labelled to be bad by the British rebelled, leading to the killing of British Residents. In conclusion, this classification influenced how the colonial administration interacted with its colony, the Muslim-dominated region of Northern Nigeria.

6) How can decentering the subject and resisting classification create a new anarchy or allow other sets of meanings and values to emerge?

During the colonial period in Northern Nigeria, the British classified the Muslim-majority population based on its own perceptions as noted earlier. However, this classification had its consequences. For example, the Muslims who were labelled to be ‘bad’ by the British challenged this categorization and formed a rebellion, burning down villages and wiping out many British troops (Reynolds, 2001). In conclusion, decentering the colonial subjectivity and classification led to the Northerners challenging the power of the colonial regime, because they opposed the classification system, and this allowed for other values to emerge.

6.3. Marx’s Alienation Theory in Northern Nigeria

The authors’ complete analysis of the three eras is contained in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Insights from using Marx’s alienation theory.

Type of Alienation	Precolonial	Colonial	Postcolonial
<i>1 The alienation of the worker from the products of his labour</i>	During the Hausa Kingdom, there was division of labour whereby each state was saddled with the responsibility of producing certain goods. For instance, Kano state oversaw growing and producing cotton and Zaria oversaw supplying labour through slavery. This could suggest that products that were produced became another’s possession. Also worth noting is that although the division of labour was not intended to explicitly exploit the Hausa people, it could still lead to a sense of alienation as the people may not have control over the entire process of production of labour. Furthermore, feudalism theory could also play a role here, as feudalism is characterized by co dependence, ownership and production, where power of the state is centralized (Tonomura, 1999).	The British implemented the indirect rule of governance. This suggests that the delegation of power by the British to selected traditional rulers and not the Indigenous rulers may have led to the marginalization of peasants who served the interests of the Indigenous rulers. Additionally, some children were rescued by the British colonial government from slave traders and relocated to Freed slaves’ homes in Zungeru and Borno. This also suggests the liberated slaves were alienated from the products of their labour when they were previously toiling under slavery.	There was a decline in the growth of Islam in Northern Nigeria while Christianity witnessed an increase because of the legacy of British colonial Influence. This reflects a shift in the religious landscape of Northern Nigeria where the Muslim majority could have felt alienated from perceptions of Islamic community due to external forces like the influence of colonialism.

<p>2. <i>The alienation felt in the course of production or labour.</i></p>	<p>Marx argues that the labourer is alienated from the production process. The invasion by Uthman Dan Fodio and the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate led to a significant shift. The imposition of a centralized system of governance and tighter Islamic laws could have led to the population feeling alienated from the process of labour. Additionally, there was significant replacement of Hausa kings by Fulani emirs under the authority of Uthman Dan Fodio, as well as the emergence of large Fulani forces in some of the Hausa states like Gobir. This suggests that the centralized authority of Fulani kings meant decisions regarding production and labour were distant from the Hausa peasants.</p>	<p>The colonial authorities caused a division in the local population, labelling some as good Muslims and others as bad Muslims. Additionally, the imposition of some Western cultural norms like Western education, Christianity, and English language, were at odds with local customs. Furthermore, this concludes that the division and imposition of Western culture and language could create a sense of alienation among the local labour force and different religious communities. Here we do not maintain a sharp distinction between (economic) base and superstructure.</p>	<p>There was a push for Islamisation by Muslim Northern leaders like Ahmadu Bello, and a struggle for dominance between the Northerners and the Southeasterners which led to a civil war. This suggests that the conflict could have disrupted the day-to-day activities of many people in Northern Nigeria who were caught in this conflict, thereby alienating them from their usual means of sustenance and economic activities.</p>
<p>3. <i>The alienation from the nature of our species-being or human existence.</i></p>	<p>Several events suggest a form of alienation from the nature of human existence. For instance, the transition from decentralized to centralized government suggests that the locals of each Hausa state may have been alienated from the community-based way of making decisions, as it was replaced by an authoritarian system. Additionally, the imposition of religious values by Dan Fodio's administration like imposing head veil on women may have alienated individuals from their customary ways of life.</p>	<p>Marx's arguments are illustrated through the impact of colonialism in Northern Nigeria. For instance, during the colonial period, the traditional structures of the Sokoto Caliphate were replaced, forcing locals to conform to new structures, thereby making Muslim leaders like the Sultan and other emirs powerless.</p>	<p>The legacy of colonialism in Northern Nigeria triggered subsequent ethnic, religious, and political conflicts. This illustrates how the identity of Northern Nigeria shifted and reflected a disconnect from the cultural roots of Northerners.</p>
<p>4. <i>The Alienation of man from man or society.</i></p>	<p>The Hausa kingdom witnessed a shift from decentralized system of government to centralized system of governance. Additionally, there were also internal rivalries within the Sokoto Caliphate after the passing of Uthman Dan Fodio. This suggests that the centralization of power under the Sokoto Caliphate may have alienated individuals across the Hausa states from one another as well as creating internal tensions and factions.</p>	<p>As human relationships become a means rather than an end, similarly individuals are alienated from one another. For example, during the colonial period, the British amalgamated the Northern and Southern protectorate of Nigeria for its economic benefits which the Northerners perceived as an attempt by the colonialists to convert the region from Muslim communities to Christian/Western cultures and beliefs. We conclude that the amalgamation fostered a sense of alienation among Northerners.</p>	<p>The assassination of the prime minister and the outbreak of civil war reflects the alienation of Northerners from their fellow Nigerians, thereby causing social tension and divide. The growth of exploitative MNCs offering low wages in both South and North adds to alienation in the Marxist sense. Alienation is increased when people are uprooted and families split in the constant search for a livelihood.</p>

In conclusion, throughout the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial history of Northern Nigeria, several forms of alienation have been illustrated. Whether it is

alienation from the product of labour, from the course of production, from the nature of human existence, and of man from man or society, the identity of Northern Nigerians has shifted throughout this transition. It is at this point that we begin to explore how Stakeholder and Agency Theory can be used to identify decisions that could have been taken to maximize the interests of the stakeholders in the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial eras.

7. Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory emerged as a foundation to understand the problem of how value is produced and traded; the problem of relating ethics to capitalism; and the problem of management (Freeman, 1984; Parmar, Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Purnell, & De Colle, 2010). Furthermore, it is also viewed as interconnected relationships between business and its communities. This would conclude that applying Stakeholder Theory could help to maximize the interests of all of the stakeholders.

As noted in the historical section of this article, in the precolonial era, the stakeholders included the local rulers, Muslim leaders, merchants, and locals of the Hausa Kingdom and the Sokoto Caliphate. On the other hand, in the colonial era, the stakeholders included the British colonial officers, local rulers, slaves, and locals of Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, during the postcolonial era, the stakeholders include political leaders, religious groups, and citizens of Nigeria. Hence, it was important for the precolonial Hausa Kingdom and Sokoto Caliphate to establish an inclusive governance structure that was reflective of diverse communities. Additionally, it was vital for the British colonial administration to foster a collaborative partnership between the Muslims that they had labelled to be good and those that they had labelled to be bad. Furthermore, an equitable resource allocation in the postcolonial administration could reduce the eagerness for Northerners to want to gain more control over the economy. It is worth noting that having an inclusive government, collaborative partnership, and equitable resource allocation provides a deeper awareness of community and strategic management, which often leads to synergistic outcomes (Brown, 2003; Saltiel, 1998).

8. Agency Theory

Agency Theory involves the issue of agency problems and solutions (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Agency theory is based on two behavioural assumptions: that individuals seek to maximize their utility; and that individuals are likely to benefit from the incompleteness of contracts (Zogning, 2017). This would suggest that Agency Theory seeks to identify decisions taken to maximize the stakeholders' interest when one party acts on behalf of another party. In order for the stakeholders' interest across each historic period of Northern Nigeria to be maximized, it was important for the rulers in the precolonial era to implement assemblies where locals could participate in decision-making. Additionally, in the colonial era, there was very limited collaboration between the administration and the

locals. Furthermore, establishment of robust anti-corruption measures could have checked the activities of elected officials, thereby reducing the risk of military coups taking place. It is also worth noting that transparent mechanisms for representation, collaboration, and implementation of anti-corruption measures could have been adopted to improve governance and mitigate corruption (Owusu, Chan, DeGraft, Ameyaw, & Robert, 2019; Tricker, 2019).

9. Implications for New Line Manager

For a new line manager about to start work in Northern Nigeria, it is vital to gain a deeper understanding of the region's complex landscape, socially, politically, and culturally, so as to be able to navigate it successfully. It is also worth noting that gaining a profound understanding of the historic influences throughout the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods of Northern Nigeria through the perspective of Foucault's genealogical method, Marx's theory of alienation, stakeholder, and agency theories, can provide the foreign line manager with essential resources for successful and effective organization, direction, co-ordination, and control.

The history of Northern Nigeria has been structured by the dynamics of Indigenious, British colonial, and postcolonial structures, thus fostering a distinct culture from the rest of Nigeria. In the precolonial period, organizations were structured around traditional norms with power shared among local leaders. In the colonial period, on the other hand, power was shared among the British rulers and favoured Northern Nigeria leaders, thus alienating many members of the community. Also worth noting is that, in the postcolonial period, the dynamics were further complicated by political, ethnic, and religious identities. Therefore, it is essential for the new line manager to understand these historic events because ideas and practices of current and potential employees may be deeply rooted in these events and their consequences.

Throughout the history of Northern Nigeria, the dynamics of power have been influenced by ethnicity, religion, and political ideologies. For the new line manager to navigate these sensitive and complex dynamics, applying Foucault's genealogical analysis can provide a profound analysis of past and present power relationships, as well as the anticipation of the possibility of future conflict. It is essential for the new line manager to manage alienation through Stakeholder Theory, thereby proactively engaging all relevant stakeholders. Also worth noting is the application of Marx's theory of alienation through the lens of capitalism to identify the feeling of alienation among employees in Northern Nigeria from their work. It is also important for the line manager to encourage the input and opinions of all employees so as to reduce alienation.

As seen from the historic contexts of Northern Nigeria, especially in the colonial period, where power and opportunities were delegated to favoured leaders by the British colonialists and indirect rule was adopted, there is the possibility of the existence of a patronage and informal system in Northern Nigeria. Additionally,

the line manager should learn to respect the diversity of Northern Nigeria to foster an inclusive work environment; this is because Northern Nigeria is culturally-diverse with numerous languages and ethnic groups.

In summary, the major points worth noting by the new line manager in Northern Nigeria include: understanding the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial history of Northern Nigeria as well as how the governance has influenced the present dynamics; identifying the consequences of the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods in the modern day; recognizing and respecting the power structures; and applying Foucault and Marx's theory to gain an understanding of how power/knowledge transformed throughout the historic periods; engagement with stakeholders of Northern Nigeria from the local heads to the local members of the community in order to foster collaboration; understanding the sense of alienation that had occurred as a result of historic events across the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods such as the British invasion; addressing any form of alienation in the modern day; applying Agency Theory to foster a culture of accountability and transparency; respecting the diverse cultural environment of Northern Nigeria; establishing managerial practices; relationship-building; and continuous learning of the evolving political and social landscape. By taking note of these points, the new line manager can navigate the complexities of Northern Nigeria.

10. Conclusion

This article has conducted an analysis of precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial history of Northern Nigeria through the lens of Foucault's genealogical method and Marx's theory of alienation, complemented by Stakeholder and Agency Theory. The analysis reveals the complex dynamics of power/knowledge and governance across different historical periods.

In each historic period, the distribution of rewards and punishments, the opinions on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the emergence of new values shaped the different structures of power/knowledge systems. Beyond a look at the forgotten region of Nigeria, the Muslim North, which is important for its own sake, the authors hope that the article has shown the ongoing relevance and usefulness of both Marx and Foucault to look at contemporary events and the historical paths that led up to them. We see different combinations and alliances of ruling forces and we see how power/knowledge is created so as to control the population and protect the mode of production. If we wanted to use the controversial terms of base and superstructure (and Marxism does not rest or fall on these since they are not terms that appears in most of Marx's writings), then clearly there is mutual interaction and reverse causation. "The economy" alone, or "politics" or "religion" alone, explains very little or nothing at all. We can see how the path from Marx to Engels to Lenin to Mao to Althusser to Foucault (a few links in the chain are left out for ease of exposition) is an important one due to the recognition that while the ruling-class is more powerful than subordinated classes, power/knowledge resides in the dominant discourses and materialized practices of institutions. *Poster*

(1984) comes very close to explaining this dynamic and progression in thought while not rejecting either important tradition. For his part, Foucault largely avoided using the term “ideology” as it suggests some sort of “true” “essence” that remains after an individual puts in the work to free herself or himself from ideological mystification. Likewise, “alienation” suggests a “true” unalienated individual, at least in theory. Foucault’s choice to reject both words achieves a gain of clarity but there is also a cost in terms of making it much harder to explain why some power/knowledge systems are less ethical or more oppressive than others. Khrushchev was in similar theoretical trouble when he struggled to criticize Stalinism at the 1956 Party Conference other than to talk about a “personality cult” (Smart, 1983: p. 14), which is a non-materialist explanation anyway (according to the logic of strict separation of the ideal from the real). Combined, we think that applying Marx and Foucault provides interesting and important commentary on the various phases of Northern Nigerian history. The question of whether Nigeria is a “real” country, or a British creation, is of course, a red herring, as every nation-state is an entity that does not exist in nature in raw form despite the passion exhibited by football fans at World Cups. Nations exist through war and conquest and through politicians and army generals drawing lines upon a piece of paper called a map. *This does not mean that individual nations lack meaning*, but only that all nations are historical products and history involves contingencies and unexpected events. Although island nations like Japan, Fiji, and Tonga seem to encourage that commonsense naturalist interpretation that equates territory, nationhood, and ethnicity, most other nation-states are more complex. If North and South Nigeria ever chose to separate, and that was the will of the majority of people on both sides, few could say that that was an illegitimate choice either.

11. Leadership Implications: Further Reflections

In our view, to be a successful leader cross-culturally over the longer-term in Northern Nigeria will not be achieved by just using the same management style as at home or by using management ideas from Western books. At the heart of management is rapport and trust, which are not the same thing, and this means building up relations with staff, individually and collectively. This means understanding their backgrounds, needs, aspirations, beliefs, and fears. People bring these things into the workplace with them even if they appear to be suppressed issues where the suppression is made in the interests of workplace culture and efficiency. An example that will be easy to understand is that if a good worker is not promoted after a certain number of years of good service, this may breed resentment and negative attitudes can be transmitted to others often without any words being said. Fears, needs, and aspirations are culturally- and socially-determined, and if people feel that aspirations and needs are being thwarted or ignored, this may breed a frustration that leads on to inefficiency.

The line manager must know the culture and history of the region and each key ethnic group represented in the workplace so as to build trust and identify cultural

triggers that may bring up anxieties or bitterness. If someone is experiencing severe trauma, due to current or past events, due allowances should be made for things such as absenteeism and deadlines; advice should be sought from experienced locals both inside and outside of the organization. This is where trust is needed. The worker should be expected to work hard on their “good days” so overall not much output is lost. In the same way, local religious and cultural festivals and obligations may require workers to take time away from the workplace. This article has explored history, politics, and culture in a unique region which is different from Southern Nigeria. A new line manager could do worse than studying this article and similar ones in order to see the history of repression and oppression in the society. All societies include aspects of the past embedded in the discourses and materialized practices of the present.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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