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Nigerian Politics of Unity:

A case study of the dynamic of religion, politics, and identity in Nigeria

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1. Introduction

How does the dynamic between religion and politics affect notions towards ethnic identities? How are ideas of "us" and "them" or inclusion and exclusion expressed? And what constitutes such ideas or attitudes? Identity is a vast category in which religious, political and ethnic labels play an important part. The aim of this thesis is to address that dynamic by focusing on how these concepts relate to one another. More specifically how the political arena is infused with both religion and ethnicity. While addressing the research questions, my objectives are to identify how leaders use religion and how statements can sustain division or exacerbate existing divisions for political benefits. I will analyse statements by politicians and other actors within the political discourse that illustrate how individuals or groups with different ethnic and religious labels describe one another. The data in this study is based on Nigerian newspapers and I will implement discourse analysis as my methodological tool for analysing these. Trough discourse analysis I examine how Nigerians' attitudes towards one another are played out and deepened by various actors in the political discourse. My main focus is on the period around the Nigerian Presidential election, 16th of April 2011.

The aim for this chapter is to demonstrate why my research objectives are important and offer a background for these. To begin with I will underline the importance of my research objectives by referring to the contemporary Nigerian context. Next I will offer relevant academic literature on the topic which serves as background information. The background information moreover underlines the relevance and importance of my case study and research objectives. After the background section I state my motivation followed by a more detailed account of the research objectives and what methods I implement to address them. An outline of the thesis and its chapters is offered in the last section of this chapter.

1.1 Context

Since I embarked on this academic journey there have been many sad events reported in the media concerning the religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria. The most conspicuous event was perhaps the bomb blasts on Christmas Day aimed at Christian churches. It thus appears that Nigeria is trapped in a religious crisis. The situation in Nigeria is, nevertheless, far more

complex than that. The role of religion and ethnicity in Nigerian politics and in national and local conflicts are important issues of growing concern, but contemporary Nigerian politics cannot be understood without emphasising the role of ethnicity. (Kastfelt 1997; Rudolph 2006;Vaughan 2001). Attitudes to race and identity contribute to shape social reality. Xenophopia or fear of the "other" can lead to social instability. The situation in Nigeria is quite complex as religion, ethnicity, and politics are all intertwined, leaving the country with a highly explosive mix. Nigeria has often been called a "stumbling giant". Being the most populous and among the most influential economies, but also among the highly unstable countries in Africa, it makes an interesting study.

Following the presidential election in Nigeria, there were violent riots in reaction to what the losing side saw as a rigged election. International observers have, however, approved of the election (BBC: 2012). The background for the violent reaction lies in the tradition of the elections, whereby Christian and Muslim leaders are to be elected every second term. Prior to this year's election the sitting president of the PDP (People Democratic Party), Umaru Yar'Adua fell ill before his time was up. The vice-president Goodluck Jonathan therefore stepped into office temporarily while awaiting Yar'Adua's recovery. As Yar᾽ Adua was rendered a candidate of the "Muslim population" and Jonathan a candidate of the "Christian population" there was quite a lot of stark reactions when Jonathan stepped into office. National and International media (Human Rights Watch, Guardian, Daily Trust) reported about rivals of the incumbent president who targeted specific ethnic or religious groups (Reuters: 2011; Human Rights Watch 2011; Ahmad 2011). Inter-faith conflicts are common and some would claim that politicians also make use of the existing divide for the sake of their own political agenda (Nnoli 2008).

1.2 Background & Previous Research

Nigeria is often referred to as a "stumbling giant"(Bøås 2011) and especially Northern Nigeria has suffered a lot in terms of ethnic and religiously motivated riots and killings. Scholars such as Mwadkwon and Sodiq describe the current situation as an on-going conflict played out predominantly by Muslims (predominantly Hausa-Fulani, but also Yoruba) v. Christians (various groups -mainly Igbo, but also Yoruba). Furthermore internal conflicts within groups and conflicts between nomadic- and non-nomadic groups are also common (Simon Davou Mwadkwon 2001: 57; Sodiq 2009). Most of the killings take place in the so-called Middle-

belt or in the Northern states of Nigeria, but hostile attitudes among Nigerians towards other Nigerians of different belonging are widespread. The civil war that lasted from 1967-1970 is over, but many Nigerians still fall victim to the old divide. During the Civil War Nigerians in the South who were predominantly Christian wanted to break out from "Nigeria" to form their own country called "Biafra". In terms of "nationalism" there are therefore different pledges of allegiance. Some Nigerians opts for the separation or break-up of Nigeria and among them are the "Biafrans" who pledge allegiance to Biafra. Then there are Nigerians from both North and South who support the current Federal Republic of Nigeria. Lastly and most recently the fundamentalist group Boko Haram advocating for a Nigeria based on Islam and Sharia, whose name mean something like 'Western education is forbidden'(Bargery dictionary).

Niels Kastfelt (2003) sees religion and politics as intertwined and overlapping. He claims this based on the observation that during the 1980s and 1990s both national and local Nigerian politics was infused with religious matters. He further claims that antagonisms between Christian and Muslim communities have even at times threatened the very existence of the Nigerian state. Political competition has often been defined as an opposition between a predominantly "Muslim north" and a predominantly "Christian south". At the local level, however, ethnic and religious loyalties converge as communities define themselves in ethno-religious terms. In the North, for example the Hausa ethnic group identify themselves as Muslim (Kastfelt 2003: 203).

1.3 Rationale and Research objectives

Quite a lot has been written on the Nigerian situation, about the conflict in the North and about the conflicts in the South, in the oil-rich Niger-Delta region (Ukiwo 2005; Ojo 2002; Ake 1996). Scholars have also written about the problem of ethnicity and of socio-economic differences (Mwadkwon 2001; Nnoli 1998; Egwu 1998). Not so many studies have, however, focused on the dynamic of religion and politics in contemporary Nigeria without either over-emphasising the North as a problem area or without over-emphasising the role of politicians. I suggest that my study offers something different to the research community. My contribution is different as I focus on various Nigerian actors' *attitudes* rather than actions towards both religious and ethnic identities. I also address how such attitudes may contribute to the dynamic of religion, politics and ethnicity in terms of strengthening or weakening tensions related to ethnocentrism. This thesis is based on a case study of the dynamic of religion, politics and ethnic identity in Nigeria. I may therefore not be able to come to sweeping

generalisations to be implemented outside this case, nevertheless, it is my aim to offer an alternative perspective to existing approaches and theories in the academic field regarding ethnicity in Nigeria. The contribution of this thesis to the wider academic field will be discussed more extensively in chapters 6 and 7. My aim for this thesis is therefore to investigate the dynamic of religion, politics, and identity in order to develop existing knowledge as to how these concepts relate to one another. As mentioned initially my research questions deals with how the above-mentioned dynamic affect and influence notions towards ethnic identities and furthermore how ideas of inclusion and exclusion are expressed. By searching for statements by politicians and commoners, my objective is to identify how leaders play on religion and to examine how statements can sustain division or play on already existing divisions for political benefits. I furthermore seek to expand on how Nigerian attitudes towards one another are played out and played upon by various actors of different ethnic and religious "belonging". My case study is concerned with how such attitudes were manifest in the Nigerian Presidential election 2011. More details on the methods for the case study will be presented shortly.

1.4 Methods

I have chosen to do a case study on the dynamic of religion, politics, and identity in Nigeria Within the case I have furthermore decided to focus on attitudes towards identity expressed by various actors in the political discourse revolving around the Nigerian Presidential election 2011. My aim is to find out how politicians and others make use of existing divides. Identity is perhaps one of the most important and complex concepts in this thesis and in the case of Nigeria ethnic- and religious identities are at times intertwined. The term "ethnicity" can thus refer to both identities. My analysis is based on data from a time span of one month in which I have especially emphasised the weeks and days before and after the event of the presidential election. The case study is a means for my analysis of the research question in which I apply the methodological tool of discourse analysis. By analysing news articles from one geographically "Northern" based – and one "Southern" based newspaper I aim to explore Nigerian ideas of and attitudes towards themselves and other Nigerians, more specifically ideas of "us" and "them" or inclusion and exclusion. By looking at one "Southern" and one "Northern" newspaper, I hope that this will enable me to get more insight into ruling attitudes towards identities, "us" and "them". More detailed information concerning research methods will follow in the Methods chapter.

1.5 Chapter Overviews

After this introduction, I will in chapter 2, be dealing with relevant literature on ethnicity and on religious and ethnic identities. The focus will be on the political aspects of ethnicity while critically assessing the academic approaches applied by scholars writing within the field of topic. The concept of ethnicity and its political aspects are scientific tools to be used in the main analysis. In chapter 3 I will give more detailed information on what method I have chosen why I have chosen it and how I will go about my analysis. Chapter 3 will also deal with researcher issues related to data collection such as reflexivity, transparency, and similar aspects. The fourth chapter presents the data and my typology of it followed by an analysis of the data collection in chapter 5. Having introduced the data properly I shall analyse it by using the analytical tool of discourse analysis, outlined in chapter 3. Succeeding the main analysis, a discussion of the findings will summarise the thesis in chapter 6, before I conclude in the last and seventh chapter.

2. Literature

2.1 Introduction

'How does the dynamic of religion and politics affect and influence notions towards ethnic identities? How are ideas of "us" and "them" of inclusion and exclusion expressed?' These are some of the questions I asked in the 'Introduction' chapter. In this chapter I aim to explore the existing theories on the topic and how other scholars have addressed similar questions. Religion, politics, ethnic identities or ethnicity are all very wide and slippery concepts. I have therefore chosen to limit myself to discussing the literature on ethnicity in Nigeria. In terms of "ethnicity" as identity marker, I regard it in the case of Nigeria to contain both ethnic- and religious identities. In the next paragraph I will address and discuss why I have chosen to treat the two types of identities together. Second I give a brief historical outline of the study on ethnicity in Nigeria and an overview of the most common perspectives adopted by scholars. Third, I go to the issue of ethnopolitics and present different arguments concerning the nature and functions of ethnicity with regards to federalism, nationalism, regionalism, and democracy. Fourth, I will engage in a critical discussion of the arguments. Finally, I present a conclusion in which I point to the potential for implementing and improving existing theories and arguments on ethnopolitics and instrumentalism.

2.2 Ethno-religious identities

According to Scarrit (2005), it is useful to separate religious identities from other identities because not all ethnic identities are ethnopolitical, that is, politically relevant or politicized (Scarritt 2005: 75). On the other hand religion is often an important basis for ethnic identity (Haynes 2005: 92) and ethnicity can serve as a platform where socio-political variables like religion, gender, class, and region are expressed (Vaughan 2001: 79). Nnoli argues that the dynamic nature of ethnicity is its most salient feature. Ethnicity does not 'exist in a pure form', but is always 'closely associated with political, juridical, religious, and other social views' (Okwudiba Nnoli 2008: 13). This case study revolves around the dynamic of religion, politics, and identity, and is therefore preoccupied with the relationship of political and ethnic aspects of religion and political aspects of ethnicity. In the Nigerian context the political aspect of ethnicity and religion coincides. Both ethnicity and religion are often mobilised for political purposes which again is related to how identity is perceived. The political mobilisation is

based on how different religious and political groups view their own - and each other's groups. For the purpose of this case study I therefore   choose to treat religious and ethnic identities together as both can be seen as groups with identity claims. For the purpose of this case study I also see it as useful for me to engage with the wider academic literature on ethnicity in Nigeria. Within the theoretical discussion for this case study, all arguments made for ethnic groups are relevant for religious as well. With regards to the overall aims of this thesis, nothing is therefore "lost" by treating all "groups with identity claims" as theoretically equivalent to "ethnicity".

Kastfelt (1997) list two types of religious and political conflict in which one is on the national political level and the other on the regional or local level. According to him, a lot of tension can be derived from a particular part of the Nigerian constitution that implies that Nigeria is a secular state and that there should be no state religion. In the related debate Muslims generally opt for no separation seeing it a purely Western, and thus also Christian product. The Christians, however, see religion as belonging to the private sphere, outside the state legislation. Kastfelt argue that the different views on the relationship between state and religion have been manifested in concrete controversies such as that of the introduction of Sharia law, Nigeria's membership in the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) (Kastfelt 1997: 44). In terms of conflicts on the regional and local level the so-called Middle Belt of Northern Nigeria has long been a "hot spot" where Kastfelt argue that political conflicts are connected with ethnic and religious identities. The dominant group in the North is the Hausa-Fulani who are predominantly Muslim and who have been strongly opposed to the Christian minority groups in the southern parts of the North and in the Middle Belt. The Christian minority tend to belong to minority ethnic groups who have become Christians of recent date, during the 20th century. The attempt to convert these groups to Islam in the 19th century was less successful and as Christianity expanded so did bitterness between the two religions and between the ethnic groups. For the Christians religion became a 'defining element in ethnic-identities and thus a religion of resistance against Fulani and Muslim hegemony' (Kastfelt 1997: 46). In the case of Nigeria we can thus conclude that the assumption of ethnic and religious identities coinciding is valid for our study and we shall therefore move on to theoretical perspectives relating to the study ethnicity in Nigeria, while focusing on the political aspects of it.

2.3 Ethnicity and ethnic identity in Nigeria

The study of "ethnicity" can be traced back to the colonial era only that those studies were limited to "tribe", which is far narrower than the "ethnicity" being studied today. In post-colonial times, at the eve of independence, "modernity" was the new intellectual paradigm which included the proliferation of nationalism and nation-building. There were no room for studies on ethnicity during this paradigm as ethnicity was seen as a threat to the unity of the nation-state, or the federal state. A reason for this might be the views of ethnicity at that time as inherently conflictual. A new popular trend among scholars in the 60's was to view ethnicity as an instrument of the elite, or even by the state, thus referred to as institutionalism (Ukiwo 2005: 5). The history of the study on ethnicity in Nigeria is coloured by conflict and there is a strong tendency of focusing on the history of the concept while concluding that the elite in continuation of the colonial administration is using ethnicity in order to "divide and rule". An instrumentalist and institutionalist approach are among the most common while criticizing the primordial approach associating it with exotic descriptions of "tribes" from the colonial era. The word "tribe" is however, still used by scholars on ethnicity in Nigeria, with reference to "tribalism".

Varshney (2002) distinguishes four schools of thought: essentialism, instrumentalism, constructivism and institutionalism. Scholars do however rely on more than one school of thought in their analyses. Ukiwo (2005) has given a brief summary of the schools: Essentialism can be seen as a continuation of primordialism a tradition in which ethnicity is viewed as static. Essentialism restates this by linking ethnic identity to the past and to cultural differences among groups. Instrumentalism

> 'posits that ambitious classes manipulate dormant ethnic identities to pursue their interests, thereby politicising ethnicity and ethnicising the polity. Constructivists interrogate the origins of ethnic groups, tracing identity 'construction' or 'invention' to the activities of colonial authorities, missionaries and emergent nationalists and emphasising the historicity and fluidity of ethnic identities. Institutionalists emphasize the critical role of political institutions and pragmatic policies in the framing of ethnic relations' (Ukiwo 2005: 5).

Scholars on ethnicity in Nigeria tend to write from an instrumentalist, institutionalist, and constructivist perspective while emphasising the dynamic rather than the static definition of

the concept (Udogu 2001: 16). Okwudiba Nnoli (2008) state that 'ethnicity does not exist in a pure form. It is always closely associated with political, juridicial, religious and other social views' (Nnoli 1978, 2008: 13). Vaughan (2001) describes ethnicity as a platform in which important socio-political variables may be expressed (2001: 79). The overarching theme which most scholars address from one angle or another is that of ethnopolitics. Among the scholars on ethnicity and ethnic conflict in Nigeria, Nnoli is perhaps the most cited scholar and he mentions these four characteristics of ethnicity:

1)   It is a social phenomenon associated with interactions among members of different ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries. The relevant communal factor may be language, culture, or both. In Africa, language has clearly been the most crucial variable. As social formation, however, ethnic groups are not necessarily homogeneous entities even linguistically and culturally...

2)   Much more than ethnocentrism, ethnicity is characterized by a common consciousness of being one in relation to the other relevant ethnic groups. This factor more than any other defines the boundary of the group that is relevant for understanding ethnicity at any historical point in time..

3)   Exclusiveness is an attribute of ethnicity. In-group - out-group boundaries emerge with it and, in time, become marked, more distinct than before, and jealously guarded by the various ethnic groups...

4)   Conflict is an important aspect of ethnicity. This is inevitable under conditions of inter-ethnic competition for scarce valuable resources, particularly in societies where inequality is accepted as natural, and wealth is greatly esteemed (Nnoli 1980: 5-8, Udogu 2001: 15).

Nnoli (1980) does not specifically refer to "religious" groups in his four characteristics of ethnicity. He has however, stated (1978, 2008) that ethnicity is always 'closely associated with political, juridicial, religious and other social views' (Nnoli 1978, 2008: 13). As mentioned initially under the heading "Ethno-religious identities", both religious- and ethnic groups can make claims to identity and can mobilised for political purposes. These claims to

identity is what Nnoli here refers to as an attribute of "exclusiveness" which again serves to define boundaries between "in-" and "out-groups", in other words how groups perceive themselves and each other. In Kastfelt's example Christian religion became a 'defining element in ethnic identities' as resistance against Muslim and Hausa-Fulani domination (Kastfelt 1997:46, p.10 of this chapter). Religious identity and religious groups are therefore in similarity with ethnic groups exclusive. Religious groups can also in my view be regarded "ethnic" as in the case of Nigeria where both religious- and ethnic communal factors such as language and/or culture coincide. An example of this is the debate concerning the Nigerian constitution as pointed out by Kastfelt (1997: 44, p.10 this chapter). The exclusiveness may further lead to a desire to dominate or subsume other groups which again can spark conflict, but also strengthen claims to identity. Such claims to identity can further be utilised for obtaining and securing political interests of the group by engaging in what scholars refer to as "ethnopolitics".

2.4 Ethnopolitics

Ethnopolitics is centred on the idea of a dynamic and instrumental relationship between politics and ethnicity. The less scientific word for it is "tribalism" and according to Nnoli

> 'It is common to interpret African politics in tribal terms. Tribalism is perceived to be the central unifying concept for the analysis of African life. This perspective was first popularized by **colonial** anthropologists. It has been internalized to such an extent that even Africans themselves now think of the dynamics of their societies as being dominated by that phenomenon (…) It is often forgotten that the concepts that prevail in the academic community are not solely of an academic or scientific nature. They usually have an **ideological and political character**. This is **particularly so with the concept of tribalism**. In Africa the concept has a colonial origin. Its function was tied to the nature and purpose of colonialism. The financial oligarchies that ruled Europe in the nineteenth century organized production in the colonies to satisfy their need for profit and capital accumulation.' (Okwudiba Nnoli 2008: 1, my emphasis).

Within the theme of ethnopolitics there are however some tension as to whether ethnopolitics or tribalism is purely negative or if it has some positive aspects as well. There are also tensions in terms of different interests between ethnic groups who are in and who are not in-

power and also internal tension as to whether to serve one's own ethnic 'nation', or to serve the nation-state. A third tension is that of unity, whether ethnicity can be seen as a catalyst for unity or as an obstacle to it.

2.4.1 Ethnopolitics and federalism

In L. Adele Jinadu's work on "Ethnic Conflict and Federalism in Nigeria", (2002), we can read that Nigerian federalism had been designed to 'pursue the objective of "diversity in unity" (King 1982: 20-21, Jinadu 2002: 1). Jinadu sees this objective as Nigeria's main problem as he asks the question "diversity in unity at what price?" . The strategy of using federalism to accommodate for ethnic diversity is challenged by ethnic mobilisation and the ethnic groups' perceived domination by other groups, and the exclusion of the "dominated" groups from national or 'unit-level' government level (Jinadu 2002: 2). As for the Janus-faced character of ethnicity, Jinadu points on one hand to the unifying aspect of ethnicity through its properties of accommodation, compromise, or cooperation, in terms of building coalitions across ethnic divides and the status of ethnic and sub-ethnic politicians as having a bridge-building function 'across the ethnic divide' (Jinadu 2002: 5). He does however, questions how fit the current political 'architecture' is to accommodate for ethnic diversity within the Nigerian nation-state. He describes the current nation-state a flaw due to its 'partial or parochial and ideologized, unificationist, integrationist or assimilationist assumptions and thrust' (Jinadu 2002: 12). On the other hand Jinadu talk of ethnopolitics and federalism and how the emergence of self-defined ethnic and sub-ethnic groups have been 'propelled by self-seeking and self-styled ethnic/sub-ethnic group political leaders who are seeking a niche for themselves in the country's enormous "apple pie", to enable them to disburse patronage and to divert state resources to corruptly enrich themselves' (Jinadu 2002: 6). In conclusion he points to 'timeless' theoretical and philosophical questions related to resurgent ethnicity as being about equality, fairness, freedom, national identity, justice, liberty, needs, political representation, and the relationship between political obligation and ethno-communal and similar obligation (Jinadu 2002: 12, Kymlicka and Norman 2000, Parekh 1998: 509-510). Jinadu claim on one hand that ethnicity can be seen as a unifying factor while on the other he questions whether the government or the nation-state is able to handle the issue of ethnicity. Jinadu further point to how federalism can be a platform for "self-seeking" political leaders. Ethnicity can be mobilised for the sake of bridge-building and can thus be seen as having a unifying aspect. Nevertheless, he also describes the nation-state as partial and "unificationist".

I can only assume that he refers to "unity" as an ethnopolitical tool through which politicians, whether local, national, or federal, can achieve creating a "niche for themselves". Though "Unity" and ethnic identity are used by politicians for their own purposes it does not mean that the ethnic groups they represent does not benefit as well. Ethnicity can thus be seen as a potential instrument for mobilising ethnic solidarity which can be used to manipulate, but also to promote democratic aspirations. Rudolph (2006) argues in similarity with Jinadu that the government deliberately make use of existing ethnic tensions.

2.4.2 Ethnoterrritorial politics

Rudolph (2006) argues that the "ethnoterritorial" politics, playing the north against the south, was a divide-and-rule device by the regime who overthrew the Second Republic. The "Second Republic" refers to the second Nigerian democratic republic denoting civilian as opposed to military rule. After General Buhari's military regime that overthrew the Second Republic, there were two more consecutive military regimes before the Third Republic resumed. Nigeria is currently in the era of the "Fourth Republic" which has lasted since 1999 (Falola & Heaton 2008: 14, 209, 214).

The "ethnoterritorial" politics during Buhari's regime was founded on an already existing class struggle between the Northern Muslims and Christian Southerners living in the North who were educated and more affluent than their Northern brothers. Tensions were rooted in ethnic, religious, and developmental differences between the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo. (Rudolph, 2006: 186-192). Rudolph argue that the civil war or the Biafran war was the product of 'a combination of simmering ethnopolitical rivalries, political ambition, political corruption, good intentions, and finally, the disintegration of the military and the destruction of the bureaucracy as all-Nigeria institutions of unity' (Rudolph, 2006: 181). Ethnopolitics can thus be seen as mobilising along religious, ethnic, and regional lines. The mobilisation strengthens group boundaries as jealousy between groups is also strengthened by perceived inequalities. These arguments also help underline the dynamic nature and complexity of ethnicity given that regional or territorial identity also constitute a part of ethnic identity, ethnic tension, and ethnopolitics. Another term within ethnopolitics is that of "ethnonationalism" which has been addressed by Udogu (2001).

2.4.3 Ethnonationalism

Udogu (2001), state that in post-colonial African states ethnic groups tend to increasingly turn to ethnonationalism as a result of alienation towards the state, and especially so for minority groups. Ethnic groups view the state to be the source of their sorrows and thus according to Udogu 'irrelevant' to their common interests (Udogu 2001: 21). There is also tension when it comes to loyalty on national v sub-national level as 'key actors or the hegemonic class who press for ethnic claims on the state are themselves major players at the national level' (Udogu 2001: 21). Udogu thus raise the question as to whether such politicians are sincere in their devotion to their ethnic group or whether it is the sate they are devoted to. He concludes that 'it has become increasingly clear that some professed subnationalists are prepared to pursue their noncentripetal objectives if doing that consigned to their collectivities the power and resources for the groups' survival – and the state may be 'damned' in the process' (Udogu 1995: 3, 2001: 22). Instead of playing the detribalizing role previously ascribed to them political entrepreneurs often invoked ethnic solidarity for the sake of promoting their own interests (Udogu 2001: 22). To summarize, Udogu argues that in response to institutional or governmental ethnopolitics there is ethnopolitics on a more local political level in which ethnopolitics may constitute something positive for the ethnic group on a national scale. Udogu does question how sincere such politicians are, or in other words if they really are as pressing for minority rights for the sake of the minorities or for the sake of enriching themselves. Mobilisation of ethnic solidarity may thus be simultaneously positive and negative as it can promote democracy by pressing for ethnic claims, but also be regarded negative as those pressing for democratic rights also may be using it to promote their own interests. The issue of politicians mobilising ethnic solidarity and manipulate people for their own political and personal interests is an important dimension of ethnopolitics.

2.4.4 Dimensions of ethnopolitics

Olufemi Vaughan supports Udogu, and suggests that the 'persistent manipulations of ethno-regional identities contributed significantly to a tragic civil war (1966-70)' which was followed by a reduction of Nigeria's 'diverse cultural communities to fortresses of political ethnicity' (Vaughan 2001: 79). Vaughan describes ethnicity as a platform where important sociopolitical variables are expressed. These variables include class, religion, gender, and region. Whereas ethnicity is a critical instrument for manipulating power by the ruling classes, Vaughan underline that ethnicity can as well be used to mobilise groups, in resistance to

oppressive and corrupt regimes (2001:79). Vaughan therefore has a more positive and nuanced view on ethnicity, while seeing it as having a Janus-faced character. It can be used both for the purpose of accumulation and mobilisation, as an instrument and as a domain for mass resistance (Vaughan 2001: 80). Vaughan criticise the tendency within the instrumentalist perspective to dismiss ethnicity as 'mainly mediums in which the political class seek refuge behind communal themes and symbols' arguing that 'confronted with the rapid decay of the Nigeria state in the 1990s a new generation of civic leaders are reconstructing ethnic themes as the medium for the articulation of not only communal but democratic aspirations' (Vaughan 2001: 80). While other scholars regard ethnicity as an obstacle for democracy, Vaughan sees it as a medium in which democratic notions can be expressed. In my opinion, ethnicity and ethnopolitics should be regarded both as an obstacle *and* a medium for democratic notions. Whether it is regarded an obstacle for – or as promoting democracy depends on who one asks and on that persons' perception of "democracy". Similarly ideas of what constitutes "unity" differ depending on which "team" or which position in society one is in. Different ideas of concepts like "unity" and "democracy" are something that will be addressed more detailed in the following paragraph, but also in ch.6.

2.4.5 Ethnopolitics and democracy

Mustapha (2004) argue that the politics of identity are central to the Nigerian democratization process. He views ethnic sectarianism, in terms of inter-ethnic processes as a real threat to Nigerian democracy and unity, but argue that it would be one-sided not to also consider intra-ethnic disagreements and confrontations (Mustapha 2004: 257). Mustapha claim that there is a connection between the state, hegemonism, xenophopia and democracy in Nigeria (2004: 258). In his view there is no doubt that democracy has fanned inter-ethnic conflict. In terms of Intra-ethnic conflict he is critical of a monolithic construct of the 'north'. In reality, he says, there is no monolithic north, but rather a 'core' (Muslim) north and a 'lower' (mixed) north of the Middle Belt (2004: 271). In terms of the ethno-regional conflict Mustapha point to the issue of fundamentally different values and with reference to Rawls, he advocate for the need for a 'sufficient consensus' being the foundation of society, holding it together (2004: 273). Amongst different political formations across Nigeria there are significantly different perceptions of- and attitudes towards the state and according to Mustapha 'While northern centralizing and hegemonic instincts are dysfunctional and ultimately unsustainable, southern demands for ethnic federalism and its associated xenophobia, are in my view, ahistorical and

impractical (Mustapha 1999; 2004: 274-275).

Nnoli (2008) claim that it is necessary to explore the link between ethnicity and the state as ethnicity also can pose 'a threat to the democratic process' (Okwudiba Nnoli 2008: 13). He does however, refer to the solidarity aspect of ethnicity stating that 'ethnicity holds individuals together, gives them internal cohesion, encourages them to provide mutual security for each other and promotes their sense of identity and direction.' Apart from solidarity, he claims it promotes democracy as well by promoting the desire to curb the generic problems of domination, oppression, deprivation, alienation, marginalisation, exploitation and privileges. In Nigeria the struggle against these social problems 'are reflected in the demand against marginalization of ethnic groups and against injustice in inter-ethnic resource distribution' (Okwudiba Nnoli, 2008: 15). Nnoli therefore conclude that ethnicity has a positive side to it which promotes solidarity and democracy.

2.4.6 Summary

In summary, studies on the political aspect of ethnicity show that ethnopolitics can have both negative and positive aspects. The mobilising aspect of ethnicity can be seen as both an opportunity and an obstacle. Ethnicity can thus be an instrument for "good" and "bad" depending on how it is used; it can for instance be misused as in the case of politicians pretending to fight for ethnic interests. One can however, not be sure whether those using ethnicity for a 'good' cause are sincere or not. This is due to another issue, being the tension between ethnic and national interests and between ethnic nations and the federal nation-state. The Nigerian federation's objective is to pursue a diversified unity, which we have seen from the studies of the scholars above, can be used both against the nation-state by self-identifies ethnic groups and by the nation-state. Whereas ethnic sectarianism is a threat to democracy and unity, empowerment of ethnic groups through mobilisation is regarded as strengthening democratic aspirations. Politicians are found on both sides of this spectre as they advocate sub-national and state-national causes. The tendency of the instrumentalist perspective has been to share a view in which the aim behind the political guises is competition for and manipulation for state power and control. Vaughan is however critical of this view regarding it reductionist and this critique is the focus for the next section.

2.5 Critiques regarding reductionism

Vaughan (2001) is not the only one who is critical to some aspects of the instrumentalist take on ethnopolitics. The instrumentalist view is based on scholars' assumptions that ethnicity was and is being used by the elite arguably to acquire money and wealth by mobilising Nigerians against each other. Ukiwo's (2005) problem with this approach is that it is top-down and built on the assumption that the mass public is passive and only acts when encouraged by the elite. Another problem pointed out by Ukiwo is its failure to explain the 'convergence of elite-mass interests for political action' and that it fails to acknowledge 'the possibility of the masses manipulating the elite' (Ukiwo 2005: 8). The instrumentalist approach is thus criticised for being reductionist by failing to address adequately the dynamic aspects of ethnicity. The top-down, or one-way manipulation represents a static rather than dynamic view of ethnicity and ethnopolitics. Ukiwo point to research 'elsewhere' indicating that when involved in ethnic politicking elites respond to mass-expectations (Ukiwo 2005: 8).

The reductionist critique also deals with the failure to encompass intra-ethnic conflicts and the micro- or individual level of ethnicity. The neglect of intra-ethnic conflicts is according to Ukiwo, due to the assumption that elites instigate conflicts to serve their own personal interests. While denying popular agency, studies on ethnicity have privileged the colonial, post-colonial, and the agency of ethnic elites. This instrumentalist assumption has according to Ukiwo yet to demonstrate that there is no 'congruence between the interests of the ethnic leaders and those of their followers' (Ukiwo 2005: 16). Sam Egwu (1998) criticizes the instrumentalist approach of overdrawing the 'group or collective dimension of ethnicity' thus overlooking the micro- or individual level of ethnicity. In line with Vaughan (2001) and Ukiwo (2005), Egwu criticizes the approach for presenting simplified, reductionist explanations, especially those explanations only emphasising the political elite's manipulation of ethnicity. With reference to Ake (1994: 51), Egwu suggests that 'ethnicity is a dialectic of imagination and reality'. Egwu further claim that the modernisation school's view of ethnicity as a colonial product falls into the essentialist pitfall: 'It is then concluded that it [ethnicity] is essentially unreal' (Egwu 1998: 22).

2.6 Alternative perspectives

Kastfelt (2003) introduces an alternative way of viewing ethnicity as opposed to the trend of

stressing the historicity of ethnicity and argue that ethnicity should not be seen exclusively in constructivist and contextual terms. His suggestion is to follow John Lonsdale's distinction of 'moral ethnicity' and 'political tribalism'. Kastfelt argues that such a distinction will offer a more 'complex historical understanding of ethnicity' (Kastfelt 2003: 205). Moral ethnicity is defined by Lonsdale as '...the common human instinct to create out of the daily habits of social intercourse and material labour a system of moral meaning and ethical reputation within a more or less imagined community' (Kastfelt 2003: 205) and political tribalism as 'the use of ethnic identity in political competition with other groups' (2003:205).

While arguing that the instrumentalist perspective lends too big a role to the elite(s), that does not, however, disprove that instrumental usage take place. There does not have to be a contradiction, rather one can point to a two-fold instrumental usage of ethnicity in which both the mass and the elite play the roles of the manipulators and the manipulated. Whether the elite(s) or ruling class(es) are working towards a protection of the *status quo* or not is thus left for further studies. Such a line of thinking can be seen as reductionist building on the assumption or expectation that all Nigerians are selfish and greedy. The important issue here is 'the perception of inequality held by actors rather than the actual inequality that leads to action' (Osaghae 1995: 21). Acknowledging that inequalities on a federal level has shaped national inter-ethnic animosity, Ukiwo also argue that 'most of the conflicts have arisen out of perceptions of inequalities at the local and state levels' (Ukiwo 2005: 13). It is therefore not so much the actual inequalities, but the attitudes stirred up by perceptions of inequality that are important to encompass in ethno political studies.

2.7 My Focus

As Ukiwo has pointed out the instrumentalist approach and previous studies on ethnicity in Nigeria have failed to address the reversed case of bottom-up usage, rather than top-down manipulation. The latter concept of the masses being able to manipulate the elite has not been tested to the same extent as the former. Or in other words the democratic potential of ethnopolitics has not been elaborated to the same extent as that of the potential for elite(s) manipulation and exploitation.

The perception of inequalities is important, but furthermore the perception of group identity, and attitudes towards ethnic groups. These are important elements that few scholars on Nigeria address. Anugwom (2000), is an exception from this rule, writing on ethnic conflict

and democracy in Nigeria. She claims that ethnicity implies ethnocentric feelings in which groups view each other as inferior and as rivals. Such feelings furthermore brings about 'certain attitudes, which distort reality and breed subjectivity in the evaluation and perception of events' (Edlyne E Anugwom: 2000: 64). Anderson (2006) speaks of the nation as 'an imagined community' (2006: 6) and compared to Anugwom's description, ethnicity can as well be seen as an imagined community existing because people within the group agree on it, in some cases as a reaction to their shared ill-treatment by another group. Scholars such as Barth, Jenkins, and Stone offer a solid background for the before-mentioned perceptions of inequality and attitudes towards internal and external ethnic identity or identities.

Barth distinguish between the processes of *internal definition* and the processes of *external definition,* where the internal definition is the self-definition expressed to both in- or out-group members, and where the external definition can be seen as the process in which one person or persons define the other(s) (Jenkins 2003: 60). Drawing on Barth's distinction between external and internal definitions, Jenkins (2003: 63) further emphasise the distinction of 'I' and 'me' borrowed from Mead (1934: 173-226). Whereas the 'I' of the 'self' responds to others, the 'me' is a constellation of the incorporated attitudes and responses of others (Jenkins 2003: 63). Jenkins further argues that there will usually be some interaction between the self-image(s) and the public-image(s) and that in this interaction there will be some 'process of conscious or unconscious adjustment in the ongoing process of the making and re-making of social identity....' (Jenkins 2003: 65). Stone (2003), drawing on Roth and Wittich (1968: 389), state that Weber is determined to see the question of "presumed identity" as the core of the difference between ethnic groups. Jenkins (2003) further state through the process of 'internalisation', among other ways, categorisation can contribute to group identity as the group being externally categorised assimilate bits of or the entire description into its own identity. (Jenkins 2003: 68).

Ethnicity is a highly complex concept as it is extremely dynamic and static at the same time. In Edward Said's (2003) "Orientalism", Said criticize the West (Europe and North America) for taking the role of the subject while assigning the rest of the world, the "Orient", the role of the object. The criticism further deals with how the "Orient" is essentially different from the "Occident", the West. In effect of being the object, the "Orient" is made "the other". The "Occident" is the ideal whereas the "other" is the opposite of the ideal. In terms of ethnicity being both dynamic and static what individual or which group is regarded the "other" might

change, but not the negative feelings associated with the "other". The instrumentalist approach can therefore be seen as having both a dynamic and essentialist view of ethnicity as ethnopolitics are based on manipulations of stereotypes of the "other" or the "dominated". My aim for this thesis is therefore to emphasise that ethnopolitics is not only governed by the elite(s), but can be used as an instrument by the masses as well. I further opt for an instrumentalist perspective which accommodates both dynamic and "static" aspects of ethnicity and ethnopolitics while avoiding the reductionist pit-fall. I wish to make creative use of existing theory, by "refining" it. In line with my research objectives I aim to demonstrate that there is a dynamic connection between religion, politics, and identity. By adapting a "refined" and dynamic instrumentalist approach, I will be able to analyse how attitudes towards identity are mobilised and expressed by various political actors and for different political purposes.

2.7 Conclusion

Current studies dealing with the dynamic of religion, politics, and identities have tended to lean towards a constructivist, instrumentalist and institutionalist perspective on ethnicity. The instrumentalist perspective has been criticized for over-emphasising the ethnopolitical issue of elite domination and manipulation the so-called 'dumb mass' versus 'clever elite' (Ukiwo 2005). Ukiwo points to the fact that there has been made studies that reveal instances of elite(s) responding to mass expectations (Ukiwo 2005). By focusing more on a two-way instrumental usage, scholars within the instrumentalist school of thought can escape the critique of being reductionist as it shows that the instrumental usage is not only static, but dynamic as well. The instrumentalist approach cannot however, entirely escape the criticism of being reductionist as the instrumental usage of ethnic identity and manipulations are based on stereotypes of the "other". There are scholars who emphasise the importance of perceived inequalities (Jinadu 2002) rather than the reactions to inequalities, and who focus on the attitudes within ethnic-identities towards other identities (Jenkins 2003; Anugwom 2000). My aim is therefore to add another layer to the existing theory by adding a new perspective. I will adapt a two-way instrumentalist perspective in which the manipulation or usage is bottom-up as well as top-down. I shall not focus so much on class struggle or struggle over resources as source of conflict, but rather explore the importance of individuals' attitudes towards in-group and out-groups and the dynamic of internal and external group identification.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

My main research objective is about ethnic identity and concerning the relationship between the dynamic of religion and politics and the concept of ethnic identity. This chapter aims at describing and explaining the methodology and methods applied to answer my research questions through an 'intensive' analysis of a single case, namely Nigeria. This case study is one of those instances 'where the 'case' is the focus of interest in its own right' (Bryman 2008:53) and where the case lays the foundation for 'intensive analysis' (2008: 53). Studies on ethnic conflict tend to focus on factors such as economy, development, struggle for land, or the metaphysical factor of religion. So-called ethnic conflicts are complex in nature and all the above-mentioned factors are important to include. Nevertheless, my emphasis is on what people *think* about each other or what they think they know rather than what they *do* to one another. It is my strong conviction that attitudes should be the onset for positive change. It is a person's attitudes that determine his or her actions. My thesis therefore aims not only to investigate the dynamic of religion, politics and identity, but offer a different perspective to the existing polemic. In the following paragraphs I give an account for my choices of research design, data material, and research methods. It is furthermore my ambition to present how it was carried out, and why it can be considered a fresh contribution to existing literature. By illustrating how this case study was carried out I hope to convince the readers of this thesis that it has credibility, transferability, confirmability, and authenticity, as suggested by current guidelines for good academic work (Bryman 2008: 377-380).

3.2 Why Nigeria and why case study?

I have always been fascinated by the African continent from an anthropological point of view. This fascination combined with my general interest in so-called religious or ethnic conflicts must be the most foundational reason for this case study. I chose case study over other methods because a case study is based on empirical data which 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin 2009:18). A good range of studies have been carried out on the topic of civil war, about ethnic tension in the north, oil-spillage in the south. These are all interesting topics, but my intention was to offer a more holistic picture by

looking at the wider contemporary -rather than historical or socio-economical context. I wanted to understand the dynamic of ethnic identity, religion, and politics. Nigeria and the Nigerian presidential election offered a good platform for the analysis of this dynamic as politicians' political rhetoric tends to unseal attitudes towards the "other" by classifying "in" and "out" groups. More on practical methods for addressing this issue will be dealt with in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

3.3 Methods

The aim of this and the following paragraphs is to address the manner in which the case study was investigated; how data was collected, and which research instruments were applied to the data and how. I start with how the data was collected.

3.3.2 Data Selection and collection

In order to understand the given dynamic I chose to study newspapers from around the time of the election, April 2011. I sought to find two newspapers that were fairly equal in terms of contents and standard. Preferably one should be from the 'North' and from the 'South' of Nigeria as I hoped it might reveal different views or attitudes towards the president and the election, given that the president is a Christian from the South and that the majority in the North are Muslims. The two newspaper agencies 'The Guardian' and 'Daily Trust' are located in Lagos and Abuja respectively. 'Weekly Trust' and 'Sunday Trust' are the weekend editions of the 'Daily Trust'. The newspapers fulfilled my "regional" requirements, but Abuja and Lagos can, however, be considered "neutral" given Abuja's status as capital and Lagos' as commercial capital.

At first I wanted to use online newspapers, but due to limited availability online and in some cases relocation of the newspapers' internet addresses, I had to change my strategy. Instead of looking at online editions I therefore collected and photocopied paper copies of the same newspapers from the period of April 2011. One of the main reasons that I opted for online material was the issue of practicality and possible costs of having the newspapers sent from Nigeria to Norway. This problem was however solved as I was able to collect the data personally, at the Nigerian National Library in Abuja, during a private trip to Nigeria in November 2011. My intention was to collect data from three newspapers, but due to limited

access at first and later due to limited time this was not carried out. Time would not allow it as I feared that the total sum of data might turn out to be far too extensive.

I found the collection of newspapers more practical than interviewing people as everything is already transcribed and written, and furthermore everything is said in public. Furthermore, newspapers may also be more practical due to the limitation of time as a master thesis will not allow for a lengthy ethnographic study. There are therefore fewer considerations to be made in terms of finding informants, planning the meeting, transcribing, and the big issue of ethical responsibility. However, as a researcher, I did not have the same opportunity to ask follow-up questions as the questions had already been posed and customised by somebody else. It was my aspiration that the newspaper excerpts would offer a different perspective given their nature as more spontaneous and oral in form than other written sources. Fortunately they did. I was able to spot different perspectives by applying discourse analysis as my analytical tool. I will return to how this 'tool' was applied in the following paragraph.

3.3.3 Discourse analysis

During the Nigerian presidential election campaign, politicians tend to compete over the electorate. It is in this competition that Nigerian politicians made use of rhetoric, as politicians often do, which emphasised themselves as the "good guys" and their opponents as the "bad guys". My strategy was to examine the process of classifying others as "good" or "bad", or in other terms "in" and "out". I established a typology of the newspapers presentations of Nigerians and Nigerian society. While carefully examining articles, comments, adverts, and cartoons, I identified media patterns of established groups or positions that "stood out". Given the nature of the data as containing political rhetoric in terms of both text and image, I was applied the theory and methods of discourse analysis.

3.3.4 Applying theory to data

Having identified different 'positions' of Nigerians, based on newspapers accounts, I furthermore identified that there was a certain political-correctness genre. What I mean by this is that there appeared to be a codex, a set of unwritten rules governing the wider political discourse. These rules included the subscription to particular key words making up the

rhetoric of the political discourse. I will now turn to the theoretical part of the discourse analysis in which I make use of Laclau and Mouffe's terminology of floating signifiers and empty signifiers. According to them a discourse is established as meaning is crystallized around some "nodal points" or privileged signs/elements. Other less privileged signs are then given their meaning in relation to these. The "nodal points" can often be termed "floating signifiers" as there are some elements that are highly fluctuating -with room for different meanings. The floating signifiers are elements or signs that different actors struggle to fill with their own contents in their own particular way (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999: 34: 40; Laclau and Mouffe 1990: 28; Laclau 1993b: 287). The key elements can thus be seen as such empty or floating signifiers that carry contextual meaning.

Identity formation
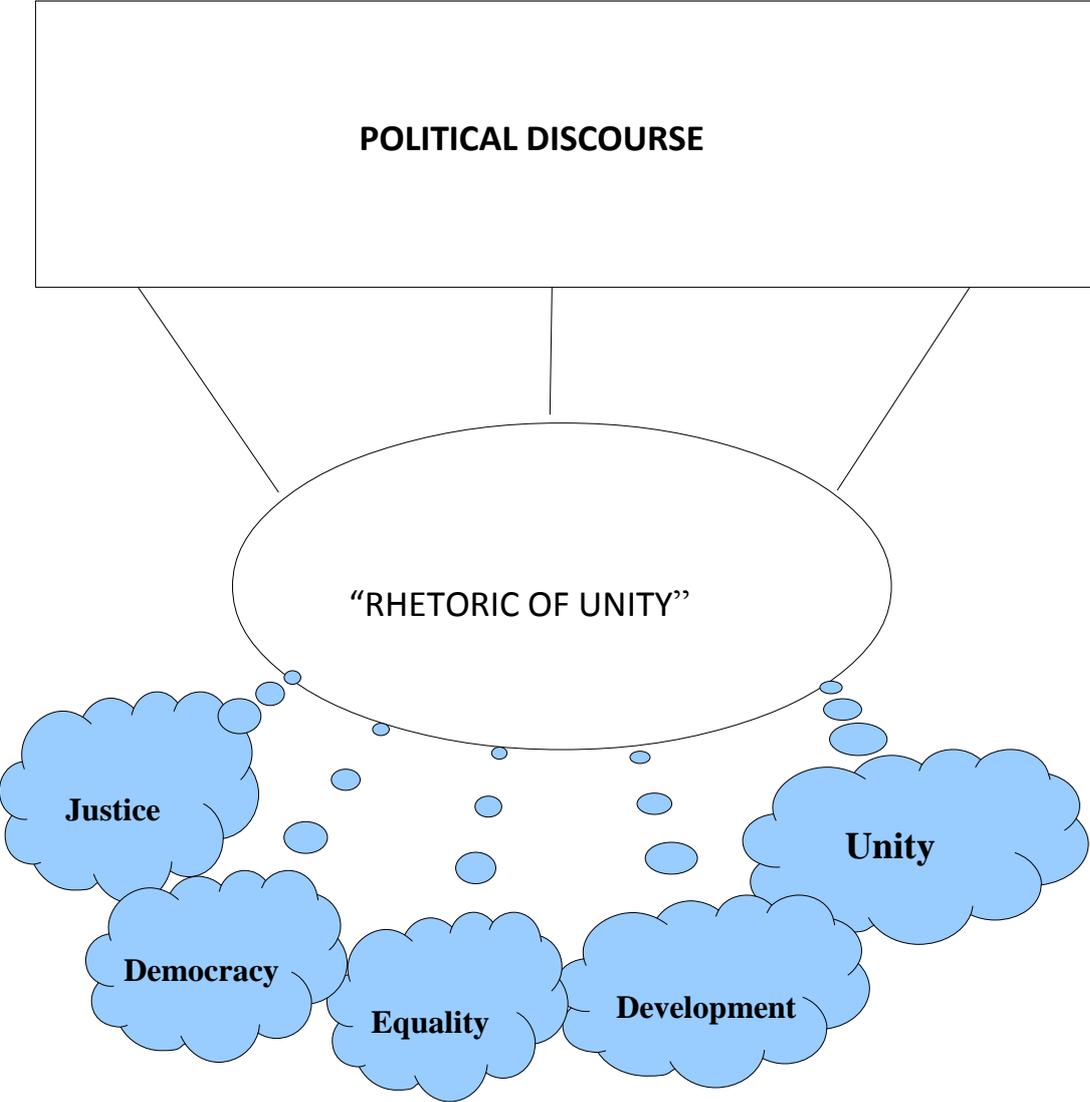
The clouds symbolise the floating signifiers or nodal points that make up what I have labelled the "Rhetoric of Unity". Laclau and Mouffe (Jørgensen and Louise 1999; Laclau and Mouffe 1990; Laclau 1993b) also introduce the terms "chains of equivalence" and chains of difference". These are terms that can be used in many ways, what is outlined below is therefore my own implementation of these terms. On one hand, the floating signifiers can generate "chains of equivalence" by actors within the discourse sharing the usage, but not the contents of the key elements. The key elements are thus "signs" of membership or "in group" of the political-correctness discourse. On the other hand these can also be used to express "out groups" through "chains of difference". These "out-groups" can be likened to that of Edward Said's terminology of the "other" (Said 2003). The "chains of difference" are to a varied degree of discreteness expressed through posters, images, metaphors, and metaphoric language. These mechanisms for classifying other individuals or groups into different categories of "in" and "out" can thus be seen as a contributing to the reader's attitudes to such groups -what they think of such people and thus to a kind of "external" identity formation. Among the key elements "unity" can be seen as the overarching sign, which is why I have labelled the political rhetoric within the discourse for the "Rhetoric of Unity". Whereas politicians and the elite(s) in general wish to communicate the image of a united Nigeria they make use of "unity". In the same manner, when individuals make comments in the newspapers object to the existence of a united Nigeria, they make use of "unity" while arguing for the separation of Nigeria. Though agreeing on either the existing unity or a "new" unity, the key elements are used to both include and exclude within the group of "agreement". The "Rhetoric of Unity" can therefore be used by actors within the political discourse who come from different 'positions' described in the media, not only the position of 'politicians' or the 'elite'. The various actors may, however, as I have illustrated above, use it for different purposes.

3.4 Limitations

The limitation of this thesis is that I focus on 'media positions' rather than real positions of Nigerians within Nigerian society. Hence, the findings of my case study are also based on how the reality is presented in the newspapers, not the actual reality. Though 'reality' in itself

can be rendered constructed and relative, I see this as one of the main weaknesses of my work. Nevertheless, I would claim that the method and data selection of this case study has offered an interesting perspective that may well be combined with other types of methods and data in future research.

3.5 Considerations

A newspaper is a public means of disseminating information and there are consequently not that many ethical considerations to be made in relation to what is already written. I do mention names of individuals either interviewed or reported to have shared their opinion in one way or the other. I have chosen not to conceal their identity as their statements are already published I assume that they have given their consent. There are however considerations to be made as to how I as a researcher analyse and report the data. "The pen is a dangerous weapon" and I have to be careful in giving a fair interpretation of the characters I have described. For the sake of transparency it is also important to be conscious of and to underline for the reader that the description of the material is based on how the newspapers view the different positions or groups in Nigerian society. One must therefore be aware that the "Nigerians" described somehow are "constructed" in that they are presented through the media and through me as a researcher. This is perhaps one of the weaknesses of my study and according to Bryman (2008: 391), critique of qualitative research points to the following issues:

• too subjective
• difficult to replicate
• problems of generalisation
• lack of transparency

There may perhaps never be room for sweeping generalisations as the social world is ever shifting and developing, generalisations may be seen as temporary constructs which is why they may be difficult to replicate. Lack of transparency and subjective interpretations and presentations can, however, be refuted and I intend to do my best in order to overcome these pitfalls. Making use of the critique as guidelines I attempt to avoid these by giving an adequate account of my research choices, analytical framework, arguments, references, and

by showing consciousness towards my role as a researcher.

3.6 Method conclusions

My main research objective is concerning the relationship between the dynamic of religion, politics, and ethnic identity. The aim for this chapter has been to provide an outline of the methodology and methods options opted for in order to answer my research objectives. I have chosen the single case study as research design and discourse analysis as my method drawing on the terminology of "floating signifiers" as outlined by Laclau and Mouffe (1990: 28, 1993b: 287,) by Jørgensen & Phillips (1999: 34-40). This chapter also seek to fulfil the ethical requirements that a good academic work should have and I hope to have reached the goal of presenting a transparent account of my study by giving an outline of choices in terms of research design, data material, and research methods. The focus for the following chapter is a more detailed overview of the data material and a presentation of "Nigerian positions" as depicted in the media.

4. Nigerian positions

4.1 Introduction

The aim for this chapter is to present and describe newspaper texts constituting my data.
I will present four different "media positions" within Nigerian society. I display and
categorize how some Nigerian identities are characerised and presented in and by the media.
The "positions" are therefore the Newspapers' presentation of different social positions
necessarily the situation on the ground. I am taking on a descriptive role to construct a
typology of the classifications that Nigerian media uses. I find that presenting the available
social positions in the Nigerian "mediascape" is useful to convey attitudes towards identity in
Nigerian newspapers. Understanding these attitudes is crucial in order to address the research
objectives and questions outlined for this thesis (see ch.1). The typology is based on a
dichotomy between religious, ethnic, and regional groups. It describes three main positions
within these; "misguided", "moderate", "Nigerian leaders", and fourth "Boko Haram".
Among the three main positions there are extreme, moderate and democratic elements on both
sides of the religious, ethnic, and regional divisions. By describing these positions I aspire to
give a thorough introduction to the data material in such a way that it serves as a background
for- and prepare the way for the main analysis in chapter 5.

4.2 Boko Haram

"Boko Haram", which directly translated means something like "book forbidden" (Bargery
Hausa Dictionary), is presented by the media as a Nigerian terrorist group whose ideal is
religious revival while eradicating the presence of so-called "Western" values (Idris 2011b:
2). Nigeria has, as we shall see later, many "extreme" opinion-holders. *Jama'aful Ahlul sunna
wal Liddawati wal Jihad*[1] aka Boko Haram is, nonetheless, a special case in that they appear
to kill other Muslims including Muslim clerics. The day before the presidential election was
to be held; one could read in the Abuja based newspaper *Weekly Trust* that 'An Islamic cleric
was also shot dead in Maiduguri by gunmen suspected to be Boko Harams...' (Idris 2011c: 5).
The attack was also confirmed by a state Police Commisioner, Mr. Mike Zuokumor, who
stated that intelligence reports had suggested that the Boko Haram group have a list of people

they wish to eliminate and that many clerics, police, army and ward heads already have been killed (Idris 2011a: 7).

In the example below, the Boko Haram is portrayed as a group that symbolise the spread of fear and insecurity and who show no interest in negotiations. Their self-presentation in the media also makes them appear rather extreme given the demands stated in their letter. The following article is a media presentation of a three page letter, which supposedly is written by Boko Haram in both Arabic and Hausa.

> "We are calling on Muslims all over the world, especially those in Nigeria, to understand that we need fairness from everybody because God has commanded us in the Holy Quran to be just in our dealings. We want to reiterate that we are warriors who are carrying out Jihad (religious war) in Nigeria and our struggle is based on the traditions of the holy prophet. **We will never accept any system of government apart from the one stipulated by Islam because that is the only way Muslims can be liberated.** We do not believe in any system of government, be it traditional or orthodox except the Islamic system and that is why **we will keep on fighting against democracy, capitalims, socialism and whatever.** We will not allow the Nigerian Constitution to replace the laws that have been enshrined in the Holy Qur'an, **we will not allow adulterated conventional education (Boko) to replace Islamic teachings.** We will not respect the Nigerian government because it is illegal. We will continue to fight its military and its police because they are not protecting Islam. We do not believe in the Nigerian judicial system and we will fight anyone who assist the government in perpetrating illegalities" the group said' (Idris 2011b: 2, Bold letters my emphasis).

In the letter issued to newsmen in Maiduguri, Boko Haram demand that Sharia shall replace the current Nigerian constitution and democracy and threaten to continue spreading insecurity if such demands are not met. The group also stated that they will not accept any negotiations with or accept amnesty by the government. The "media position" Boko Haram appear ruthless by showing no remorse for those killed, claiming that they were justified killings serving their cause: 'We are not sorry for all the people that we are killing, including ward heads, politicians, police and the army because they were associating themselves with the government by arresting Muslim brothers and sabotaging Islam' (Idris 2011b: 2). The group further claim that they are fighting for the right of religious freedom for Muslims:

"We want to make it clear that we are fighting not just because our mosque and centre of learning were destroyed in Maiduguri, or because we were chased out of our houses. The reason we are at war is because our freedom has been curtailed. For time immemorial, we have been advocating for **freedom of worship** and assembly and the need for everyone to believe in Allah. We have been preaching that people should **jettison modern democracy** and embrace Islam as their religion" (Idris 2011b: 2, my emphasis).

The "fighting" or what many non-Boko Harams would term "terrorism" is in this letter described as their "obligation". In this presentation of Boko Haram in *Weekly Trust*, they are complaining of provocation by the government and Islamic working against them. While the members of the group 'were carrying out their religious obligation in 2009, they were provoked by the government, which according to them connived with some Imams and ward heads and attacked their members in many states' (Idris 2011b: 2). It is however interesting to note that while "advocating" for "freedom of worship" which one would relate to human rights the group is asking "people" to 'jettison modern democracy'. This stands out as a bit of a paradox, unless the meaning is that the democracy *of Islam* or what they have been advocating since 'time immemorial' is the correct as opposed to *modern* democracy which is not based on Islam. Still, it is interesting to see the usage of modern terminology while advocating for something which is often rendered traditional and archaic. The usage of concepts such as "democracy" and "unity" is an issue that I will return to in the main analysis in chapter 5.

The media position labelled Boko Haram is full of accusations, but also self-representations, of extremism and violence. The position can be described as extremist in that the group make extreme claims of an ideal society based on Islam and Muslim subjects, but also that they go to extreme measures to fulfil their goals by attacking other Muslims including Muslim clerics. It is not always easy to tell whether a bombing is caused by Boko Haram or other groups resorting to extreme measures, one example being the bomb blasts in Kaduna the day after the presidential election. According to the newspaper report, the police said they had arrested four foreigners that were 'nationals of Niger Republic and a Nigerian suspect' (Akhaine 2011b: 3). The Police further claimed that 'the suspects belong "to a dangerous organisation" (Akhaine 2011b: 3). In this case it is left for the readers to assume whether this "dangerous

organisation" is Boko Haram or not. Name-given or not Boko Haram is an element of fear and insecurity in Nigerian society. It appears that they also enjoy a great deal of respect as well as being feared, given that the newspaper bothered to publish their letter to such great length.

The Boko Haram is in my material presented as ruthless as they do not regret any killing and fearless by killing even the police. They are further presented as a group who see it as their duty to fight for the freedom of worship and the abolishment of the secular constitution, which should be replaced with Sharia Law. While anti-democratic they do advocate for the 'freedom of worship' which is a more democratic and secular terminology and it is therefore interesting to see it in use here while advocating for a religious "fundamentalist" state. In the following sub-chapter we shall focus on how the (less) extreme positions of "misguided" elements are portrayed.

4.3 Extreme positions: "Misguided" elements

Newspapers often blame violence related to the presidential election on "misguided elements". I use this term to describe a 'position' established by the media which covers a range of different labels: irate youths, angry youths, rampaging youths, mob, hoodlums, political thugs, criminals, gunmen, and rioters. These "misguided" elements can be found among descriptions of both "Christians" and "Muslims", and among both "Southerners" and "Northerners". Northerners, whether Christian or Muslim, are however more frequently found in these categories. I have divided the "misguided" elements into three different categories: political positions, religious positions, and regional positions. Within each of these three categories there are antagonisms expressed through the dichotomies of CPC v PDP (political positions), Muslim v Christian (religious positions) and Northerners v Southerners (regional positions). The political positions express antagonisms through protests, religious positions through responses, and the regional positions through stereotyping. CPC is an abbreviation for Congress for Progressive Change, a political party led by General Muhammadu Buhari, a former military leader of Nigeria. PDP is an abbreviation for Peoples' Democratic Party. PDP was led by Muusa Yar'Adua, until his vice President and now incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan took over in succession of Yar'Adua's recent death. As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, my aim is to illustrate the complex group formations in Nigeria as depicted in and through the media of Nigerian newspapers. My research questions are concerned with the dynamic of religion, politics, and ethnic identity and about how in- and out- groups are expressed. The descriptions are thus offered as a platform for expanding on the research questions outlined in chapter 1.

4.3.1 Characteristics of the "misguided" elements

I will now offer the characteristics of media presentations of the "misguided" elements. The term "misguided elements" is borrowed from one of the President's media statements on the post-election crisis under the heading "Why Nigeria must be united, by President Jonathan":

> 'Sadly, some **misguided elements** do not share in the spirit of our **democratic** achievements. They formed into groups of **miscreants**; and struck with deadly and **destructive force** in **some parts of the country**. They killed and maimed innocent citizens. They set ablaze business premises, private homes and even **places of worship**. In some cases, they showed utter **disrespect to all forms of authority**, including our most revered traditional institutions. They

systematically targeted population groups. They singled out and harassed **nationalistic** politicians. They intimidated travellers. The **mobs** also targeted government offices and facilities' (*The Guardian* 2011a: 9, my emphasis).

The "misguided" elements are here also described as groups of miscreants and mobs. They are characterised as anti-democratic as they do not 'share in the spirit of our democratic achievements' and as unpatriotic by singling out and harassing 'nationalistic politicians'. The "misguided" elements are moreover described as brutal by striking with deadly and destructive force killing innocent citizens. They did, however, not strike everywhere but in 'some parts of the country'. The "misguided" elements are further depicted as misguided by their 'disrespect to all forms of authority' and as they are presented as targeting almost everybody and everything; innocent citizens, travellers, politicians, traditional and governmental institutions, places of worship, and even the idea of nationalism and democracy. In summary, they are presented as being against almost all Nigerians, and all Nigerian institutions whether traditional, political, or religious. In another newspaper, *Daily Trust*, the "misguided" elements are described as youths, political supporters, and hoodlums.

> 'Last Saturday, youths in Jalingo protested alleged manipulation of election results (…) the protest spilled over to neighbouring towns of Bali, Gassol and Mutum-Biyu, where fighting between **party supporters** left two persons dead (…) Meanwhile, there is an uneasy calm in the capital town of Jalingo as **youths** yesterday took to the streets celebrating a coup rumour. (…) But the police commissioner dismissed the youths as **hoodlums** who wanted to use the opportunity of the election to commit crime' (Idris 2011a: 6, my emphasis).

In the passages above the "misguided" elements are described as angry youths, and hoodlums, but it is not stated where these angry youths belong in terms of ethnicity, religion, or political party. We are as readers told that the protest was political and between angry youths and political supporters in the "North", or more precisely Taraba state in the Middle-Belt, the intersection between the North and the South. As readers we are also presented with the claim that these youths are simply troublemakers and are dismissed as "hoodlums" searching for an opportunity to commit crime. In the following passages I will deal with the dichotomisation of Christians and Muslims. I have identified so-called "misguided" elements on both sides of the traditional divide between Christians and Muslims, and between the ruling PDP and the oppositional CPC party. First I will explore the two main political positions (CPC and PDP) and their view of one another.

4.3.2 Political positions

The CPC is led by a Muslim, General Buhari, while his running mate, Pastor Tunde Bakare is a Christian. PDP is the ruling party with a Christian President and a Muslim Vice President. The PDP has been the ruling party for more than a decade and supporters of Buhari are reported to see CPC as a key to change. CPC-supporters who voted en mass for Buhari are further depicted as regarding the defeat a result of a dirty game played by the federal government and PDP-members. Many allegations have been stated in the media concerning cheating, such as intimidation, and rigging as in stealing of ballot boxes, bribery, and so on and so forth. This alleged dirty game appears, however, to have brought up old divisions. Though the protesters were reported to be protesting on political grounds the religious divide somehow found its way to the surface. In the following paragraphs I will give an outline of "misguided" elements among PDP- and CPC-supporters, starting with the PDP.

PDP supporters and cheaters

PDP-supporters are often displayed in my material as cheaters and ballot-snatchers and their cheating as cause of "misguided" behaviour. In a letter to the editor in *Weekly Trust* a Nigerian stated that 'Rampaging youth in Northern Nigeria went on the streets in protest against what they perceived as robbery of their votes; haven voted en mass for General Muhammadu Buhari' (Ibrahim A. 2011: 37). Moreover, even killings are in the next excerpt below displayed as explainable from this perspective. The heading of the news story below is "Violence, fraud mar presidential poll".

> 'According to reports, there was tension in Kabala yesterday during the presidential polls because **Muslims** were allegedly refused to vote, a claim that has not been verified by *Sunday Trust*. In Bauchi State, two persons were **killed by irate youths** for an alleged attempt to snatch a ballot box at Kofar Dumi Polling Unit in Bauchi metropolis yesterday. According to a spokesman for the CPC, Alhaji Aliyu Sa'idu "The two **youths** attempted to snatch a ballot box and some **youths** stopped them. The two were beaten to death. We had cautioned our **youths** in Bauchi not to take law into their hands, but people in town were angry with the attitudes of the **PDP** who intimidated people in order to **rig the election**"' (Musa & Mushadir 2011: 2, my emphasis).

PDP-supporters are thus presented as "misguided" by their mischievous behaviour. They are

also presented as "misguided" youths who provoke "misguided" behaviour by other youths or "misguided" elements from the oppositional CPC.

CPC- supporters and protesters

CPC-supporters are often reported as angry protesting youth rioting against what they see as an unfair election. These angry youths are also reported to frequently take matters into their own hands by using violence and causing mayhem, as in the example above where two persons accused of cheating were killed. Many of the reports cover protests that later escalated to riots, which took place in the middle-Belt States. In Nasarawa, for instance, 'angry youths poured into the streets, protesting the outcome of last Saturday's presidential election in which the PDP's Goodluck Jonathan won in the state'. The youth were reported to have been carrying 'leaves and placards of CPC's General Muhammadu Buhari chanting "Nigeria, Sai Buhari", and some anti-PDP slogans' (Ajobe & Joseph 2011: 6).

The protesters are further portrayed as hooligans and mobs that indiscriminately cause a lot of violence and damage to material wealth as well, finding local political or governmental targets a channel for their frustration. In the report "Mob burn buildings in Jigawa", *Daily Trust* states that 'Angry youths in Jigawa State yesterday burnt many buildings in protest against the early results' (Ajobe & Joseph 2011: 6). The "youths" or "misguided" elements did, however, also attack the convoy of General Buhari, leader of the CPC. A witness stated to the Abuja based newspaper *Sunday Trust* that 'a sea of rampaging youths' had stopped their car and that some of the youths had 'started smashing the already battered cars'. The witness further said they were lucky as they 'got some sensible people among them who even recognised the General's vehicles'. One of the "sensible youths" had explained to the convoy that 'it was the nature of your vehicles that occasioned the attacks. You were mistaken as government officials who usually ride in jeeps' (Abdallah 2011: 2). From this presentation it appears that CPC-supporters are a combination of angry youths, mob, and "sensible people". It is interesting to note that though they claim to be CPC-supporters they are not only attacking the political "enemy" or opponent PDP, but government officials as well. The protests may therefore not only represent a conflict between the CPC and the PDP, but a general dissatisfaction with the Nigerian government.

Politically based protests are also reported to have led to sectarian violence where religious individuals and institutions are targeted. In the case of Yobe, Anti-Jonathan protesters were

reported to have been taking over the streets 'in protest against the just concluded presidential poll results while chanting "Sai Baba Buhari" (Ajobe & Joseph 2011: 6). It was also reported that 'the angry youths had attempted to burn the house of the former Police Affairs Minister, Adamu Maina Waziri and the INEC office' and that 'places of worship and shops were burnt down' (Ajobe & Joseph 2011: 6). Though it was a political party who lost the election, group identities go across political, regional, ethnic, and religious boundaries. From the media presentation it appears that political identity is fused with religious as protesters are attacking religious institutions of the opponent. In my opinion this section from an opinion column in *The Guardian* summarise the "political position" well:

> 'Buhari's supporters in the Northern states have been on rampage. Mostly young, poor and unemployed, they are united by the anger that a Southern Christian, an unbeliever in their reckoning, and a product/promoter of Western education is now president-elect (…) They have been chanting: "mu ke so, ba muso hanni" ("It is Buhari that we want, we don't want an unbeliever")' (Abati 2011: 51).

This excerpt does not only summarise the "political position", but also sheds light on the dynamic of religion, politics, and ethnic identity. It helps identify the overlap of religion and politics, but also attitudes towards "us" and "them". Buhari's supporters are not presented as the CPC here, but it is assumed. It is also assumed that his supporters are from the North and that they are young poor Muslims united against a Christian South and the new President which is portrayed as an "unbeliever". Though the presentation gives a stereotypical and fixed image of the "North" and the "South" it is relevant for expanding on how attitudes of "us" and "them" are expressed. In the next sub-chapter I will focus more on religious responses by the "misguided" elements.

4.3.3 Religious responses

My aim for this section is to give an outline of religious responses by "misguided" elements. Though my aim is to give an outline of the "misguided" elements' religious responses, this proves rather challenging while religious, political, and ethnic sentiments tend to overlap. The focus will be on the "misguided" elements that are presented as angry Muslims or Christians. These positions are further depicted as both victims and "revengers". I start by presenting "Angry Muslim youths".

Angry Muslim youths

Muslim youths and students are portrayed by the Lagos based newspaper *The Guardian* as irrational and irate:

> 'Muslim students protested the demolition of their mosque by the school authority (…) In protest the demolition, the students went on rampage and locked the entrance gates to the university, thus preventing human and vehicular movement to and from the campus (…) But the university's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Isaac Adewole, denied the claim that the Muslim students were not contacted before the demolition was carried out (…) "I can't understand why they should go and lock the gates" ' (Lawal 2011: 3).

Whether the students were warned or not is uncertain, but the effect of this disagreement is that the students are depicted as overreacting and as being oversensitive with regards to religion. On one hand *The Guardian* portrays "angry Muslim youth" as being sensitive to religious issues by protesting against the "attack" on their own mosque. On the other hand they are reported to be protesting by attacking churches as 'irate youths in several states in the north had gone on rampage, attacking people, burning houses, churches' (Akhaine 2011c: 16). The youths are thus presented to be responding along the lines of religion to political events as the attacks were 'in protest against President Goodluck Jonathan's victory at the polls' (Akhaine 2011c: 16). As mentioned initially, religious, ethnic and political sentiments overlap. The "misguided" elements are found across religious, political, and ethnic boundaries and are in the texts depicted as playing the roles of both victims and perpetrators, or "revengers".

Angry Christian youths

Whereas the "Angry Muslim Youths" were described as "attackers" in the excerpts above, Christians are depicted by *The Guardian* as "revengers" while sharing the same properties as the former:

> '(…) Malam Hamisu Shehu, 75 years old who narrated his unfortunate experience during the crisis. He said he was attacked at Maraban Rido, on the outskirts of the metropolis after the evening Moslem prayer (…) "We were at mosque praying when some youths came with cutlasses, forced us out and started cutting some of us like grass (…)"

(Akhaine 2011a: 8).

Christians are reported to be revenging earlier attacks by Muslims and according to the Guardian 'Hundreds are said to have died from the attacks by Moslems and reprisals by Christians' (Ijediogor 2011: 55). The earlier attacks by Muslims may however have been "attacks" or political protests by CPC-members taking a religious turn. In the examples above we see how political protests are presented to escalate into religious warfare based on assumed group identities, roles, and stereotypes. It appears that the "Muslim" identity of CPC-supporters and the "Christian" of PDP-supporters are more exposed which again, somehow, in the eyes of the opponent legitimise such religious warfare.

Hausa, Muslim, and CPC victims

The newspaper *Daily Trust* and its weekend edition, *Weekly Trust,* reports about the "Zonkwa massacre". The victims are described as Hausa, Muslim, and indirectly CPC, given the last extract where they are asked to 'denounce CPC'. Hausa-Fulanis are described as victims as 'Over 150 members of the Hausa/Fulani community were allegedly killed in the post presidential election violence that engulfed Zonkwa (…) Kaduna State' (Abubakar & Musa 2011: 4). In the excerpt below Muslims and CPC supporters are portrayed as victims:

> '(…) someone brought pick axes and started hacking at the mosque until it collapsed. After
> that, they descended on Alhaji Namadi's mosque and that angered Yallo, one Hausa/Fulani
> youth who protested against the action. He was shot instantly and that ignited the crisis (…)
> Able-bodied Muslims, fearing for their lives, hid in pit latrines and wells but the not-so-lucky
> ones were gunned down, slaughtered or burnt alive. The carnage stopped when they thought
> that the entire menfolk had been exterminated. However, women and children were spared but
> they were subjected to various   humiliations, including asking them to denounce CPC and
> praise PDP' (Musa & Mushadir 2011: 2).

Once again the newspapers presents a complex image of identity as religion, politics, and ethnicity are all intertwined. Supporters of the political party PDP are reported to carry out attacks on a Mosque and Muslims while forcing them to 'denounce CPC and praise PDP'. Most of these excerpts are from the North, but nevertheless, it is interesting to note how neatly the lines are presented. The newspapers tend to draw parallels between religious, political, and ethnic identities. CPC-supporters are presented as Muslim, PDP- supporters as

Christian. In the next paragraphs I will focus on presentations of Christians and non-Muslims as victims to underline how identities tend to overlap, before I move on to the next sub-section, "Regional positions".

Christian and non-Muslim victims

In these stories Christians and other non-Muslims are portrayed as the victims of "misguided elements". The *Daily Trust* reports that 'the youths attacked some residences, whose occupants where perceived to be non-Muslim' (Jaafar & Adamu 2011: 2).In another story a young man of twenty-four, Mr. Zakaria, gives an account of how rioters attacked their home and killed his sister. The newspaper does not explicitly state that Mr. Zakaria is a Christian, but there are given two examples of victims where the other one is a Muslim and is served in a hospital with a Muslim name, whereas Mr. Zakaria is treated in a Catholic hospital.

> 'Mr. Zakari, a 24 year-old boy from Adamawa State currently receiving treatment at Saint Gerrald Catholic hospital, Kakuri. He narrated to *The Guardian* how he lost his only sister at Trikania, a suburb of Kaduna town (…) "I was sleeping with my sister in the corridor (…) when we suddenly heard gunshots close to our compound. My only sister suddenly woke up without knowing what was going on (…) being confused on what the problem was really, she unluckily ran into the hands of the rioters with guns and cutlasses (…) and they slaughtered her like goat.(…) Rioters fled chanting their war songs that whosoever stood in their way would be destroyed" (Akhaine 2011a: 8).

The "misguided" elements are here referred to as rioters who sung "war songs". That the rioters "slaughtered her like goat" indicate that these "misguided" elements were Muslims and that the "war song" might refer to a religious warfare, at least in the first story where non-Muslim homes were singled out. Christian institutions were also targeted during the political protests and in Izzi Local Council of Ebonyi State 'Suspected thugs loyal to a political party unleashed terror on St. Stephen's Catholic Church' (Sobechi 2011: 15). Through media presentations one gets, as a reader, the impression that political issues are resolved on a religious level. In other words, political events are interpreted through a religious lens which again leads to religious responses mixed with political and ethnic sentiments.

4.3.4 Regional positions

Whereas religious responses presented in the previous section appeared to be mixed with political and ethnic sentiments, I will now address the regional aspect to the before-mentioned sentiments. The aim of this section is to illustrate how stereotypes based on regional properties are presented in the newspapers. Some of the stereotypes are presented as ironic self-depictions. These presentations are also critical of stereotypes they outline and it is worth noticing that these accounts are all from the Abuja based newspaper *Daily Trust.* Outlines of these stereotypes may therefore be seen as a critique of the opposed "Southern" identity's external classification of the "Northerner".

Stereotypes of Northerners

Northerners tend to be described as angry, irate, extreme, and Muslims as illiterates, poor, as illustrated in this letter to the editor: 'the anger, if not action of the youth, was shared by the majority people of northern extraction' (Ibrahim A. 2011: 37). This presentation of the Northerner or the entire "northern extraction" presumes that there is a united "North" supportive of the "misguided" elements' anger. In terms of ironic self-depictions, one Muslim Northerner, Mr. Ibrahim expresses the stereotypes that he expects others to have of him and other Northerners as 'a parasitic Malam[1] who is probably a beneficiary of quota system or a lazy and uneducated and backward subject of some imaginary northern oligarchy.' (Ibrahim A. 2011: 37). Another illuminating depiction of the Northerner's expectations of stereotypes held towards him or her are illustrated in the excerpt below.

> 'It was fast becoming the **perception** that the Northerner is a **greedy** power monger, a schemer and an **opportunistic** compromiser of ideals and compatriots for self actualization (…) the Northerner is seen as a **religious bigot** (Northerner here refers to **both Christian and Muslim**) piety on the outside, and inherent evil lurking inside. Majority of Northern youth have acquired the attributes of the **vagabond** -*siddon-do-nothing* and yet belly-ache on the influx of dream merchants, particularly **Ibos**, who come to the North with nothing and grow from shop boy to the owner of a condominium and a chain of stores. Even in the North, the enterprising **Hausa** all-year-round farmer is given land to till, and making a success of his toil, he gets killed as victim of hate in **sectarian violence** as has happened in the ethnic minority enclaves of the North' (Mathias 2011: 36, my emphasis).

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[1](Non-Christian Religions / Islam) (in Islamic W Africa) a man learned in Koranic studies
(http://www.thefreedictionary.com/mallam) (24.02.2012)

Stereotypes of Northerners as portrayed here can thus be seen as a depiction of tensions between the Southerners and the Northerners. The stereotypes are here somehow incorporated and are used to express expected negative attitudes the Southerner or others may have towards the Northerner. In that sense these stereotypes are in my view expressing a tensed and antagonistic relation between the two regional camps. Whereas previous presentations of "misguided" elements have circled around political or religious attributes, these excerpts highlight the regional factor. The texts in previous sub-sections have presented dichotomies along political party lines and along religious affiliations while especially this last text points to the stigmatisation of the "North" as troublemaker rather than any particular political, ethnic, or religious group.

4.3.5 Conclusion "misguided" elements

Within the political position there is a dichotomy of the CPC and the PDP, within the religious a dichotomy of the Muslims and the Christians, and within the regional a dichotomy of Northerners and Southerners playing on stereotypes or perceived attitudes of the counterpart. By giving examples of- and antagonisms within the position of "misguided elements" my aim has been to illustrate the complex group formations in Nigeria as depicted in and through the media of Nigerian newspapers. My aim has moreover been to offer a platform for answering the research questions of the relationship between religion, politics and identity, moreover how attitudes of "us" and "them" or inclusion and exclusion are expressed. The group formations within the position of so-called "misguided elements" can be classified into political, religious, and regional camps. The "misguided" or the "other" is often depicted as irrational or angry. Such descriptions of the "other", serves to paint a diminutive picture of that person or group as childish and irresponsible. In the next sub-chapter the position of "moderate" elements will be outlined to add on to our existing framework on group formations. The presentation of the "other" and the effects of such depictions will also be further highlighted in chapter 5.

4. 4. "Moderate" elements

In the previous sub-chapter the focus was on the position of "extreme" elements and on how newspapers displayed antagonisms within three categories: political, regional, and religious. The aim for this sub-chapter is to present coverage of the more "moderate" elements. The focus here is not on the antagonisms, but on the different groups' position in terms of Nigerian democracy, state, and religion. The "moderate" elements often appear as columnists, editorials, or in the opinions section, but also some of the interviewees. These elements can be classified into three main positions. The first consists of elements that are against division because of secular (or neutral) arguments such as democracy and development. The second is made up of religious leaders who share religious arguments. These leaders emphasise equality and common traits and regard places of worship as the preferred channel for communicating this message of equality. The third position consists of elements that are "pro-division". This position is presented as less tolerant in their use of stereotypes. Once again my aim by outlining the different positions is to offer a background for understanding the complex group formations in Nigeria as they are presented by the newspapers. By offering these descriptions is also aspire to approach the research objectives of this thesis concerning the relationship between religion, politics, and ethnic identity.

4.4.1 Moderate Muslims

As mentioned at the outset, I have carved out three main positions and these will also be an important instrument while trying to depict "moderate Muslims". I will give an overview of secular and religious arguments presented against division and stereotypes which can appear divisive. I start with reported "Neutral or secular arguments against division". Within this group everybody wants peace and unity, but for different reasons. Key words are peace, unity, non-violence, development.

Neutral or secular arguments against division
After the "Zonkwa massacre" (See section 4.3.2), one of the Muslim victims 75 year-old Shehu, had according to the newspaper *The Guardian* 'stressed the need to live in peace with one another irrespective of tribe and religion' (Akhaine 2011a: 8). The use of kinship terms such as "brother(s)" is also not uncommon language in the parlour of tolerance as in this

response sent via SMS to *Weekly Trust*:

> 'We are all our brothers' keepers and there is no reason why we should kill each other over election disagreements (…) As Nigerians, we also inter-marry, both northerners and southerners. We should not allow politics to divide us' (Abdulhamid, 2011: 38).

Another aspect of those moderate pro-unity elements is that of democracy and development. In an SMS response to *Weekly Trust'*s "SMS views" column, one Nigerian compares the post-election violence with the Arab spring and the Egyptian revolution whilst seeing the latter a model fit for Nigeria:

> 'Violent protest is no way to build a democracy. Nigerians should look at Egypt where peaceful protest was able to topple one of Africa's longest serving dictators. If we resort to violence, we achieve nothing because we can easily turn against each other, as is happening now. We should all embrace peace' (Usman 2011: 38).

These "moderate" Muslims are not only reported to want peace for the sake of peace, but in order to create good soil for democracy and socio-economic development. A news report from Tafawa Balewa, concerning rivalry between smaller ethnic groups, states that local politicians stress the need for peace for the creation of socio-economic development. For instance Senior Special Assistant to the State Government on Media, Sanusi Mohammed was reported to have 'appealed to the people in the area to embrace peace as it will help to bring socio- economic development in the state claiming that 'The incessant crises in Tafawa Balewa and Bogoro local government draw us back. We should stop. It will only end if people in the area are ready to embrace peace' (Mohammed 2011a: 11). In this media presentation, peace and unity is thus underlined as key factors to socio-economic development. Apart from peace and unity, tolerance is another aspect highlighted by "moderate" elements and Governorship candidate of the All Peoples Grand Alliance (APGA) in Kaduna State, Dr. Auwal Sagir is a politician who is portrayed as preaching tolerance. According to *The Guardian,* he does not 'support a situation where our politics should be on religious or ethnic divide because we all need one another to move along'. In the newspaper account he continues to emphasise the equalities of the two religious camps before he shift the blame to the political scene: 'There are no separate markets for Christians and Muslims. We all, Christians and Muslims suffer the same consequences as a result of the PDP misrule'. He thus give away his identity as a CPC supporter and one may question whether his quest for tolerance goes further than religion as

he continue to stress that Christians and Muslims are equal by stating that 'they all read the same newspapers, watch the same television or listen to the same stations on the radio and buy the same recharge cards'. He goes on to state that as a Muslim he does not 'see the Christian as an enemy' and does not 'expect the Christian to regard me as an enemy'. He further argues for the importance of bridge building between Christians and Muslims by underlining that they 'should come together and look at their common challenges' (Akhaine 2011d: 11). By referring to the PDP rather than Muslims or Christians as the enemy the Governorship candidate stand out as tolerant in terms of religion and ethnicity, but less tolerant in terms of politics. Nevertheless he is presented as a "moderate" politician, who emphasises unity and bridge building across religious and ethnic divides.

Religious arguments against division

Unifying voices from the religious camps are in the media presented as having the tendency of emphasising scriptures and morals that are in line with peaceful conduct. They are however, also presented in the media by other leaders as rather extreme and furthermore indirectly accused of encouraging their members to carry out so-called violent and unpatriotic acts. Media-presentation of leaders is something I shall return to later in the next sub-chapter "4.5 Nigerian Leaders".

"Moderate" Muslim leaders are depicted as expressing their moderateness by openly emphasising the parts of Islam that forbids violence for the sake of peaceful co-existence, using the local mosque as a channel of communication and education. One example is Mallam Ahmad, a regular preacher at the local mosque who 'had stood up in the mosque and admonished that Islam forbids violence as a means of registering grievances and advised the worshippers to register their grievances peacefully in line with the teachings of Islam' in response to the 'violence that broke out in most states of the North in protest against irregularities in the presidential election' (Ibrahim H. 2011: 2). In similarity with "moderate" secular voices, religious voices in the media emphasise the need for peace, but also stress the fact that both religions are accountable. One Dr. Mamudu Dako for example 'urged leaders to show maturity and avoid making statements which some misguided elements could misconstue to mean a call to cause trouble. "This is the time to preach peace. After all, both major religions, Christianity and Islam, preach peace" (Adeshole and Oyebade 2011: 4). Some religious leaders apparently did more than just show "maturity" and avoiding provocative statements according to a reader's letter to *The Guardian*:

'Jonathan's votes came from Christians, yes, but in considerable numbers from Muslims. The Sultan of Sokoto emphatically urged people to vote not on the basis of religion or ethnicity, but for the candidate who would move the country forward and be just to all. Other Muslim leaders took the same position' (Kenny 2011: 14).

Religious and traditional leaders are thus portrayed as playing an important role as "moderate" and democratic elements. They apparently play a unifying Nigerian society by urging people to vote across the lines of religion and ethnicity. An example of 'other Muslim leaders' may be organisations such as the NSCIA, or the NASFAT. NSCIA, or Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, an organisation which is

'meant to promote peaceful and harmonious co-existence between Muslims, Christians and other religious group, to ensure that we promote patriotism and the unity of our country, basically to promote understanding and tolerance among religious bodies' (Adegbite 2011: 23).

Similarly, religio-political Islamic organisations are presented in the media as moderate promoting values of tolerance, peace, and democracy, but also as emphasising a "positive" or "correct" religion. For instance, the President of NASFAT (Nasrul-Lahi-il-Fathi), Alhaji Sheriff M. Yussuf emphasise that violence is against Islam, even against religion in general 'It doesn't have any place in any religion; (…) Islam abhors violence; (…) the use of force in seeking anything you desire' Mr. Yussuf further claim that it is "undemocratic" as 'Violence is abominable' and as it is 'condemned', 'unacceptable', 'undesirable' and furthermore 'doesn't fit the tenets of democracy or decent society'. The President of NASFAT takes it as far as encouraging people not to vote for anyone who is a "fake" Christian or Muslim, arguing that

'if you are a true follower of Islam or a true follower of Christianity, Christianity does not preach violence, Islam does not preach violence (…) if any such candidates is identified with organising thugs, organising violence then, you know that person is not a Muslim or a Christian. And we should not vote for them' (Yussuf 2011: 22).

Whether extreme or moderate, religious and political sentiments overlap and as I will illustrate in a moment tolerance is relative. It might be pushed aside in a political "blame-game"

Arguing for tolerance while partaking in the "blame-game"

Politicians are reported to elevate themselves and their moderate and tolerant nature by pointing at other less tolerant personalities. However, by painting a non-tolerant picture of others they stand out as less tolerant themselves. Hajia Aisha Jumai Alhassan is the first woman from Taraba State to be elected into National Assembly and she did so while beating the former governor of the State, rev. Jolly Nyame. In an interview in *The Guardian* she was presented as less tolerant given statements such as 'We should not allow somebody that is selfish, like Nyame, to be using religious sentiments to divide us' (Akpeji 2011: 8) Other statements are in line with the unity and peace language of other moderate Muslims, for example she state that 'I have always told people that God created the Moslems and Christians together and He intended that we should live together, that was why he put us in one state' (Akpeji 2011: 8). In the same statement, however, she appears to address her own role as a politician and as a tolerant person: 'Religion, I always tell people, is in the mind; it has nothing to do with political leadership. It is a very wrong trend, but I thank God the people of Taraba saw it and refused to take that rubbish. Both Christians and Moslems voted for me and I am happy that he did not succeed' (Akpeji 2011: 8).

It is however, not clear from the text whether these are her exact words or whether there has been some editing to the contents as well as the form. Based on the newspaper data above she appears inconsistent. On one side she argues for the equality of Christians and Muslims while on the other she is partaking in a "blame-game" in which her opponent Reverend Jolly Nyame is targeted.

Stereotypes

The aim for this section is to give an outline of "moderate" stereotypes. In the presentations below the first online reaction presents the "Northerner" in the same category as Buhari and the CPC, and the "Southerner" together with President Jonathan. This view is, however, contested and criticised in the second online reaction. In the first online reaction below, 'The Daily Trust' presents the reader with a perspective of the "Northerner's" attitudes towards the opponent group "Southerner":

'The outcome of the result has also shown that the country has divided in two and it also

shows Northerners are much fairer to the Southerners than the other way round because Jonathan won many states in the North, while Buhari got less than 20% in all the states in the South' (Abdullahi 2011: 29).

Another reaction regarding the election from the opinion column express the perspective of a Muslim as less worth listening to than a Christian, but also suggests that the positions offered by the media are not as black and white in reality as they appear on paper:

> 'These responses are automatically translated for Nigerians by the Western Press as that Muslims dislike Jonathan because he is Christian, and love Buhari because he is a Muslim. This is totally wrong! But who will listen to me as I am also a Muslim?' (Musa A. 2011: 32).

Stereotypes or perceived stereotypes, and responses to them serve to uphold a certain dichotomy whilst blaming the "other" for real or imagined inequalities, intolerance, and thus also for divisive tendencies. Dichotomies of "us" versus "them" playing on ideas of the "other" will, as mentioned earlier, be analysed in greater detail in chapter 5.

4.4.2 Moderate Christians

Just as religious Muslim leaders emphasise that Christians and Muslims are the same, so does Christian religious personalities. The aim for this section is to outline how "moderate" Christians are reported to make use of religious arguments against division, but also divisive stereotypes of the "other".

Religious arguments against division

Archbishop of Kaduna Anglican Diocese, Idowu Fearon, is here presented by *Daily Trust* as preaching shared "theological truths" in order to reach out and possibly pacify more "extreme" Christians and Muslims:

> "Let me sum all that up by saying to my Muslim – we Christians never lose sight of the fact that even though we are Trinitarian, we affirm that there is only **one God:**In fact, the orthodox Christians in the Middle East always say in Arabic: **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy spirit, ONE GOD!** (In Arabic: *Bismilabi wal- ibni- war- ruhi- l-quddus, ALLAH WAHID).* This is to show that in affirming the Trinity, we do not deny in any way that

God is one." (Idowu-Fearon 2011: 29, my emphasis).

In a comment and debate section in *Sunday Trust*, we can read how one Christian is promoting both political and religious tolerance by pointing out common treats between Christian and Muslims, using himself as an example:

> 'Indeed, Buhari, the so-called fundamentalist picked one of the most vociferous preachers of the Christian faith, Pastor Bakare as his running mate. (…) If he is a fundamental Muslim, I give it to him, because I too, a northern Christian, am fundamental about my faith' (Asaju 2011: 26).

This shows again that the boundaries are not that clear-cut, that Christians as well can support General Buhari and his predominantly "Muslim" party.

Stereotypes of the "other"

Also "moderate" Christian are presented with divisive tendencies through the usage of stereotypes of the "other". The "other" is here depicted as a rich, corrupt, Muslim editor. Under this "stereotype" we are given the perspective of the Christian response to allegations of President Jonathan's "unfair" victory. Mr. Osuchukwu insinuates that the "likes of you", meaning the editor, is rich and corrupt:

> "You are only trying to fuel the crisis which the likes of you initiated in the first place. But the game is up for you, what remains is for you to go and hide your face in the shame, as for me yesterday will be the last day I will as much as take a look at the rag u call newspaper. When the likes of you send your children to good schools and encourage the poor ones to doom theirs to almajiri in this time and age. Your problems are right there at your nose leave, Jonathan and politics out of it" (Abubakar 2011a: 64).

Under this "stereotype" we are given the perspective of the Christian response to allegations of Jonathan's "unfair" victory. Mr. Osuchukwu insinuates that the "likes of you" aka the editor is rich and corrupt as he send his own children to good schools while encouraging the 'poor ones to doom theirs to almajiri[2]'.

Another online response to the allegations of the President's "unfair" victory, suggests that the

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[2] "Almajiri" is Hausa for : 1. A disciple, pupil, scholar, or 2. The commonest name for a beggar of mendicant (Bargery dictionary).

newspaper is biased: 'Daily Trust after all is owned by a Katsina man who obviously will support Buhari whether good or bad' (Abubakar 2011a: 64). The online response suggests that the owner of the newspaper belongs to the "other", to a group who will support Buhari even if he is behind "bad" things. The author of the online response draws on a chain of assumptions and stereotypes. First of all *Daily Trust* is based in Abuja, which belongs to the geo-political "North". Secondly the owner is 'a Katsina man' –from Katsina, also in the "North". He is therefore expected to support Buhari who is also representing not only the "North", but the "Muslim North". Because of his position and expected attributes of it, the owner of the newspaper is labelled the "other" in this online response.

4.4.3 Conclusion "moderate" elements

As we have seen the "moderate" elements can be classified into three main positions in which the first consists of elements that are against division because of more secular (or neutral) arguments such as democracy and development. The second position consists of religious leaders sharing religious arguments emphasising equality and common traits, with places of worship as the preferred channel for communicating this message. The third position consists of elements that are "pro-division", or who share a less tolerant message allowing negative attitudes come to the surface through stereotyping. The three positions are shared by both the "Muslim" and the "Christian" camp. This sub-chapter too illustrates the complexity of ethnicity and group belonging in Nigeria as boundaries tend to overlap whereas stereotypes present attitudes towards identities that have fixed boundaries or characteristics. Political, regional and ethnic affiliations tend to overlap and are expressed through stereotypes of identities. These are however only stereotypes as there are not only one single overlap, but rather a complex and dynamic system of affiliations. A person from the "North" does not necessarily vote for Buhari and pray in the Mosque. Likewise, a person from the "South" does not necessarily have to be a Christian and vote for President Jonathan. In the next sub-chapter I will give an outline of different Nigerian leaders as depicted in the media.

4.5 Nigerian Leaders

"Nigerian leaders" is a position made up of politicians, traditional and religious leaders, other important voices, and the elite(s) who to a certain extent encompass the former categories of Nigerian leaders. The aim for this sub-chapter is to illustrate how this group of Nigerians are being described in the newspapers by other Nigerians. I am thus offering a public description of these elements. The descriptions are based on editorials, columns, and various responses from readers -online, letter-based, or SMS. I have selected responses from different social strata. As mentioned to begin with, I have identified the following categories: The elite, politicians, religious/traditional leaders, and other important voices. Other important voices include religio-political personalities of different organisations and forums. These categories are however not that clear-cut as religion and politics often are fused. Despite the blurred boundaries of the two spheres of religion and politics, I seek as far as possible to address them separately. I choose to do so for the sake of further analysis relating to the research questions on the dynamic of religion, politics, and identity in Nigeria. Religious, political, and regional affiliations tend to overlap and while giving an overview of media depictions of Nigerian leaders, there are some positions that are more slippery to place than others. These "slippery" positions are what I have labelled "Religious and Traditional leaders". Traditional leaders may be political or religious leaders, they are somehow in between as they do not follow modern "rules" for political structures. Traditional and religious leaders are therefore treated together before I move on to an overview of how the media presents political leaders. I will mainly focus on how political leaders are reported to be the "blame game", in which the goal is to make the "other" leader or political party look bad either through insinuations of intolerance or allegations of corruption. The focus will also be on how the media presents other "common" or ordinary Nigerians' view of political leaders. I start by presenting "Religious and Traditional Leaders".

4.5.1 Religious and Traditional leaders

State Commissioner for Health and Environment, Dr. Nwangele Sunday 'told newsmen that the youths of the area were angry because the Reverend Father was preaching politics' and therefore the youths or the "thugs" targeted a local church in Ebonyi. The thugs were believed to be 'overzealous PDP youths' (Sobechi 2011: 15). Religion can therefore be seen as a very important aspect of identity. It is an important aspect given its function as marker of identity

and can stir up a lot of strong feelings if challenged, as in the case above. The media present a trusted religious leader who crosses the line in terms of religion and politics and further reports how such acts might stir up such strong emotions linked to identity.

Serving two masters

Religion can also be an important aspect of politics and vice versa. For example, it is quite common to use religious leaders in adverts for politicians, especially during the election campaign: 'Muslims vote wisely (…) Our SHEIKS endorse GOODLUCK JONATHAN. Vote GOODLUCK for ISLAM don't be deceived. By Concerned Northern Muslims' (*The Guardian* 2011b: 93). This advert is pro-Jonathan, and thus also somehow pro-PDP and pro-Christian which might underline the already existing tension between religion and politics. It also underlines the pressure on religious and traditional leaders, such as the Sheiks, Emirs, and Sultans, as this might trigger off anger within more extreme circles such as Boko Haram where Christianity and secularism are presented as birds of a feather (See ch.4.2 on "Boko Haram"). The challenge does however play both ways as in the following case where the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) question the political party ACN's choice of a Muslim leader in the South: 'The group during a meeting with the ACN candidate queried his choice of a Moslem as his running mate. Most of the members of the group have started campaigning against the ACN on the ground that a Christian dominated state like Benue should not have a Moslem in the Government House' (Nwakaudu 2011: 10).

In the "media-scape", the otherwise revered traditional leaders were reported to be under severe attacks by "extreme" elements following the announcement of the election results. It was stated in an editorial in *Daily Trust* that there was a 'huge disenchantment [of traditional leaders] that made it possible for such frontal attacks on even symbols of traditional authority' (Jega 2011: 33). According to the authors[3] of *Weekly Trust's* cover story "Why Northern masses rose against leaders", the disenchantment was rooted in a view of these leaders playing a political game conniving with politicians in order to "eat their cake and have it too". Politicians were further presented to use Islam for this cause given that Islam prescribes Muslims 'to respect their leaders irrespective of how they arrived at the threshold of leadership and irrespective of how they are governed' (Ibrahim et al. 2011: 3-4). A command that 'has been abused by both traditional and political leaders as they conspire to under

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[3] Written by Hussain J. Ibrahim, Solomon Chung, Abuja, Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna, Aliyu Mohammed Hamagan, Gombe, Ahmed Mohammed, Bauchi, Yusha'u A. Adamu, Jigawa, Lawal Ibrahim, Katsina & Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

develop the people' (Ibrahim et al. 2011: 3-4). Upon finding out 'how politicians in connivance with some powerful people used monetary inducements to get the voters to vote in a particular direction, especially in the rural areas of the north' (Jega 2011: 33), the position of traditional rulers was made weaker and the anger of the protesters more fierce.

4.5.2 Political leaders

The government, the elite(s), and especially politicians are reported to have been given the blame for the violence in the period of the presidential election. The political system as a whole is presented in the media as distrusted by commoners and politicians through allegations of conspiracy, violence, and corruption. Politicians somehow contribute to the negative image as they are reported to take part in the "blame game" and by depicting their opponents as the "other". In other words they transfer the blame onto *other* political individuals or groups while elevating themselves.

"Blame game"

'The acts of violence are crimes against society (…) Our party has been preaching peace in line with our motto which is Peace and Progress' (Alao 2011: 13). Politicians who are blamed by the people for the problems occurring in the aftermath of the elections, preach peace and tolerance while blaming opponents for breaking this peace or of cheating: 'Different unsavoury acts are perpetuated where the PDP constitutes the government (…) Threats of his [The former state governor] life and failed attempts to actually kill him are widely reported by the mass media' (Alao 2011: 13). The following incident of election violence in Bauchi serves as a fairly good example of politicians' blame-game. The caretaker committee chairman of the CPC in Bauchi, Alhaji Aliyyu Sa'idu, said on one hand that 'the crisis was allegedly caused by youths who said they were out to protect their votes' and that '...the PDP connived with electoral officials to reduce the number of ballot papers' (Mohammed 2011b: 3).On the other hand, the state Publicity Secretary of the PDP, Sani Al'amin Mohammed, 'accused the CPC of hiring thugs from outside the state to intimidate people and prevent them from voting the candidate of their choice' (Mohammed 2011b: 3). Based on these media presentations, politicians can be seen as contributing to ordinary Nigerians' negative perception of them by blaming and accusing one another for acts of cheating, corruption, and violence.

Self-depiction

In the media, politicians are outwardly humble and tend to use a good portion of religious rhetoric. Buhari's "plea to religious leaders" suggests that politicians try to portray themselves as humble while using God to amplify that humbleness and their philanthropic nature:

> 'It is my candid view that we as a people have reached a stage where our religious leaders cannot afford to maintain neutrality in terms of offering guidance to their followers and flocks in deciding who governs them in the April general elections, in which I am humbly offering myself to lead with uprightness, passion for service, and the fear of God' (*The Guardian* 2011c: 66).

Both religious and political leaders make use of big words and especially political leaders. They do not however, only make use of these "big" words, but also neutral words in their rhetoric, like "God" rather than culture-specific names like "Allah" or "Jehovah". The usage of religious rhetoric will be examined more closely in ch.5, but also accounts of the "other" which I only briefly present here.

Accounts of the "other"

Strong imagery like "saviour" vs. "evil" or "tyrant" is not uncommon. Barrister Oronto Douglas state in an interview that he views President Jonathan as 'a pen in God's hand which He the Almighty, is using to bring justice to all Nigerians whether we are from the North, South, East or West' (Bissala 2011: 53), thus suggesting that Jonathan is the "saviour". Jonathan is however also depicted as a "tyrant" from a different political position: 'We must treat them as leaders not rulers, and make them accountable to us for all their promises. No need replacing one set of tyrants with another' (Abubakar 2011b: 64). The response from this *Daily Trust* columnist insinuate that all PDP-leaders are tyrants who won the election by fraud: 'I am ashamed and angered that for the next eight years I shall be governed again by the PDP based on a very fraudulent election' (Abubakar 2011b: 64). In the media, it appears that it is not only politicians, but "commoners" as well who take part in the "blame-game".

Commoners blame the elites and the politicians

As mentioned earlier, in the media the Nigerian elite(s) and especially the politicians are blamed for the violence in the aftermath of the presidential election. I present three different statements by "commoners" or ordinary individuals who blame the position of "Nigerian leaders" for the post-election crisis. The first one is Pharm. Harvey Igho Akpogamu who blames Nigerian leaders because 'they use thugs as weapons when they do not win elections. As the popular saying goes, a hungry man is an angry man this shows how the poor masses can react towards a failed leader who fails to fulfil his or her promise.' Example number two, Mrs. Peace Igho, suggests that it was the pride of the political leaders: 'As for the post election crises, it was caused by political and religious leaders. The political leaders who refused to accept defeat use the youth in the country to cause violence' but also the religious leaders 'who preach to their followers that they should vote for people of the same faith are to be blame.' Mrs. Bukola Mohammed, example three blames political leaders 'because they use the youth as thugs to cause the post election crises that is happening.' She also adds that 'most of the illiterates need to get political education.' (Timothy 2011: 53). The media-position of Nigerian leaders, both religious and political, is thus presented as corrupt, untrustworthy, and the blame of the post-election crisis by ordinary individuals.

Conspiracy

Apart from "commoners" or ordinary individuals, editorials also present it as the fault of the politicians, while claiming that there are rumours of a conspiracy in which the Northerner is squeezed out: 'The conspiracy goes that a southerner on the seat of presidency is going to work to ensure that the northerner is further pauperized and disenfranchised from the Nigerian State and the northern politicians working with Jonathan are only concerned about (…) welfare and better good of their own people' (Jega 2011: 33). It is also presented as the fault of the politicians due to 'the campaign mode of some politicians who resort to use religion, tribalism' but also the electorate's 'lack of awareness' as 'they [the electorate] would instead go to a candidate that belongs to their religion or tribe even if the person of their choice is not capable of handling the affairs of the state' (Badamasi 2011: 30). The presentation above suggests that politicians are not only blamed for political tribalism or ethnopolitics, a topic I will return to in my academic discussion in chapter 6.

Allegations of Corruption

Another example of a general discontentment with political leaders, is the numerous allegations of politicians cheating, stealing and immoral behaviour. A response by one *Daily Trust* reader concerning the former governor of Taraba State, Rev. Jolly-Nyame exemplifies it: 'The big man himself (Nyame) was on top of things stealing directly from the till. The money was mostly wasted on women, wine and revelry.' The governor is not only a politician, but also carries the title "Rev." meaning he is a Reverend, making the allegations of immorality an ever harder blow: 'Awilo, the Congolese's Makossa Crooner, got his own share. So were artistes like Hausa movie actor, Sani Denja. Prostitutes from neighbouring states found the regime also helpful. The governor was their saviour who found ways to end their poverty' (Lau 2011: 31). The irony of using "saviour" here underlines the double standard perceived by the reader both in terms of religion and in terms of responsibility connected to political tasks such as providing socio-economic development for all. Political leaders also do what they can to increase the notion that *other* political leaders are corrupt and not to be trusted by claims and allegations. The following statement is dated before the election, where Buhari tries to put Jonathan in a bad light. In an online reaction to the claim by Buhari to Jonathan "I have never stolen public funds" the ball of distrust is tossed back to Buhari by Awwal Kako: 'Buhari can say that to his people in the north. He cannot deceive us in the south. As a military dictator, I can say that he cannot beat his chest and say he never stole a kobo from the government. We refuse to be deceived. Period' (Kako 2011: 29).

4.5.3 Summary

This statement summarize the general notion towards political leaders: 'What seems to matter to politicians is the inordinate urge to capture power and secure offices from which they can loot public funds and enrich themselves through further means of corruption' (Asemota 2011: 79). Nigerian leaders are presented as untrustworthy, greedy, and corrupt by ordinary people and other politicians. In addition to this, their rhetoric is what I argue makes them appear as chameleons. In a way they are somehow found in between the "extreme" and the "moderate". They are capable of taking many shapes and colours; they can praise themselves and their party, preach for peace, unity and the love of "God", but also devalue, and blame their opponents for the wrongs in society. I will return to this argument in chapter 5 "Rhetoric of Unity" and in chapter 6 while discussing my findings.

4.6 Conclusion Nigerian positions

The aim for this chapter has been to present and describe my data, consisting of newspaper texts and excerpts. I have presented four different "positions" that Nigerian media use in their coverage of Nigerian politics and established a typology of these media-positions. My aim has also been to illustrate the attitudes towards identity that I render key to answering the research questions regarding the dynamic of religion, politics and identity. The four positions contain the most extreme and perhaps most specific group Boko Haram, the (less) extreme, but "misguided" elements, then "moderate", and last "Nigerian leaders". Apart from Boko Haram the other positions have representatives from both sides of the religious divide. This does, nevertheless, not mean that there is a clear-cut divide of ethnic boundaries. My aim has therefore been to illustrate the complex group formations in Nigeria as depicted in my material by voices in the two Nigerian newspapers. By so doing I hope to have provided a thorough introduction to the data material, but also the necessary background for the analysis in chapter 5 that I will address in a moment.

5. Discourse Analysis of the "Rhetoric of Unity"

5.1 Introduction

Before and after the Nigerian presidential election 2011 acts of violence were reported in the media. I set out to study newspapers from this period in order to answer my research questions regarding the relationship between attitudes towards ethnicity (ethnic and religious identities) and the dynamic of religion and politics. My research findings suggest that the political discourse is coloured by the usage of – and subscription to certain key elements which include "unity", "justice", "democracy", "development", and "equality". These elements can further be regarded floating signifiers (see ch.3) given that contents ascribed to them by members of the political discourse differ. My aim for this chapter is to establish that actors in the discourses make active use of the politically correct "Rhetoric of unity" to signal who is "in" and who is "out". Politicians, prominent people, and leaders in general, as well as "ordinary" individuals make use of the rhetoric arguably to obtain their goals, either political or economic. "Users" of the rhetoric make use of "presumed identities" to strengthen ethnocentrism and to present their own constructed reality in which the "I" and the "we" are opposed to "them", "those", and the "other". An important point is that though politicians and other traditional and religious leaders, and the elite in general may be more skilled in the usage of the rhetoric, that the instrumental usage takes place across the social strata. Politicians and others in the political discourse may knowingly or unknowingly make use of the different identities or group memberships both as a weapon and as a shield. The rhetoric is used to express unity, but also antagonisms of political and regional nature.

I will first give an outline of what I term the "Rhetoric of unity" with examples from the period before the presidential election and the political campaign and from the post-election period. My main emphasis will be on President Goodluck Jonathan, but I shall also account for how Buhari and other political personalities and "commoners" play on this rhetoric. The instrumental usage can, in my view, exacerbate the tension between groups by downplaying or denying that there is a problem and by covertly playing on those very fractions. I will exemplify my claims with cartoons and excerpts from Nigerian newspapers. Through analysing the excerpts I will be able to show how actors from different positions use words, images, and metaphors. This is important to demonstrate how this usage contributes in the making and reshaping of group identities. It is also very interesting to note how the language is rich in images that convey strong meanings and how opinion holders can say just about

"everything" without really "admitting anything". The actors use the discourses to "hide" information by conveying meaning "between the lines" in cartoons and metaphoric language. I will divide my analysis into two main parts. In the first part I will delve into the issue of who is "in" by definition of the "Rhetoric of Unity", more specifically how the different actors make use of key elements or "signs" within the discourses. My focus will also be on how these actors while sharing the usage of these, may have different conceptualisations of them or may attribute different properties to them. In the second part I will attempt to highlight certain "cracks" or alternative usages of the "Rhetoric of Unity" to create antagonisms and "out-groups". The out-grouped are depicted through metaphors and images and made take on the role as the "other".

5.2 "Rhetoric of unity"

I will now introduce what I choose to refer to as the "Rhetoric of unity" in which there are certain elements that "all" seemingly agree on as long as one does not discuss the contents. Having introduced the "Rhetoric of unity" I will move on to a short overview of my analytical tool; discourse-theory and explain how this rhetoric within the political discourse will be analysed. It is evident from the 2011 presidential election campaign that both Jonathan and Buhari, but also other prominent people in the media's lime light, made good use of "correct" discourse by employing the "Rhetoric of Unity". "Unity" is the key element and mantra of the "Rhetoric of unity" and can be based on two levels of religion. It can be based on membership of one particular religion, and simply the membership of religion in general or of being "religious". An example of the latter type of unity is the multitude of "God" references in the discourse. "Unity" is also based on the shared quest for development, justice, prosperity, peaceful coexistence (harmony), equity, and last but not the least, democracy. There are however, different understandings of these elements, the last in particular. Though the elements are somehow interrelated I will structure my text by emphasising the elements which I see as overarching, namely "unity", "development", "democracy", "equality", and "justice". These elements can be seen as "floating signifiers" which is described in chapter 3. The floating signifiers are elements or signs that different actors struggle to fill with their own contents in their own particular way. My aim is therefore to see how the different actors; 1) Buhari, 2) Jonathan, and 3) Other actors, struggle over the "ownership" of these signs and furthermore contribute to the "Rhetoric of Unity" within the political discourse.

PART I

5.3 Buhari and the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC)

I will now give an example of how Buhari contributes to the political-correctness discourse by usage of the key elements mentioned earlier. The illustration below was originally a newspaper-advert for Buhari and CPC from the presidential-campaign period.
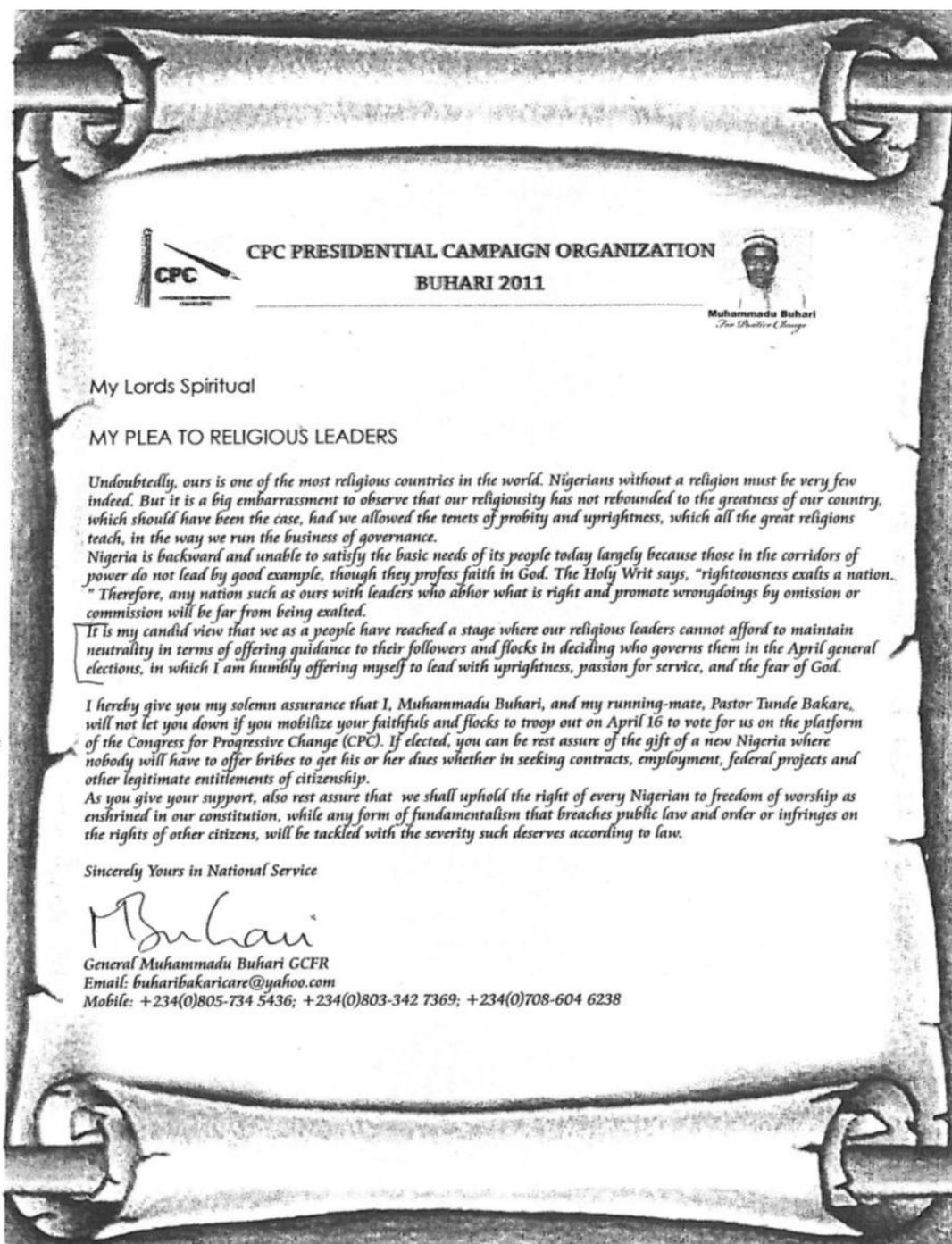
Illustration 1: "Plea to Religious Leaders" (*The Guardian* 2011c: 66)

5.3.1 Unity of religion, development, justice, and democracy

Buhari emphasise the unity of religion, development, justice, and democracy. He links "right" religiosity, moral and religious values such as integrity, uprightness, honesty to development and progress. He thus presents an image where religion is the "solution". The poster is called "plea to religious leaders" in which Buhari makes use of the "unity" element as in unity of religion and of being religious. My aim is to demonstrate how Buhari make use of the "correct" elements of the "Rhetoric of unity" by using religion as the main entry point.

The "solution" it seems, is to unite in the kind of religiosity that the 'great religions teach', namely religions believing in 'probity and uprightness'. Buhari further links religion to governance that these tenets should be implemented or "allowed" in 'the way we run business of governance'. According to Buhari the inadequate development is caused by the lack of righteous politicians. He does not, however, explicitly mention the word "politicians", but camouflage them as 'those in the corridors of power' who 'do not lead by good example'. Buhari further describe these politicians as hypocrites by adding 'though they profess faith in God'. These politicians do therefore not count as members of that group of Nigerians that are of the "right" religiosity -the "we" in this discourse. The 'leaders who abhor what is right' can therefore, if following the rhetoric of Buhari, be labelled the "sinners" when they 'promote wrongdoings by omission or commission'. Buhari continue to play on the unity of religion by adding a quote from "The Holy Writ", which one would expect was with reference to the Quran given his background as a Muslim. However, "The Holy Writ" here actually refers to a Bible passage, Proverbs 14:34. Buhari must have assumed that the readers of this poster already knew the passage as he only include the first part of the verse: 'righteousness exalts a nation'. The second part of the verse accounts for the opposite scenario: 'but sin condemns any people'. Buhari thus present us with an image of him and the righteous religious Nigerians on one side contrasted with the politicians in power on the other side. The unrighteous and the "sinners" are portrayed as causing the lack of development and as the reason why the nation is not "exalted" despite its potential.

5.3.2 Democracy, justice, equality, righteous leaders

Buhari presents the reader with two scenarios: One in which the country is backward with unrighteous, hypocritical, and corrupt leaders; and the alternative "new Nigeria" without bribery, equal rights to employment, justice, and the right to religious freedom as 'enshrined in our constitution'. After presenting the two scenarios, Buhari moves on to his plea to religious leaders. He call upon religious leaders to fulfil their duty of guiding their people as Nigeria has reached a certain stage where they cannot "afford" not to do so. He implies that religious leaders should "guide" or instruct people on how or on who to vote as 'the future of Nigeria' is at stake. The promise is that Nigerians will be rewarded by 'the gift of a new Nigeria' without corruption and with the right to freedom of worship. This reference to Nigerians' rights and further references to the Nigerian constitution represents a desired equation mark between Buhari, the CPC and democracy. Buhari also mention the punishment of fundamentalists thus distancing himself from extreme religious activism as that of Boko Haram, but also defending himself as a person and the CPC from prejudice against extremist Muslims. By doing so he establishes CPC as a moderate party and attempts to undress the myth that CPC is predominantly Muslim-friendly. The statement 'any form of fundamentalism that breaches public law and order (.) will be tackled with the severity such deserves according to law' also refer to the elements of justice and equality as it is written 'any form' of fundamentalism that is in conflict with the law. Buhari thus emphasise the elements of "unity", "justice", "equality", "development", and "democracy" from a moral and religious perspective. Religion is here offered as a solution given that it is the "right" type of religiosity, the one of Buhari and righteous Nigerians and not the one of those leaders 'who abhor what is right'. It is interesting to note how Buhari refers to the righteous, to Nigerians, and to 'those in the corridors of power' he does not mention the words Christian, Muslim, PDP, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, North, South and he furthermore signs with 'Sincerely Yours in National Service'.

5.3.3 Summary

The aim for this sub-chapter was to illustrate how Buhari, the leader of the CPC follow the genre of political correctness and how he makes use of "Rhetoric of Unity". The data suggests that Buhari's concept of the "unity" sign includes national and ethnic unity, but emphasises unity of religion. Correct religiosity is presented as the prerequisite for "unity", "justice",

"development", democracy" and "equality". The current state of things is presented as caused by the lack of the unity and righteousness Buhari claim to represent. He makes use of the political correctness genre by pointing out the "other" through images such as "those in the corridors of power", rather than "politicians". While communicating between the lines he attempts to establish links of equivalence between his own name and political party and the positive value of the key elements while establishing chains of difference (see ch.3.3.4) between the "other" and those values. In the following sub-chapter the aim is to demonstrate how Jonathan and the PDP (People's Democratic Party) makes use of the "Rhetoric of Unity" and how the floating signifiers of "unity", "justice", "development", democracy" and "equality" are conceptualised.

5.4 Jonathan and the People's Democratic Party (PDP)

We have just seen how Buhari and the CPC emphasised the unity of religion and the need for righteousness and righteous leaders in order to acquire a democratic country with justice, equality, and development. My aim for the following passage is thus to present how Jonathan also makes use of the key elements as opposed to Buhari. What meaning does he ascribes "unity" for instance? Jonathan does emphasise unity of religion, but also relates this unity to a broader context. Whereas Buhari want change in terms of getting rid of bad leadership, Jonathan use "unity" to paint a rather glossy image of a united Nigeria with himself in the leading role.

5.4.1 Unity of religion

The illustrations below are adverts sponsored by the *One Nigeria Coalition*, promoting tolerance in terms of religious unity. It is my aim to show how Jonathan as well uses unity of religion and does so by using visual elements with Muslim connotations.
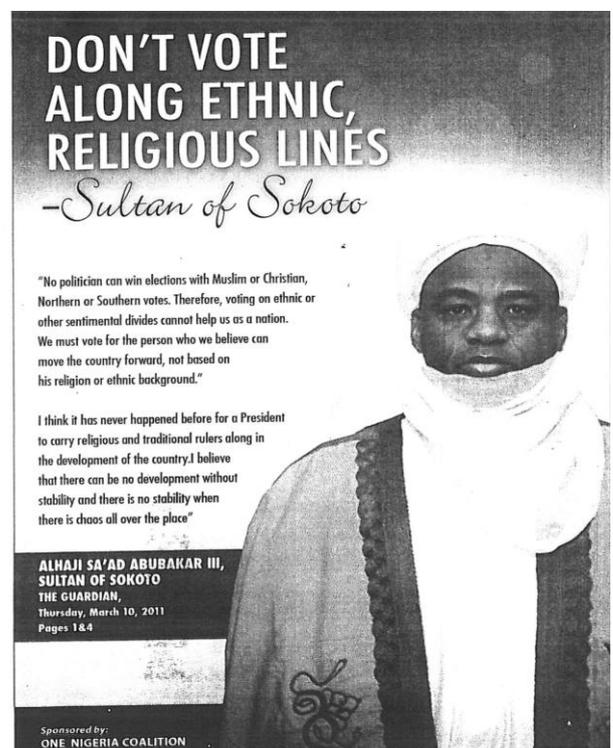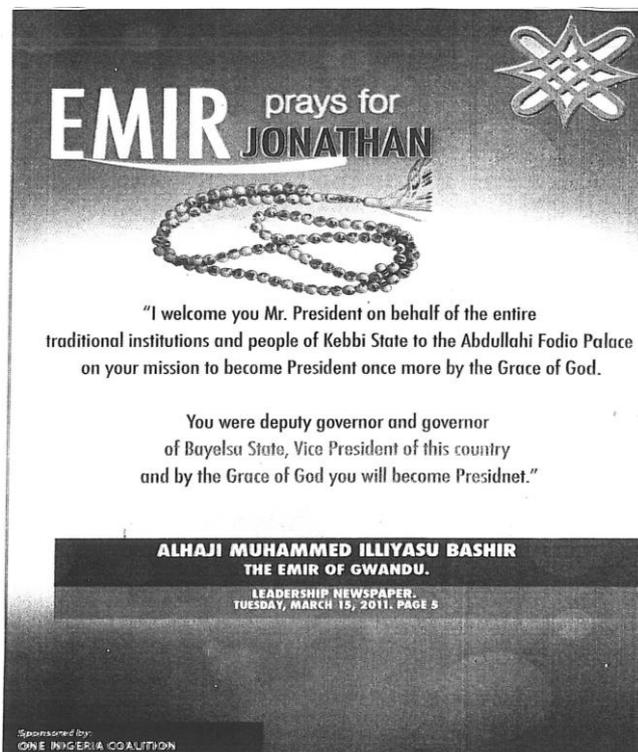
Illustration 2: "One Nigeria" (*The Guardian* 2011e: 10, *The Guardian* 2011d: 30)

The creator(s) of the adverts above quite skilfully make use of religious symbols and traditional religious institutions to promote Jonathan and to team up with the electorate. We are given the impression that there is a connection or a "we-feeling" between Goodluck and Muslim leaders. The heading "don't vote along ethnic, religious lines" gives the readers the notion that Muslim leaders and Christian leaders, or leaders who are Christian, like Goodluck, are equal in terms of their shared quest for democracy There is thus an amalgamation of what Goodluck represent and what Muslim leaders such as Sheiks and Sultan represent. I therefore see this kind of campaigning as an attempt of bridging the two religious positions under the banner of "unity" an instance of political correctness. The Emir describes it as Jonathan's mission to become president and repeats twice that it is by the 'Grace of God'. Under the heading "Emir prays for Jonathan" we can see some prayer beads, but not the Rosary used by some Christians. It is therefore unclear whether it is by Allah's grace that Jonathan becomes president or if it is by some shared notion of "God". Religion is therefore used here to create a sense of unity based on a shared religious element. As Buhari did, so Jonathan plays on the unity of religion.

5.4.2 Development

The advert to the right, where the Sultan of Sokoto encourage the electorate not to vote along religious or ethnic lines is trying to elevate Jonathan over Buhari as the General once was reported of saying that Muslims should vote for Muslims -an attribute that people tend to remember. Jonathan is therefore better as he, or the advert, suggests that he is the person to 'move the country forward' and as he 'carry religious and traditional rulers along in the development of the country', which the Sultan, according to the advert, think 'never happened before for a President'. In the advert the Sultan moreover state that he believes there 'can be no development without stability and there is no stability when there is chaos all over the place'. The Sultan thus draws a chain of equivalence between the traditional rulers (himself), stability, and development.

5.4.3 Unity of ethnicity
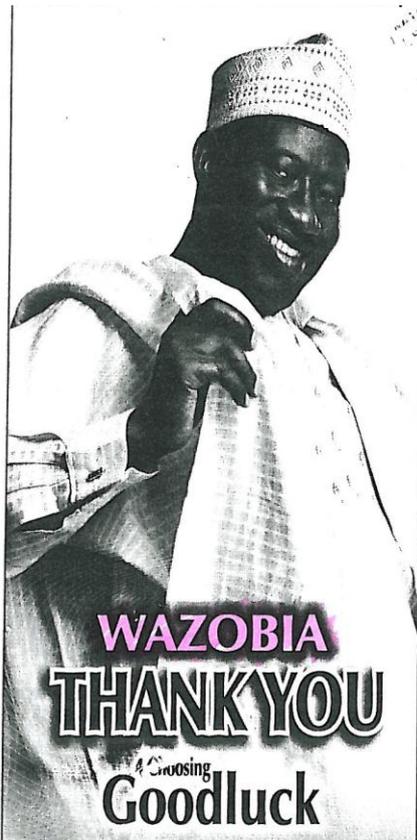
Three days after the presidential election, Jonathan is displayed on a poster with the words "Wazobia thank you 4 choosing Goodluck". He is once again playing the "unity" card as "Wa", "zo", and "bia" means "come" in Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo, respectively. After independence it was one of the suggestions when naming the current "Nigeria". The idea was to choose a name that would represent the larger ethnic groups yet reflect the unity of "Nigeria"/"Wazobia". Wazobia is still used even though it is not the official name. The effect of using it here is to underline once again the united Nigeria and to disprove or drown the ethnic tensions between these three groups in particular and their religious affiliations. To crown it all, he is wearing Hausa attire whilst smiling, communicating harmony, tolerance, solidarity, and peaceful co-existence.

Illustration 3:" Wazobia" (*Daily Trust* 2011: 55)

It is however interesting to note the paradox of the elite(s), traditional, religious, or political, encouraging the electorate not to vote along religious or ethnic lines while those are the exact measurements used in the political campaign. Both Buhari and Jonathan play on Nigerians' shared religiosity. Jonathan further (indirectly) plays on ethnic and regional affiliation by being their "ally" in terms of identifying himself with a minority ethnic group, namely Ijaw. It therefore appears that he is representing all of Nigeria, both the majorities and the minorities. One of the reasons why Nigeria was not called Wazobia, besides the fact that the colonial administration was against it, is that some ethnic groups not included linguistically in the name of the nation might have felt cheated. He was in that sense a very "correct" Nigerian presidential candidate. This is what I refer to as the "one Nigeria project" where aim is to portray a unified Nigeria and anyone trying to destroy this image, will as I shall illustrate shortly, be framed as the enemy of the democracy and unity.

5.5 Summary

I have given examples of how politicians can make use of the different key elements or "floating signifiers" in line with the protocols of the "Rhetoric of Unity". I have also demonstrated how both Buhari and Jonathan seek to connect their position to the elements of "unity", "development", "justice", "equity", and "democracy", as they are often associated with positive values. Politicians and other participants within this discourse thus share the similarity of having membership in this group. Being "in" by using correct polite language and by sharing the usage of key elements, does not however necessarily mean that the different actors in the discourses share the same concept or application of those elements. For instance, the element of "unity" is slightly differently used by Buhari and Jonathan. They both emphasise "unity of religion" and present religious symbols of the counterpart like prayer beads and quote from the Bible. Yet, it is only Jonathan who really envisage the unity of ethnicity following the example of "when in Rome do as the Romans" by wearing a Hausa attire. Whether they only differ in terms of their understanding or if also in terms of the degree to which they indulge in the concept of "unity" does not however emerge clearly from the data. The floating signifers or key elements within the "Rhetoric of Unity" can also be used to "out-group", to exclude both other members and non-members. In the following part two I will show how antagonisms and dichotomies are produced by different positions while within the protocols of the political-correctness discourse by using images, metaphors, and metaphoric language.

PART II

5.6 Constructing the enemy

Succeeding the presidential election there were acts of violence and protests against the results in which Jonathan and the PDP won. In the same manner that the politicians above struggled outwardly to associate themselves with the key elements, Jonathan and his supporters try to construct an enemy who is the exact opposite of what the PDP represents. Whereas the group "politicians" (see ch.4.5.2) are given the blame by commoners, politicians cannot blame ordinary people while staying within the protocols of the correct "Rhetoric of Unity". Instead, they blame the vaguely defined group of protesters which they label so-called "misguided elements" (see ch.4.3). Whereas the protesters could somehow be seen as enemies of particular politicians or political parties, the "enemy" is portrayed not as an enemy of the PDP, but of a united Nigeria. My aim is therefore to show how politicians, in this case president Jonathan, can exacerbate antagonisms by the demarcating "in" and "out" groups in their rhetoric. Furthermore, to demonstrate how the president and other users of the "Rhetoric of Unity" employ key elements ("unity", "justice", "development", "democracy", and "equality") through the genre of political-correctness to play on notions of identity, both national and sub-national, by indirectly unmasking the "enemy" or the "other".

Based on my material I will illustrate in the following paragraphs how metaphoric language and key elements are used to create "the other", as opposed to the "we". The antagonisms can be of political and regional nature and expressed across social spheres and classes. "The good guys" share the common determiners of being "Nigerians" and of being united against a shared enemy. I will divide the following sub-chapters into two sections where I name the first "Enemies of Nigeria" and the second "Nigeria as the enemy". To begin with I shall demonstrate how the "enemy" or the "other" is presented as "youth" or "misguided elements", as another "politician", and another "part" of the country. Secondly I will show how the political construct "Nigeria" can be perceived as the "enemy".

5.7 Enemies of Nigeria

My aim for this section is to shed light on how politicians and the elite(s) in general, that is, political, traditional and religious leader and important personalities, make use of the "Rhetoric of Unity" to paint a black and white image. An image in which the Nigerian leaders themselves play the good guys, teaming up with "Nigeria" and "Nigerians", against those of a different political opinion and/or regional affiliation. Furthermore I wish to present how the discourse can be wielded both as a weapon and a shield. The floating signifiers can be used in different ways constructing different views of reality. Therefore, they have the potential of being used as a shield against criticism, but also as a weapon by putting the blame on another group, hence making it the shared "enemy".

5.7.1 The "other" as "youth"

The excerpt below is to illustrate how Jonathan and his supporters use the political-correctness discourse to create dichotomies where the roles are "we" the "Nigerians" against "those youths".

> 'To **all those youths** who have been rioting in many states to protest the outcome of last Saturday's presidential elections, newly re-elected President Goodluck Jonathan handed down a stern warning this morning: Enough is Enough!' (…) "I will **defend** the right of all citizens to freely express their **democratic** choice anywhere in this country; to enjoy every freedom and opportunity that this country can offer without let or hindrance. I assure **all Nigerians** that I will do so with all **powers** at my disposal as President, Commander-in-Chief" 'The President described the current unrest as a reminder of the events that led to the Nigerian **civil war** of 1967-70. He said the intention of the rioters and their sponsors was to frustrate next week's governorship and state Houses of Assembly elections (…).' "**To those** persist in sowing the seeds of discord, I say – You may hurt and bring grief to some innocent families momentarily, but you will **never succeed** in stopping our journey: a journey that will lead this country, by the **grace of God**, to emerge stronger, more prosperous and **more united**. A nation where the bonds of our common aspirations and goals will spur and re-energize our resolve towards greatness. A nation where our children from North and South, East and West will grow with hope and live together as brothers, sisters, and friends. Let us always remember that we are all part of a shared **destiny.**" (Shehu 2011: 4-5).

The "enemy" or the "other" is "those" who according to this text do not support or share the positive values of the key elements within the "Rhetoric of Unity". The "other" is usually referred to as the "youth" or "misguided elements". They are labelled "misguided" or "confused" as they work against the values of unity and democracy which serves as the alpha and omega of the so-called 'One Nigeria' project. On one side we are presented with the voice of the "we", Nigerians who can be defined as democratic and patriotic towards the federation (see ch.5.3; 5.4). On the other side, we are presented with the "other" or "those" opposite of the "we". They are opponents by trying to stop the "destined unity" of Nigeria. These are thus not presented only as enemies of the state and the Nigerian dream, the destined future and success of Nigeria, but also as "childlike", "irresponsible" and "irrational" elements .The paternalistic categorisation of this group is better illustrated in the cartoon below.

Illustration 4: "Baba Goodluck" (*Weekly Trust* 2011: 49)

5.7.2 Baba Jonathan

In the illustration below we can see President Jonathan and Vice President Sambo wondering what to do with the "Nigerian youths", here depicted as a baby. This illustration is to demonstrate how Jonathan and others make use of metaphoric language to shape identities or create images of the "other". It furthermore, illustrate how Jonathan by using the metaphor "youth" for the protesters somehow belittle or redress the issue of ethnic tension. The use of these metaphors of "youth" and "baby" is a polite or subtle way to communicate that these elements are "childlike", "irresponsible" and "irrational". These elements are furthermore anonymous described only by their virtues and are therefore voiceless and moreover used as an instrument to criticize the rhetoric of other politicians.

The use of a baby as a metaphor for Nigerian youths is to symbolise the view of them as arguably innocent, but also helpless, and in need of guidance just like the baby does as it grows. Jonathan can thus be attributed the role as the "father" of the nation. He speaks out against "irate youths" and their irrational acts whilst trying to pacify the "adults" or the democratic and "patriotic elements that they are the majority. The youths are simply "misguided", disobedient and confused elements representing only a "part of the country". By taking the role as "Baba Nigeria", President Jonathan skilfully avoid the real problem by minimizing it to the issue of "ignorant youths". By belittling the issue altogether he also defend himself and his political foes and by creating an "out-group" he also make use of the discourse as a weapon. That the "misguided elements" aka "youths" or "baby" are presented as innocent and irresponsible can also be seen as an instrument or weapon against other politicians. It can be a weapon as it gives the president an opportunity to shift the blame on them, that they somehow triggered the irrational actions by not following the protocols of the "Rhetoric of Unity".

5.7.3 The "other" as a particular "part of the country"

The following excerpt exemplifies well how it is possible to say just about "everything" without really saying "anything" at all. President Goodluck's aide on Research, Documentation and Strategy, Barrister Oronto Douglas was interacting with some journalists in Abuja, whereupon he was asked how he would react to the post-election violence that broke out immediately after the president's victory:

'President-elect Jonathan comes from **a part of the country** that has consistently voted for national unity and togetherness. His brand of politics is one without rancour or bitterness. His public and private life speaks of and demonstrates peaceful co-existence. He is not an exclusionist and it is unfortunate that violence should erupt **from a part of the country** to sour the sweet of **our** democracy. This is the time to heal and not to kill. It is time for **Nigerians** to intensify the building of our country brick by brick as supported by the strong mortar of One Nigeria' (Bissala 2011: 53).

Apparently the electorate from one "part" of the country was consistently voting for national unity and togetherness while violence erupts from (another?) "part" of the country to damage "our (Nigerian?) democracy". Whereas Jonathan points to "elements", Mr. Douglas refers to "parts" of the country, thus insinuating that there is a part of the country that is pro-democracy and pro-unity, and that there is a part that is not -that is violent and unpatriotic. He further plays on the religious rhetoric and makes reference to Jonathan as the needed saviour of Nigeria. He does not however specify who or what qualifies for the label "Nigerian" or "Nigeria". Upon being confronted by a journalist of *Sunday Trust* whether the post-election violence would not affect the glory of the President's victory and with the allegations of rigging from the President's opponents, Mr. Douglas reply the following:

'Did you say "His victory"? No, no, no! This is not a victory for Jonathan. It is a victory for **Nigeria and Nigerians**(…) President Jonathan is a pen in God's hand which He the Almighty, is using to **bring justice to all Nigerians** whether **we** are from the North, South, East, or West.' (Bissala 2011: 53, my emphasis)

By referring to Jonathan as a pen or a tool of God, he also plays on the religious landscape of Nigeria and the respect for "God" by both Christians and Muslims. Instead of answering the question concerning allegations of cheating he elevates Jonathan to God's vessel of justice to Nigeria, thus releasing him from trivial issues like rigging. It is interesting to note that while Barrister Douglas initially make hints of regional differences with respects to democratic inclination, he refers to President Jonathan as God's tool to 'bring justice to all Nigerians regardless of geographic location. He moreover emphasise that Jonathan and himself are part

of the "we" of Nigerians and that it is "our" democracy. This excerpt is further helpful in illuminating the unwritten law or codex of leaders' public speech, highlighting their own membership of "Nigeria". It also highlights the "proper" democratic indoctrination by giving reference to Nigeria as one nation, peaceful conduct, equality along religious and ethnic lines, and the fruits of such indoctrination being socio-economic development.

5.7.4 The "other" as a "Beast"

The illustration "Of Beauty And The Beast" and the excerpt below is taken from the same newspaper column "SaturdayNotebook" in *The Guardian*, written by Felix Oguejiofor-Abugu. What the author is doing here is that he, in a very polite manner, draws chains of equivalence between Buhari and "the Beast" and contrasts this "Beast" with its counter "Beauty" aka Jonathan.
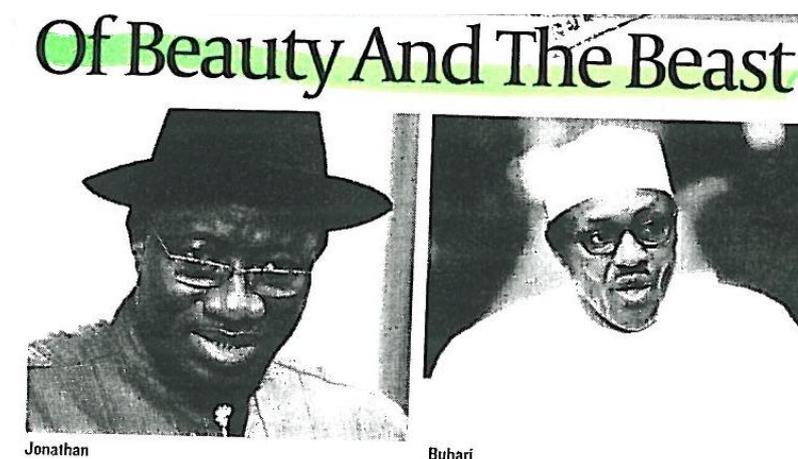
Illustration 5: "Of Beauty And The Beast" (Oguejiofor-Abugu 2011: 11)

'Suffice it to say, however, that this nonsense about **one particular group** every so often falling on **the others**, at the slightest provocation, and killing and maiming them and destroying their property with so impunity and careless abandon has gone on for far too long in this country and has just got to stop (…) There are **civilized** avenues to channel our grievances at any point in time and **those** who constantly send **ill-educated youths** to fight their hate wars must learn to take advantage of such channels (…) And yet, I must still appeal to the governors: do not let this **beautiful exercise** we have had so far be tarred any further. It

is obvious now that there are many out there, within and probably outside, who do not appear to wish us well (…) This whole thing is a **trap**, a well-choreographed plot by some **separatist forces** to tear down our budding**wall of unity** based on equity, justice, and fair play and re-erect that of oppression and **ethnic bigotry** and supremacy, which had been the core of our **underdevelopment** all these years. So, don't let us play into their hands. Like President **Jonathan**, let the polls be **free, fair and transparent**.' (Oguejiofor-Abugu 2011: 11, my emphasis).

The role of "The Beast" is here attributed to Buhari, and 'one particular group' who 'at the slightest provocation' go killing and destroying properties of 'the others'. The date is 23.April, about one week after the election in which President Jonathan and the PDP won and the voice of the author smacks of this. The tone carries certain arrogance and perhaps it is because of this arrogance from winning the election that the author exaggerates the means he use to describe the "other". We are led to believe that there is a connection between this group and Buhari/CPC as the author makes further reference to 'those who send ill-educated youths to fight their hate wars'. Politicians are frequently blamed for hiring political thugs to do rigging or to get back at the opponent (see ch.5.4.2). Given that President Jonathan is 'free, fair, and transparent' we can only assume that it is that other guy who is behind the "trap" or the 'well-choreographed plot' trying to 'tear down' Nigeria's or "our" stronghold of unity. "The Beast" therefore represents the exact reversed mirror-image of "the beauty" or of Jonathan. Whereas Jonathan has raised a 'budding wall of unity' that is based on 'equity, justice, and fair play', Buhari and his 'separatist forces' will tear this down and take Nigeria back to a past of 'oppression and ethnic bigotry' the core of underdevelopment. Buhari is commonly addressed as General Buhari with reference to his past as a military ruler in Nigeria in the 1980s, and this fact may be what the author is driving at while speaking of 're-erecting' a wall of oppression and ethnic bigotry. "The Beast" aka Buhari/CPC, separatist forces, and ill-educated youths, is an enemy of a united Nigeria, development, justice, and equity, who should learn to use "civilized avenues" to channels their grievances.

Illustration 6: "Angry Northern mob v Corrupt politicians" (*Daily Trust* 2011: 32)

This cartoon shows another side of the story. It illustrates a darker, rawer, and more realistic image than that of Jonathan's "correct" rhetoric emphasising "democracy", "development", "equity", "justice", and "unity". I believe it is appropriate to ask whether the young angry man holding a club can be seen as a prime example of ill-educated youth or part of the "separatist forces" conspiring to tear down Nigeria's "budding wall of unity". One may furthermore ask if this illustration represents the perspective of the "misguided" elements.

5.7.5 The "other" as "such Nigerians"

'On a general note, it is evident that many Nigerians, **without prejudice to religious or ethnic affiliation**, hate the political entity called Nigeria more than they actually love it. As **this group** ignores the realities of the present, the future of Nigeria similarly matters not to them; which is why **such Nigerians** tell so many "**sweet" lies about a non-existent future** (…) This **misguided group** of Nigerians rather prefers to win elections **fraudulently** and at all cost than lose honorably.(...) **Custodians** of our traditional institution similarly have their own share of the **blame** in the political dilemma from which the region currently suffers. They have ceased to be the voice of those they lead and have instead become **puppets** to some **unpopular political office holders**.' (Ndagi 2011: 39, my emphasis).

In the opinion section of the Nigerian national newspaper *Weekly Trust* (Ndagi 2011: 39), Mr. M.U. Ndagi claims that there is a group of Nigerians who actually 'hate the political entity called Nigeria'. This group also lie and deceive others by giving an unrealistic view of the future. The author makes use of the key element "development" while presenting those who 'ignores the realities of the present' and does not care about the future as a 'misguided group' of Nigerians who would win elections fraudulently and at all costs. Knowing that Jonathan and the PDP won the election and that Buhari and the CPC has accused them earlier of cheating, readers are in my view meant to believe that the President and his followers constitute an obstacle for the development of Nigeria. The President and his followers are presented as "such Nigerians" who lie about 'a non-existent future'. It therefore appears as if he is trying to deal with the President and the PDP's usage of the "Rhetoric of Unity" presenting Nigeria as united under their banner. It is also interesting that as he is dealing with Jonathan's glossy picture he is somehow careful not to go completely on accord with the correct "Rhetoric of Unity". To begin with he adds 'without prejudice to religious or ethnic affiliation' before he continues his mission. This might however be a double-edged sword, as to point to the fact that it is indeed with reference to a particular ethnic or religious group that he writes what he writes.

In summary, it appears that Mr. Ndagi is criticizing President Jonathan's image of a future which is abundant of "milk and honey" where there will be unity, peaceful co-existence, development, and so on and so forth. He moreover extends his discontent to accuse "such Nigerians" of deceiving common people by telling their 'sweet lies about a non-existent future' out of selfish reasons as they do not really care about the future of Nigeria. By criticizing the President and the PDP of using the "Rhetoric of Unity" to deceive Nigerians, MR. Ndagi actually make use of the very same rhetoric himself. While demonstrating that the President and the PDP or "such Nigerians" are the enemies of Nigeria he simultaneously draws between the lines a picture of Buhari and the CPC as the opposite of "such Nigerians". The text above therefore shares some similarities with the example of "Of Beauty and The Beast" as this text as well plays on the strings of conspiracy. A conspiracy in which there is a particular group of "such Nigerians" who is working against the welfare of the majority of the Nigerian people. In the following sub-chapters I will present an alternative way of establishing the "other". In this alternative way, the "united Nigeria" presented earlier by General Buhari and President Jonathan is perceived as the enemy while opting for an alternative "unity".

5.8 "Nigeria" as the enemy

Seeing *Nigeria* as the enemy is an alternative way of establishing the "other" opposed to the "standard" way discussed in the previous section above. This alternative way is alternative in that it uses the key element of "unity" to somehow attack the "standard" or the "federal" way of viewing "unity". It offers a critical perspective on the political situation in Nigeria, and criticism of what some Nigerians perceive as a "sugar-coated" truth and a forced "political marriage" or forced "unity". As mentioned just briefly earlier, the "unity" element of the "Rhetoric of Unity", is paradoxically, utilised by some to advocate for the division of Nigeria. We shall first see how Jonathan's "One Nigeria" project is perceived to be having cracks with reference to the "state of the nation" being divided into two. We will furthermore go into how the "Rhetoric of Unity" can be seen as a defence mechanism for politicians in order to avoid the discomfort of addressing the differences within the nation. Key elements such as "unity", "democracy", "development", all carry positive connotations that most politicians would subscribe to. Understanding, interpretation and implementation of these will, however, differ and it is this difference which establishes the key elements as floating signifiers.

5.8.1 Cracks -broken image
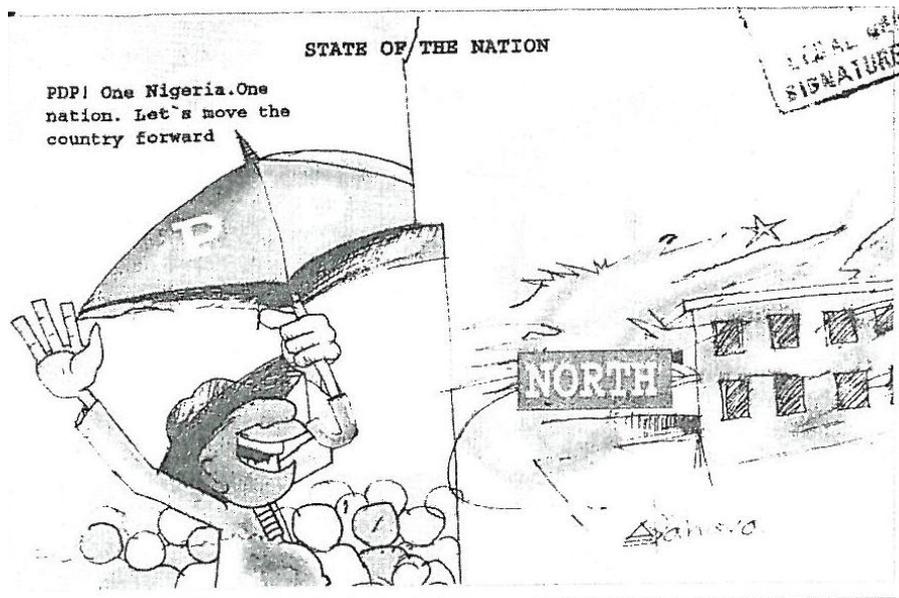
Illustration 7: "State of the Nation" (*Daily Trust* 2011: 31)

This cartoon can be seen both as a mockery of the President's "unity" project, but also as antagonistic towards the North as "misguided elements". While holding an umbrella with the letters P, D, referring to the initials of his political party PDP, President Jonathan is hiding in a trench or behind some kind of fence. While the umbrella here serves as both a metaphor of unity and protection, the trench can further be associated with war, thus possibly referring to the Nigerian civil war in which the South (under the name of Biafra) fought the North. That the president here is waving cheerfully while hiding behind a wall whilst holding a PDP umbrella in his hand is adding both irony and disbelief to his concept of a Nigerian "budding wall of unity" and Nigeria's "destined" success and prosperity. Jonathan thus appear to be in line with his own mantra, or even hiding under it, on his side of the fence whereas the North on the other side appears to be a war zone of some sort. It is also worth noticing the "crack" dividing the picture which underlines the title "State of the nation". This cartoon thus exemplifies very well that there are "cracks" or fractures in the picture of a "united Nigeria" depicted by Jonathan in the run-up to the election.

5.8.2 Nigeria as unrealistic

The following excerpt from an opinion column in the Daily Trust (26.04.2011: 29) by Charles Dickson also address the "cracks" in Jonathan's "unity" image:

> '**Biafra** wanted to be free and independent. It affected the **common people** who were **suffering** endlessly. The battle failed and the **problem was silenced** (…) We have exhibited in the last few weeks again that there is a continued **forced political marriage**, which at best is simply co-habitation and it is not mutual, at least amongst the very **wild poor** and the **very rich** on top. Again our comments have shown that we are **a symmetrically groups** trying hard to find a melting pot other than soccer, corruption and neglect by those we call leaders. In the face on current political contestations we **continue to sugar coat the truth** in the presence of the **stark reality**, another of which is that as violence has raged over in the **Northern part of the country**, we are **cursed** with a **leadership** that has long lost grasp of the issues, whether it be Goodluck Jonathan or *Bestluck Buhari.* (…) We have continued to the **same thing** over and over again and expecting different results (.) A simple disagreement, one religion, sect, ethnic group is upset and we resort to arms and in few hours lives, properties and worship centres are

dispatched with military precision and then a curfew is declared and after few months we **repeat the sequence**' (Dickson 2011: 29, my emphasis).

In this letter of opinion the author start out with a reference to the civil war, how it was wanted by "Biafra" and made "common" people suffer. Whether it is the leaders of the Biafra or whether it is the Biafrans who made the common people to suffer by their selfish wish for independence is however not stated clearly. The interesting point he is making here is how the 'problem was silenced' after the battle failed. I argue that this silencing is usefully analysed as similar to what Jonathan was trying to do in his inaugural speech in response to the post-election violence when blaming the "misguided elements". Mr. Dickson draws a parallel to that event while demonstrating that this "silencing" of the problem is the pattern and the protocol of the rhetoric politicians abide by. He further underlines the insignificance of pointing fingers at particular political parties, since it is more of a general trend to make use of the "Rhetoric of Unity" to 'sugar coat the truth'. According to this author the situation will remain *status quo* and "the sequence" will be repeated.

5.8.3 Kicking out the bed-wetter

In the article "Ha! My Cousin Is A Bed-wetter", (Ogunsola 2011: 12) the title is applied in this text as a metaphor of the relationship between the "South" and the "North", where the "North" represents the cousin who is bed-wetter. By wetting his bed, the "cousin" is bringing shame and uncleanliness to the house, meaning Nigeria. The author, Mr. Ogunsola, is using two voices. He applies italics where he talks of his "family matters" and the standard font where he discuss the current situation in Nigeria. Mr. Ogunsola draws a link between the smell of the urine and the blood, between the bed-wetting and the blood-letting. Wetting your bed is shameful, similarly as the world is watching the blood-letting in the North is also shameful in that it gives Nigeria a bad name as 'visitors avoid our room'.

LIGHTHOUSE   Truth Has No Elder Brother...   Yemi Ogunsola / Yemiogunsola@yahoo.com / 08069074718

Ha! My Cousin Is A Bed-wetter

H has done it again. The blanket, the bedsheet, the pillow, the cover-cloth, the floor. Everywhere! And the tang of ammonia is suffocating. Our neighbours perceive it and wring their noses in disgust. Can you hear that? That's my cousin snoring away. He doesn't care one bit. He sleeps through it all. Why must I continue to share sleeping space with this, this incorrigible bed-wetter, even if he's my cousin? No! I don't hate my cousin! It's the bed-wetting I hate. Who won't? So sickening, nauseating, disgraceful... After all, ours is a three-bedroom apartment, why can't each of us—

Oh! Oh! So sorry. I got carried away. I should not make my family affair a matter of public discuss. So sorry...

Now, to the matter I set out to address. The orgy of blood-letting in the North which followed the last presidential elections will not be the last—unless President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's backs his warning with concrete action. Commissions of enquiry had been raised over similar incidents in the past. But nothing concrete had come out of them. The culprits and masterminds had always gone un-named and unpunished. Little wonder that the mindless slaughter of non-indigenes and non-Moslems have become a frequent pastime in the North. Of course, there are masterminds! After all, child almajiris, those often blamed for such orgies, don't import grenades, bullet-proof vests and rocket launchers. Or run secret training camps (which, a Police commissioner once admitted were many in the North). They need the help of adult almajiris, the "powerful" and perfumed ones. Particular note should be taken too of the alleged complicity of that BBC Hausa Service journalist who allegedly announced figures that did not originate from the body authorized to do so, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)—and thus sparked the protests. Whose instructions was he carrying out? No one familiar with the wily ways of the West would rule out the possibility of a plot by foreign interests to scuttle what they fear to be a new era of peace and progress in our country. Never mind what they say in public. Remember Wikileaks.

The findings should not be kept secret. The masterminds must be named. Otherwise, more Nigerians will die horrible deaths in northern hands.

You see, many of our neighbours can't tell us apart. We share some resemblance, you know; after all we are cousins though distant cousins. It's most embarrassing to be mistaken for a bed-wetter. It's most unfair, for someone like me, who abhors filth of any kind to be locked in this stinking alliance. But some strangers of questionable motives, non-members of our family, insist that we share the same bed. Why?

Visitors avoid our room. Who cares to associate with bed-wetters anyway? Those who brave the urine-saturated atmosphere of our room (often for pecuniary reasons) come with gas masks or something close to it. So embarrass—

Oh! Sorry, sorry. So sorry. Got carried away again. That's the trouble with pent-up frustration. It has a way of venting itself at unexpected places. Imagine discussing my family matter on the pages of a newspaper. Sorry, sorry...

As I was saying, masterminds of mayhems, under whatever guise, should not go unpunished. Yes, aggrieved citizens have the right to protest. But protests should be civilized. Protests occur in the South too. But even in our most aggrieved moments, we never slaughter harmless mallams in our midst. When Babangida, a northerner annulled a free and fair election won by Chief M.K.O Abiola, a southerner, there were protests. Yet nobody went about killing Moslems or Christians or mallams—not even when they killed Abiola with the collaboration of their foreign "friends". Any such act would be roundly condemned by the southern populace. That's sanity. I pray we never, ever descend to that level of bestiality. No law-abiding northerner resident in the South should be harmed. They are our brothers, our guests. We share the same national tribulations. Nobody should come to harm by reason of his nationality or faith. This is the era of Goodluck for everybody. A most effective way to stop the frequent carnage in the North is to eradicate widespread ignorance, illiteracy and unemployment. Northern leaders should make this a cardinal policy. The first two, especially, have been deliberately encouraged by the northern elite who seek, among others, a horde of easily misguided youths to be used as cannon fodder in achieving their odd sinister political ambitions. The activities of religious teachers with awesome powers over the minds of their followers should also be kept under close scrutiny. A similar menace exists in the South, especially under Christian clerics. The only and major difference is that the latter case rarely involves manipulation for physical violence.

If my cousin does not mend his ways, hum; if he refuses to go for urgent therapy—in fact, psychotherapy— which he clearly needs, but keeps avoiding, and should there be any bed-wetting henceforth, I will seriously consider parting ways with him. Eem... I... will miss him, no doubt. He has his good points. But then, I want progress, development, good health, etc— we are not getting younger! These are hardly attainable in the present state of things. And I don't mean just having a separate room to myself. No. I mean outright relocation to a different apartment altogether. He would need a visa to glimpse me—

Ha! I have done it again! Digressing into family matters...
Sorry O!

Jonathan   *Sambo*

Illustration 8: "My Cousin is A Bed-Wetter" (Ogunsola: 2011: 12)

In text as well, there is an element of conspiracy as the author points to how the BBC Hausa Service journalist 'allegedly announced figures that did not originate from the body authorized to do so, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) - and thus sparked the protests'. The conspiracy also include foreigners as 'No one familiar with the wily ways of the West would rule out the possibility of a plot by foreign interests to scuttle what they would be a new era of peace and progress in our country. Never mind what they say in public. Remember Wikileaks.' He further goes on to exemplify his conspiracy theory in his metaphorical account of his cousin: '*But some strangers of questionable motives, non-members of our family, insist that we share the same bed. Why?'* Mr. Ogunsola thus suggests that it is some foreigners, some agents of "the West", who is threatening Nigeria's era of peace and progress by preventing a desired break-up between the South and the North.

His arguments for the break-up is that in the "South" people are more civilized because they do protest as well, but they never 'slaughter harmless mallams in their midst'. He further draws equation marks between "Northerners" and "Muslims" and between "Southerners" and "Christians": 'Babangida, a northerner annulled a free and fair election won by Chief M.K.O. Abiola, a southerner, there were protests. Yet nobody went about killing Moslems or Christians or Mallams (.) Any such act would be roundly condemned by the southern

populace' He is also arguing that Christians are better than Muslims as the Christian clerics seek their political ambitions through "misguided elements", but do so in a different manner as it 'rarely involves manipulation for *physical* violence'. Furthermore, the "cousin" aka Muslim, and Northerner, is a hinder for development and progress. Though he has 'his good points', it is 'hardly attainable' to get 'progress, development, good health, etc.' in the 'present state of things'. He therefore argues for the separation of Nigeria and the exiling of his "cousin" by relocating him to the extent that 'he would need a visa to glimpse me'.

Mr. Ogunsola make use of the key elements "unity" and "development" to express his antagonisms towards "Northerners" while sticking to the protocols of the political correctness genre. He points on one hand to how Northern leaders make use of hordes of easily "misguided" youths and on the other an example of Christian clerics in the South. Yet, he point also to the "fact" that the "Northerners" are an obstacle for the development. His usage of these elements is another illustration of how the key elements are floating signifiers which differ in conceptualisation and implementation depending on the actor and his or her agenda. The "unity" the actor in this discourse have in mind is thus in stark contrast to the "unity" envisaged and advocated for by President Jonathan, and to that of Buhari.

### 5.8.4 The usage of key elements as weapon and shield
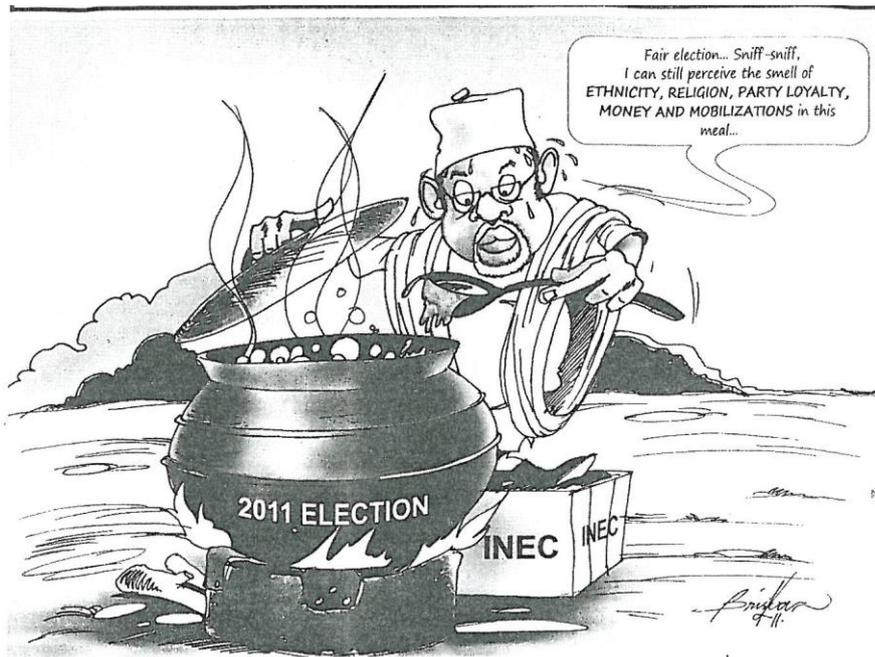
Illustration 9: *"Fair election"* (*Sunday Trust* 2011: 28)

Following accusations in the media regarding the election being fraudulent, President Goodluck Jonathan has according to an article in *Daily Trust* 'dismissed media reports suggesting that his election was made along religious lines with the "Muslim North" voting against him and the "largely Christian South" voting for him' (Shehu 2011a: 3). Moreover, Prince Chibudom Nwuche deputy co-ordinator of the President's campaign in the south-south stated the following to the *Daily Trust*:

> 'Jonathan's victory should therefore **unite** and not divide the country, noting that the violence which erupted in the **northern part** of the country was regrettable. "The fact that President Jonathan obtained over 25% of the votes cast in 33 states of the federation shows that he indeed enjoys a truly national mandate freely given by all sections of the country cutting across the North, South, East, and West" (Gusau 2011: 20 , my emphasis).

The CPC and it adherents has on a multiple of occasions accused the PDP of cheating (see ch.4.3.2; 4.5.2). If that is the case that the PDP did cheat it would indicate that they did not get the united support they claimed to have received. In President Jonathan and his fellows'

defence of the cracks in the envisaged image of "unity", they once again underline that he is truly a man of the people in line with their unifying nationalistic ideology. I find it slightly conspicuous to continuously be stressing the need for unity and brotherhood. It makes me as a reader makes me suspect that he is not having such a strong role as a unifying force as in the image we are initially presented with. In my view, the firm insistence on such qualities is only contributing to the confirmation and reinforcement of already existing demarcations. As the attention is taken away from the issue of ethnic conflict by pretending that there is none by "silencing it" one allow the "sequence" to repeat itself. While politicians fight to be the most "correct" in the political discourse they are avoiding to address the actual contents of what they claim to adhere to in terms of the "Rhetoric of Unity. It is this uncertainty or taboo-like condition I would claim is likely to only exacerbate the identity issue, but also the aspect of the shared key element that they adhere to are floating signifiers. The root to the perceived broken promises could spring out from the matter of subjects and politicians associating different values to the key elements of "democracy", "development", "justice", "development", and "unity". For instance, Buhari underline the religious right to freedom of worship while Jonathan speaks of "democracy" as the right to freely choose to live where you want. That these elements or categories are so spacious is both their strength and their weakness and is perhaps why they can be used as both a weapon and a shield. In the rhetoric based on unity and political correctness, actors can use them to elevate one candidate, idea, or party, but also as protection against allegations, as suggested in the case of President Jonathan and his victory.

5.9 Conclusion

In part 1, I have established that there is a certain rhetoric centred on political correctness and the key elements of unity, justice, democracy, development and equality. "Unity" can be seen as the overarching element in the sense that unity of Nigeria can be regarded the main "project" of the politicians and other elites participating in the discourse. The usage of these key elements, also referred to as floating signifiers, differs between the different actors within the discourse. Whereas Buhari mostly emphasise unity based on religion, justice, and democracy, Jonathan emphasise unity based on religion, and (covertly) ethnicity, and development. Other politicians are however less discrete and in part 2 we have therefore seen how antagonisms are played out by these very same key elements. The usage of key elements

making up the "Rhetoric of Unity" can thus be seen as both a weapon and shield. Metaphors and metaphoric language is employed to create chains of equivalence as in the case of "the Beauty and the Beast" in which Jonathan is equalled with "The Beauty" and Buhari with "the Beast". Such chains of equivalence can, however, simultaneously generate chains of difference by presenting the two as intrinsically different, where one represents the so-called "other" or "the Beast".

The main project of portraying a unified Nigeria has moreover an alternative interpretation in which the main project is regarded unrealistic. By communicating this message and the need for a break-up and change of the political entity "Nigeria" they still argue alongside "unity". One may therefore suggest that they are advocating for a different type of "unity". This demonstrates the point that there is a dynamic instrumental usage of the floating signifiers across the social strata, not only "top-down". It has been interesting to note that though politicians agree on the "unity project", and those against this project also agree on their own different type of unity project, they do not agree on the contents of their projects. Identity groupings are thus highly complex and fluid. Whereas Nigerians may agree on being Southerners and agree on the political act of "kicking out the bed-wetter" they may disagree on terms of religion or ethnicity.

Actors within the political discourse may use the same key elements, but do not necessarily share the same opinions. The key elements are thus used to convey very different and antagonistic messages through metaphors. Between the lines there is thus a "correct" bullying going on, where one refers to certain "parts of the country", or gives the "other" certain characteristics as to make sure that the "enemy" is known. I therefore suggest that the instrumental usage of the key elements has the potential for exacerbating ethnic tensions. The "Rhetoric of Unity" within the political discourse can be seen as political means of stigmatising the opponent; the individual or group not sharing one's political or religious views. The instrumental usage can also be harmful as it appeals to Nigerian stereotypes by playing on Nigerians' attitudes towards one another.

6. Discussion

6. 1. Introduction

The overall aim of this chapter is to expand on the research findings in chapters 4 and 5 by engaging other scholars and previous research on the topic. My aim by doing so is to support and to show how my findings in this particular case can offer different knowledge or perspectives that may be of interest to the wider academic field. My research problem is concerned with the dynamic of religion and politics on the one hand, and the concept of ethnic identity on the other hand. While discussing the concept of ethnic identity in chapter 2, I argued for the emphasis on the political aspects of ethnicity and that ethnic and religious identities should be treated together under "ethnicity". In chapter 1 "Introduction" I asked the questions "How does the dynamic of religion and politics affect and influence notions towards ethnic identities? How are ideas of "us" and "them" or inclusion and exclusion expressed? And what constitutes such ideas or attitudes?" I addressed these questions in the previous chapter (5) by means of discourse analysis. Analysing the data a pattern emerged in the political discourse that I have referred to as the genre of political correctness and the "Rhetoric of Unity". Within the genre of political correctness and the "Rhetoric of Unity" there are certain unwritten "rules". These "rules involve that one must subscribe to the usage of key elements; unity, development, democracy, equality, and justice, that again function as so-called floating signifiers. Based on my findings I have argued that this political-correctness discourse can be used as an instrument, by the elite and other actors in the media, both as a weapon and a shield. I furthermore argue that such instrumental usage has the potential of further exacerbating existing tensions by playing on Nigerians' attitudes towards one another.

6.2 Presentation of research findings: a short summary

Based on my findings, I suggest that there is a "Rhetoric of Unity" within the political discourse in which the elites and other Nigerians express their attitudes to one another through so-called "floating signifiers". The floating signifiers contain certain key elements that are dominant in the political discourse and the "Rhetoric of Unity", these include: justice, development, democracy, equality, and development. The political discourse thus becomes an arena in which various actors and representatives from across the social ladder can present

their attitudes towards other individuals and groups. Moreover, they present not only their attitudes towards others, but also their own image of reality and of themselves in terms of self-identification. Actors identify themselves and others by attributing people certain properties or characteristics.

The key elements of the "Rhetoric of Unity" can be understood by using Laclau and Mouffe's (see ch.3; Laclau and Mouffe 1990; Laclau 1993b) term "floating signifier". The meaning ascribed to the key elements by members of the discourse differs, but also the usage of them. One and the same key element can therefore, as in the case of "unity", be used to exclude and include one and the same group depending on the various meanings or values attributed to the element. I therefore claim that they can be used as an instrument by all its participants. The participants of the given discourse are both politicians in general, political leaders and other elites and commoners from one or more of the various group belongings; political, religious, regional, ethnic. The rhetoric can thus be used to mediate various grievances and negative attitudes towards other Nigerians and furthermore strengthen existing dichotomies. In this sense I see the instrumental usage of the rhetoric as having the potential for further exacerbation of existing ethnic tension by targeting notions of ethnicity and of belonging. In summary, my findings suggest:

a)   That there is an instrumental usage of ethnicity in the political discourse playing on notions of belonging and Nigerians' attitudes towards one another.

b)   It is a "two-way usage", meaning that it takes place across the social strata reflecting the background of the various participants of the "Rhetoric of Unity".

c)   The usage, whether from one position or another can cause exacerbation of existing tensions related to ethnicity.

6.3 Relating to the wider academic field

Previous research on the dynamic of ethnic identity, religion and politics has been criticized by over-emphasising the instrumentalist argument and by focusing merely on the top-down instrumental usage of ethnicity (See chapter 2.5: 16-19). It has therefore been my aim to look

at how the dynamic can be used by various actors, not just the privileged hegemonic class often referred to as the elite(s). My first priority has however been to focus on the role of expressed attitudes towards identity and ethnicity rather than actions or reactions to it. Based on the overview given in chapter 2, I will address how scholars on ethnicity in Nigeria view the dynamic. I will furthermore explore how their shared efforts highlight the ambivalent nature of ethnicity in terms of its functions and characteristics. Scholars' efforts on the dynamic of religion, politics and identity, is often centred on the topic of "ethnopolitics" and often adopts an instrumentalist approach. Within the instrumentalist approach there is, nevertheless, some disagreement regarding the functions of ethnicity as scholars choose to emphasise different characteristics of ethnicity. A key aspect of ethnicity is mobilisation. This aspect is however ambivalent as it can be seen both as an obstacle and a primus motor for the realisation of the key elements of "unity", "democracy", "development", "justice" and "equality". Whether one has positive or negative inclinations towards ethnic mobilisation, thus rely on the individual or the group's conceptualisation and understanding of these elements. Ethnic, nationalist, and federalist positions will all view ethnicity according to their position's view on ethnicity and its relation to the key elements (see ch.2.4). My contribution to the dynamic in question and to the academic field can be listed in the following points:

1)   Examples from the Nigerian newspapers confirm that ethnic and religious identities are used in an instrumental manner which has the potential for exacerbating tension.

2)   The instrumental usage is dynamic and can therefore be seen as a two-way process. In addition to the elite(s) various actors take part in ethnopolitics through their participation in the "Rhetoric of Unity".

3)   I suggest an alternative perspective; that in addition to the before-mentioned instrumental usage there is a meta-instrumental usage of ethnicity in the political discourse, in which politicians use other politicians' participation in ethnopolitics as a weapon against them.

4)   I further address the disagreement within the instrumentalist approach and between the instrumentalist and essentialist views on (ethnic) identity and ethnopolitics.

6.3.1 Instrumental usage: "Rhetoric of Unity"

I argue based on my research findings in that there is an instrumental usage of both ethnic and religious identities. Furthermore, there is also an instrumental usage of the intersection between religious and ethnic identities, further exacerbating existing tensions. The instrumental usage is moreover dynamic and I later argue that it is a tool which can be applied both from "above" and from "below", across political, religious, regional, and social strata. The instrumental usage of "ethnicity" has been referred to and termed "ethnopolitics", political tribalism, identity politics, or ethnic politics, by other scholars in this field. I stick to the term "ethnopolitics" in line with Nnoli (1978). The ethnopolitics in this case manifest itself in the instrumental usage of the political discourse in which the key elements of "unity", "equality", "justice", "development", and "democracy" are crucial. The dynamic of these is what I have previously referred to as the "Rhetoric of Unity". The aim for this paragraph is to show how this rhetoric the political discourse can be used as an instrument by filling its key elements with different contents and thus creating different "enemies". No particular ethnic or religious group is targeted overtly, instead metaphors and metaphoric language is used to give away who the opponent or the enemy of "federal" or national unity is. The antagonisms draw on the different conceptualisations of "unity" which includes unity of religion, ethnicity, political views, regional affiliation, but also on the other key elements; justice, democracy, development, equality.

The enemy is not presented as the traditional Muslim, Christian, Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, or Ijaw, but rather as an enemy of the key elements by his or her classification as the "other". The "other" can be classified through labels such as so-called "misguided elements", particular "parts" of the country, or "separatist forces". These labels can however be seen as a shaping and reshaping of group identities and an addition to existing traditional labels. This leaves us with a complex web of group alliances as the key elements are attributed different meaning and contents depending on the holder. "Everybody" thus agree that opponents of such concepts as "unity" and the other key elements ought to be rendered enemies of "Nigeria". Who these opponents are again depends on the individual interpretation of the key elements. Even the term "Nigeria" is debatable as there are conflicting ideas as to the current "unity" of the federal state. Basically "everybody" agree and wish for a state based on unity, peace, harmony, justice, development and so on and so forth, but on different terms. Likewise "everybody" submit to the "correct" rhetoric, but for different purposes and to express different attitudes and opinions. I shall now compare and discuss my findings in relation to previous scholarship on ethnicity in Nigeria starting with Niels Kastfelt.

Relating to other scholars

The nature of the key elements is underlined by Kastfelt's view on the debate in Nigeria concerning the Nigerian constitution being opposed to or in support of Nigeria as a secular or religious state. He points to the different understandings of how this relationship ought to be. Whereas many Muslims opt for a religious state, Christians often argue that religion should remain on a private rather than a state-level (Kastfelt 1997: 44). "Unity" can thus be regarded a sign which symbolises very different values and usages. Religious and ethnic identity is, as mentioned earlier, dynamic and it appears that it has the potential of interfering with what values and contents a sign or key element is given. For instance, In Buhari's discourse in "Part 1" he generally emphasise "unity" based on religion. President Jonathan emphasised religion as well, however, on religion as part of ethnic identity, illustrated by the attire he was wearing. Given the close ties between the individual or groups' conceptualisation of the key elements and identity, the key elements can be used to express the "we" as opposed to the "other". "Unity" or other key elements can thus be used to include or exclude. For example, I demonstrated in "Part 2" how the current "united Nigeria" was regarded the obstacle for a different kind of "unity" in which the Northern part was not included. Based on this I argue that there is a tension between "unities" and thus also potential tension between users of such different "unities". Ethnic, religious, regional, political, local, national, and federal unity are but a few mentioned by scholars (see ch.2).

Jinadu's (2002) state that the objective of Nigerian federalism is to pursue 'diversity in unity'. While advocating for federal unity, the implementation of a "Rhetoric of Unity" is in fact threatening that very unity through the antagonisms provoked by classification and exclusion of groups. According to Jinadu (2002) the unity of the Nigerian federal state can be threatened by one ethnic group's *perceived* **domination** of other groups and the exclusion of the "dominated" groups from national or 'unit-level' government level (Jinadu 2002: 2, my emphasis). Federal "unity" is thus threatened by the type of attitudes opting for a different unity based on the separation of the Nigerian state, but also the "dominated" groups. This supports my research as those elements presented as "misguided", "youth", or "baby" in the "Rhetoric of Unity" can be seen as dominated by being classified as such. Jinadu (2002) describes the current nation-state a flaw due to its 'partial or parochial and ideologized, **unificationist**, integrationist or assimilationist assumptions and thrust' (Jinadu 2002: 12, my emphasis). Jinadu thus insinuate that politicians do in fact make use of "unity" through their

'unificationist assumptions and thrust'. According to Udogu (2001), political entrepreneurs often invoked ethnic solidarity for the sake of promoting their own interests (Udogu 2001: 22). The "political entrepreneurs" thus make use of "unity" based on ethnicity. There are therefore, in my view, tensions between the different types and expectations of "unity". The descriptions above thus serve to underline my claims of tension between different understandings, but also different usage and politics of "unity". In the next section I will emphasise "ethnopolitics" and on how the instrumental usage of ethnic unity and solidarity should be seen as dynamic.

6.3.2 A dynamic instrumental usage

The ethnopolitical usage or manipulation of Nigerians' attitudes towards one another is not a one-way project. I mentioned initially that actors in the political discourse in my data represent various groups from different religious, ethnic, regional, and political background. In chapter 4, I presented a typology of four Nigerian positions based on the depictions of these in the newspapers in my material. The three main positions include "misguided", "moderate", and "Nigerian leaders". The issue of classifying troublesome Nigerians as "misguided" elements supports that there is an elite, or several elites on the top trying to manipulate people for the sake of their own interests. However, the data taken from interviews and opinion sections in the newspapers suggests that common Nigerians also participate actively in the political discourse and utilise the key elements for the sake of *their* own interests. There is thus a tension between the interests of different Nigerian positions and thus also different understandings and usages of ethnicity. What is presented as an expression of democratic aspirations by some may therefore not be perceived as such by others. In the last section of Part II in chapter 5, "Enemies of Nigeria", or those Nigerians describing *Nigeria* as the enemy where in fact exercising their democratic rights. Their democratic aspirations may not however be perceived as such by the "friends" of the current Nigerian state (see ch 5.8). Though the actors presented in chapter 5 are from different religious, ethnic, regional, and political backgrounds, I can unfortunately not claim that they are from *all* social strata as at least the opinion sections requires literacy on the account of the actor. Some of the Nigerians interviewed might however have been illiterates, but even at that they may not be able to engage actively in the political discourse. Furthermore, they may also not be given the chance to consciously make use of the discourse as there are limited ways for them to check that what

is written equals their own account. In that sense it is a possibility that those who are illiterate can be used by journalists or editors for the sake of the interests of the latter.

In relation to previous scholarship, Ukiwo (2005) points to the fact that there had been studies in which the elite had responded to mass-expectations (Ukiwo 2005: 8). He does, however, not mention any scholars or the name of the studies conducted. Nevertheless, the data and the analysis in this thesis suggest that there is a "two-way" manipulation. As mentioned in chapter 2, the instrumentalist approach has been critiqued of offering a rather reductionist or one-sided view of ethnopolitics in terms of class struggle and manipulation of the masses (ch2: 21). Vaughan criticise the tendency within the instrumentalist perspective to dismiss ethnicity as 'mainly mediums in which the political class seek refuge behind communal themes and symbols' arguing that 'confronted with the rapid decay of the Nigeria state in the 1990s a new generation of civic leaders are reconstructing ethnic themes as the medium for the articulation of not only communal but democratic aspirations' (Vaughan 2001: 80). Vaughan further underline that ethnicity can be used to mobilise groups in resistance to oppressive and corrupt regimes. Mustapha on the other hand regard ethnicity as an obstacle for democracy, viewing ethnic mobilisation or in his words 'ethnic sectarianism' a threat to the unity and democracy of Nigeria (Mustapha 2004: 257). This supports that there are different opinions of what "unity" constitutes, but also that by using the political discourse actors can invoke ethnic solidarity based on the key elements ("unity", "development", "justice", "democracy", and "equality"). It also suggests that in addition to the two-way usage of both elites and "masses", or common Nigerians, the discourse can be used to express different interests depending on the position. That does not, however, disprove that the elites manipulate the masses. It does open up for negotiations as the discourse becomes a democratic arena where one can express opinions as long as within the protocols of the "Rhetoric of Unity".

6.3.3 Meta-level

In addition to the two-way instrumentalist usage of both mass and elite I would argue that the actors also use ethnopolitics on a meta-level. A usage in which one refers to the ethnopolitical game played out by other political actors within the political discourse. In "Part 1", for instance, Buhari relate the inadequate development to unrighteous politicians. He does not, however, refer to them as politicians, but as "those in the corridors of power" and categorise

them as hypocrites by phrases like 'though they profess faith in God'. This can be interpreted as the other politicians are using religion as an ethnopolitical tool, whereas Buhari and the CPC are the ones who actually subscribe to a rightful religious identity. By referring to other politicians' instrumental usage of religion, one can argue that Buhari and the CPC implement ethnopolitics on a meta-level. Similarly, President Jonathan and the PDP can be said to subscribe to such a meta-instrumental usage of ethnopolitics. While his classification and domination of the so-called "misguided elements" can cause exclusion of the "dominated" groups from national or 'unit-level' government level (Jinadu 2002: 2), it can as well relate the behaviour of these groups to the ethnopolitics of other political actors. By using metaphors such as "baby" and "youth" to describe the "misguided elements" these elements are stripped of responsibility due to their "childlike" and "irrational" behaviour, but as well used to criticize the rhetoric of other politicians. Buhari for instance talk of the need for religious leaders to "guide" the people in terms of voting and such kind of statements can be used against him as ethnopolitical rhetoric.

6.3.4 Instrumentalist and Essentialist

We shall now return to the tensions between the instrumentalist- and the essentialist approach, starting with instrumentalist underpinnings. The antagonisms and dichotomies communicated through the "Rhetoric of Unity", political correctness and metaphoric language can as pointed out above be used for political goals by actors across the social strata. It can however, also arguably strengthen tensions as well as ease them given ethnicity's ambiguous nature. Jenkins (2003) state that categorisation can contribute to group identity through, among other ways, the process of 'internalisation' where the group being externally categorised assimilate bits of or the entire description into its own identity. (Jenkins 2003: 68). The expressed antagonisms and dichotomies can thus be regarded categorisation. This categorisation is in my view playing on existing attitudes, but can as well lead to the internalisation of new attitudes or ethnocentrisms between groups, but also negative attitudes towards the state. According to Jenkins (2003) social identity is shaped and reshaped through an on-going process in which external or public images of the 'self' become incorporated. Drawing on Barth he claims that the 'self' consists of 'I' and 'me' where the 'me' is a 'constellation of the incorporated attitudes and responses of others' (Jenkins 2003: 63). Jenkins' view thus appears to support my claims regarding the shaping and reshaping of group identities. However, social identity

and ethnic identity is not necessarily the same as ethnicity. Ethnicity or ethnic identities can be seen as one of many sub-identities constituting the 'self'. Social identity can be seen as a more general term for group belonging, whereas ethnicity tends to lend associations to a shared historic past, either real or imagined (see ch.2; Kastfelt 2003: 205).

I see the instrumental usage of ethnicity in Nigeria as both dynamic and essential. Whereas ethnic or religious identities remain the same in form by the continuation of rituals and traditions and the manner in which these are expressed might change. In this sense ethnicity should be seen as having the attributes of being both dynamic and slow to change simultaneously. I am therefore apprehensive of concluding that the instrumental rhetoric analysed previously shape or "create" new ethnic identities, but suggest that they reinforce existing tensions as suggested by Rudolph (2006) in the case of the civil war. According to him the sitting regime used ethnicity as device by playing on existing tensions rooted in ethnic, religious, and developmental differences between the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo. (See Ch.2: 17;, Rudolph, 2006: 181, 186-192). Kastfelt (2003) suggests that ethnicity should not be viewed in exclusively constructivist and contextual terms. He introduces an alternative way opposed to the trend of stressing the historicity of ethnicity by drawing on Lonesdale's distinction of 'moral ethnicity' and 'political tribalism' (Kastfelt 2003: 205). In his opinion, this distinction can offer a more 'complex historical understanding of ethnicity' (Kastfelt 2003: 205). Moral ethnicity is defined as '…the common human instinct to create out of the daily habits of social intercourse and material labour system of moral meaning and ethical reputation within a more or less imagined community' and political tribalism as 'the use of ethnic identity in political competition with other groups' (Kasfelt 2003: 205). Though I agree with Kastfelt that this distinction offers a more complex understanding of ethnicity I do not see how it counterfeits the instrumental usage of ethnic identity nor that this usage can be a positive as well as negative trait of ethnicity. That the two distinctions are named 'moral ethnicity' and 'political tribalism' leaves an impression of 'good' v 'bad' as 'tribalism' is a concept that often carry negative associations and that is often linked to the conflict aspect of ethnicity. In my opinion, 'political tribalism' or the usage of ethnic identity in political competition does not have to be negative. It is, in my view, relative to what the competition is about –whether it is about minority rights or whether it is the instrumental usage of such claims.

I mentioned previously that various actors engage in ethnopolitics through the political discourse and that this can be seen in support of my claim that the instrumental usage is

dynamic. I also mentioned initially in this paragraph that I see the instrumental usage as both dynamic and essential. Though instrumentalism as a school of thought is opposed to essentialism it does carry some essentialist aspects. Stereotypes are somehow frozen descriptions of the "other" and are thus static. Stereotypes are typically concerned with the essence of a character or group and in line with Edward Said's theory of "Orientalism" this falls under essentialism. The "other" is a construct and functions as the object which is opposed to the subject. The subject has positive characteristics whereas the object is made the negative "mirror-image" of the subject (Said 1978). Through the "Rhetoric of Unity" these antagonisms are often expressed via stereotypes or fixed ideas of the "other". Actors within the political discourse may not shape new identities, but strengthen existing dichotomies and antagonisms by upholding a fixed or static perception of the "other". The instrumentalist approach and the instrumental usage the "Rhetoric of Unity" and its key elements of "development", "justice", "unity", "equality", and "democracy", can thus be seen as both dynamic and static simultaneously.

6.4 Conclusion

The aim for this chapter was to expand on the research questions by comparing the research data with the knowledge of other scholars. In this chapter I have showed that 1) there is an instrumental and dynamic usage of ethnic and religious identities in the case of Nigeria. 2) My research supports and refines the suggested perspective on the instrumental usage of ethnopolitics being a two-way usage. 3) My research further suggests an alternative or additional ethnopolitical perspective; that there is in addition to the before-mentioned instrumental usage a meta-instrumental usage of ethnicity in the political discourse. 4) Addresses the disagreement within the instrumentalist approach and between the instrumentalist and essentialist views on ethnicity and ethnic identity.

 Attitudes towards ethnic identities and inclusion and exclusion are played out in the political discourse. In the political discourse this takes place as various actors make use of the so-called "Rhetoric of Unity". Antagonisms and other attitudes are "silently" expressed through this channel and this instrumental usage is what the literature address as ethnopolitics or political tribalism. Ethnopolitics is, however, not only used to manipulate the "dumb masses" as the "Rhetoric of Unity" is an available tool that various actors in the political discourse and

political arena in general may utilise for their own purposes. The instrumental usage does therefore not necessarily have to be negative as such, but a tool for expressing one's opinion, a democratic right. This right may however, be used to argue against the current democracy. It is this relativity which I see as the core of the Nigerian political discourse and its key elements of "democracy", "development", "justice", "equality", and last but not the least, "unity". Ethnopolitics does also exist on a meta-level in which actors make use of the public's knowledge and perhaps even dislike of political actors' participation in ethnopolitics. On the meta-level actors make use of *other* actors' implementation of key elements and mobilisation of identity along ethnic, regional, and religious affiliations.

I have demonstrated that there is a tension not only within the instrumentalist approach, but also between the instrumentalist and the essentialist perspective in terms of ethnicity and ethnopolitics. The instrumentalist approach as well as the instrumental usage of the "Rhetoric of Unity" can be regarded both dynamic and static. That the dynamic usage is by both mass and elite for the sake of different interests and that the antagonisms are expressed through stereotyping of the "other" underlines this claim.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Summary

"Nigerian Politics of Unity" is the title for this thesis as I claim that the "politics of unity" or in other words the "Rhetoric of Unity" can sustain and moreover exacerbate existing tensions. The aim of this thesis has been to expand on the dynamic of religion, politics, and identity, and furthermore how ideas of inclusion and exclusion are expressed. My motivation for posing the questions above was instigated by what I saw as inadequate accounts by previous research within the field of ethnicity in Nigeria. In chapter 2, I therefore gave an overview of previous research and critiques of the instrumentalist approach. I furthermore, pointed to how the contributions of this dissertation by adding that "ethnopolitics" and instrumentalism can be seen as both dynamic and static in the Nigerian case. Drawing on Laclau and Mouffe's (Laclau and Mouffe 1990; Laclau 1993b) terminology of "floating signifiers", I account for the choice of discourse analysis applied in ch.5. I established my own typology of Nigerian "positions" as depicted in the "mediascape" of the two newspapers. These positions include "Boko Haram", "Extreme elements", "Moderate elements", and "Nigerian Leaders". In chapter 5, I implemented discourse analysis on my material consisting of newspaper excerpts. In chapter 6 the findings of the discourse analysis are further discussed in relation to previous scholarly work outlined in ch.2. ' As outlined in the introduction chapter, I have addressed how these concepts relate to one another by looking at how Nigerians and particularly Nigerian leaders, in their statements, use ethnic identity for their political agendas.

7.2 Contributions

The findings of this dissertation suggest that there is an instrumental usage of ethnic identity which does not create new, but strengthen existing antagonisms and divisions by referring to current dichotomies. The instrumental usage or the "ethnopolitics" is furthermore dynamic, meaning that it can be implemented in more than one way and by more than one group of actors (or positions). Analysing the data using discourse analysis, I argued for an interpretation of what was "hidden". In other words, I analysed what was communicated between the lines or expressed through metaphors and metaphoric language. I found that the discourse was often used to express antagonisms. This happened when actors gave each other

different labels and thus categorized the other individual or group as the "other". I will now move on to a more detailed account of my main findings and contributions to the wider academic field.

7.2.1 Typology of "media positions"

The data presented in ch.4 "Nigerian Positions" are depictions of Nigerians as presented by the media. My typology is thus a way of structuring what has already been published and interpreted by the media. However, by structuring it I am providing an independent analysis. The typology outlined in chapter 5 consists of the following positions: "Boko Haram", "Extreme elements", "moderate elements", and "Nigerian leaders". I found that presenting these positions in the Nigerian "mediascape" was useful to convey attitudes towards identity in my material. Among the three main positions (not Boko Haram) I found that there were extreme, moderate and democratic elements on both sides of the religious, ethnic, and regional divisions. The purpose of outlining the "media positions" was to illustrate the complex group formations in Nigeria, but also to offer an introduction to the material and moreover provide a background for the analysis in chapter 5.

7.2.2 "Rhetoric of Unity"

In ch.5, I made use of discourse analysis and find that in the political discourse there is a dominant "Rhetoric of Unity". Unity can be seen as the overarching theme of the key elements of the rhetoric which are: "unity", "development", "democracy", "justice", and "equality". The elements are however, somehow overlapping. Actors within the political discourse tend to refer to one or several of them and the elements constitute what Laclau and Moffe (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999: 34: 40; Laclau 1990; 1993b) has referred to as "floating signifiers". In Part II, for instance, I illustrate that there is an alternative way, a way in which "Nigeria" and the "one Nigeria project" can be perceived as the enemy. Such elements are thus advocating for a different kind of unity than that of the "one Nigeria project" and of both Jonathan and Buhari. This underlines that the key elements are floating signifiers that can be used differently, by different actors, and for different purposes. The instrumental usage of the key elements can further be harmful as it can sustain and even exacerbate existing tensions.

As I have demonstrated previously, the usage is, however, dynamic. It can therefore be used in more than one way, what is harmful to some is an expression of democracy to others.

In Part I, I label the rhetoric of Jonathan for the "one Nigeria project" in which individuals reported to be protesting against the results, and other individuals and groups causing violence and destruction, are labelled "misguided" elements, and thus an enemy of Nigeria. In Part II, I illustrate that there is an alternative way, a way in which "Nigeria" and the "one Nigeria project" can be perceived as the enemy. Such elements are thus advocating for a different kind of unity than that of the "one Nigeria project" and of both Jonathan and Buhari. This underlines that the key elements are floating signifiers that can be used differently, by different actors, and for different purposes. The instrumental usage of the key elements can be harmful as it can sustain and even exacerbate existing tensions. As I have demonstrated previously, the usage is also dynamic and can therefore be used in more than one way.

7.2.3 Critique of existing theory

I mentioned initially that my motivation for posing the research questions I did is that I regard existing literature of not adequately addressing the topic of ethnicity in Nigeria. While exploring the literature I also found that while focusing on the political aspects of ethnicity there was a strong tendency of leaning toward an instrumentalist approach. The instrumentalist approach came to exist as a response to the essentialist approach implemented during the colonial era. The instrumentalist perspective emphasise ethnicity as constructed and dynamic unlike the static view of the "savages". In the study of Nigeria, the instrumentalist approach has however been criticised of falling in the same pit as the previous essentialist approach. Critics claim that its scholars are offering a reductionist account by over-emphasising the top-down manipulation in which the "clever" elite is opposed to the 'dumb' masses (Ukiwo 2005). I have confirmed that there exists an instrumental usage of ethnic identity in which the elite(s) use ethnic identity to manipulate the masses. However, I have also found that this usage is dynamic as the political discourse can be seen as a political arena in which various actors express their opinions and political agendas. The instrumental usage is also dynamic as it exists not only on a two-way level, but on a meta-level in which participation in ethnopolitics is used as a weapon against the opponent. By using it as a weapon the actor is taking part in ethnopolitics him- or herself, but on a meta-level. Though

the instrumentalist approach involves a scholarly view on ethnicity as constructed and dynamic, it is somehow in conflict with itself as the usage in the case of Nigeria takes an essentialist form through stereotyping. Said's concept of the "other" entails a static depiction of the other as something negative whereas the subject viewing the object are attributed all the positive properties. The "other" is thus static, it can be the "North", "youth", "politicians", but is always associated with something negative It is however, dynamic as well given that the contents of the category the "other" might change just as identity formations are fluid and dynamic.

7.3 Final words

Due to limited time and space, the study presented here does not investigate if, or how, the usage of this rhetoric might increase intra-ethnic tension. Moreover, it does not, in my view, adequately account for the role of sub-national politics in relation to the federal in terms of the "Rhetoric of Unity". As for methods, I can only say that discourse analysis was a magnificent tool in order to "uncover" messages between the lines and to bring out messages wrapped in imagery language and cartoons. The weakness of this study is that though I have demonstrated that the rhetoric can be used by various actors across social strata, I do not, unfortunately, encompass *all* voices. For further research I would therefore have preferred to combine the methods of this study with interviews or ethnography as to find out more from those Nigerians whose voices are not "audible" or visible in my current material. I would also suggest a more in-depth study of the dynamic of sub-national and national politics in terms of "unity" rhetoric. Given that this is a Master's thesis and thus a smaller dissertation, the limitations made were necessary in order to complete study and hence offer a contribution to the wider academic field.

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