

Title of Article: Colonialism and Sub-national Revolution in Post-Independent Africa: A Comparative Study of Biafra and Southern Sudan..

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Abstract: The Biafran revolution of 1967 was the first bold attempt by post-colonial Africans to reject the colonial contraption under the guise of nation-state in Africa. However, the Aya-nya struggle of southern Sudan which started in 1955 can also be described in the same light. Both conflicts were ethnically defined civil wars seeking autonomy or independence for a portion of a colonially defined nation-state. The continent of Africa clearly emerges as an area where colonial legacies left indelible impact in its aftermaths. The arbitrary territorial demarcation of Africa and colonialism had the effect of dividing and coercing previously independent and self-governing ethno-political entities characterized in almost all cases by cultural, linguistic and ethnic homogeneity, to live together under single states. This has defined the contour of politics, where political leaders mobilizes political support from loyal kin groups and broader ethno-religious lines to help secure access to political power, limit the support of rivals and restrict the mobilization of political challenges. By default, government actions and resource allocation follow the same configuration. As a result, a veritable maze of grievances and severe ethnic sensibilities has been nurtured, contributing to a complex interplay of multiple factors which form the basis for internal conflict, the extreme of which is demand for secession from the colonial contraption. These internal strife dots the African landscape, but the dominant perception at the time of independence in the 1950s and 1960s was to maintain the indivisibility of the colonially defined boundaries and preserve the territorial integrity of these new state. This informed the non support for the

altercation of colonially imposed boundaries of Africa, a core principle in the formation of the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU). But this notion was frontally challenged by Biafra and the South Sudan shortly after independence, plunging Nigeria and Sudan into a civil war and strives. The two conflicts which rank as the boldest challenge by post independent African against the colonial contraption. Though Biafra was short-lived as the rebellion was crushed by the forces of unity within 30 months, the conflict in south Sudan raged on intermittently until 2005 when a peace treaty was brokered between Khartoum and the rebellious southern forces granting south Sudan significant autonomy including the option for secession after a referendum which finally held in January 2010. What were the underlying dynamics in Africa that caused the civil wars in Nigeria and the Sudan? Are there similarities in the nature of the wars in Nigeria and Sudan? How the conflicts resolved and what were the post-conflict developments in the two countries?