

Reminiscence of
The Days in My Life

By

Nuhu Muhammad Sanusi
Emir of Dutse

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“When you were born you cried and the World rejoiced,
Live your life so that when you die the World cries and
You rejoice” (*Indian proverb*)

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Dedication

In loving memory of mother Fatsuma Binta Nuhu who nurtured me and my thoughts through her wisdom and love. She made me understand the basic principles of life that personal achievement is a gift from God, and whatever a person achieves is a gift to his community. I also dedicate this book to my father Muhammad Sanusi Dan Bello who guided and taught me to be respectful to everyone, but subservient to no one. I am indebted to my brother Basiru who inspired my childhood and supported me through adolescent period. I am immensely grateful to my wives and children who supported me through trying moments in my life and encouraged me to publish this memoir. I am appreciative to friends that enriched my vision through their contributions to create my reality. May the eternal bounty and blessings of the Almighty (Allah SWT) be with them.

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Yielding to Public Pressure

"I have mixed feelings about life. Sometimes I adore it, sometimes I feel angry at it, sometimes it drives me crazy, and other times, it breaks my heart. But despite all these feelings, I feel thankful for having it, especially when I realize that all the unpleasant struggles and lows are also part of this beautiful, breathtaking journey. Today, take a moment to reflect on all the things life is blessing you with - both the good and the bad, the big and the small - because they are all gifts worth appreciating". Fabrizio Fenech

I am indeed blessed to be born in a time and place that has taken me from a wooden writing board to a laptop, from a small thatched hut to a civilized urban life with all the modern amenities. My greatest asset in life lies not in the material acquisitions but in those moments of despair and hopelessness, successes and primacy. These were moments that put my life into focus, and those were the time of critical decisions. I have chosen to write my memoirs in response to various requests from students, well-wishers, and acquaintances seeking permission to write and publish my life stories. I have deliberately refused permission to avoid misrepresentation, exaggeration, or praise singing my efforts and covering my weaknesses. I am a mortal like any other person who has strength and weaknesses, who hold personal views about different persons or issues. I went through life experiences that are pleasing and displeasing a time as part of the learning process of a purposeful human life. Destiny and personal efforts played an important role in my success and ability to understand, prioritize, plan, and invest in my future. In coping with exigencies of life and desire to make a brighter future, I endured patiently through tough times, in classrooms as a student for twenty-one year's pursuing my goals in life without break, ignoring the attractions of youthful exuberance.

This book is about my life, but it will be a meaningless exercise if it does not relate to events and actors of such events. I have chosen out of the many entries in life diary events that shaped my thinking, my understanding, and my perceptions. I spent my early childhood in a remote village, my late childhood in big towns and adulthood in cities. I traveled around the world and have seen most of its notable cities, met people of different cultures, different religious beliefs, yet within me, I tried to maintain my identity and always wanted to return to my community and serve the country that gave me the opportunity to achieve my life ambitions. I was lucky to be one of the thousands of people who kept their life dairies for others to read and be inspired by what I went through from rural dwelling to urban life, from despair at some occasions to hope in others, and from nonentity to the glare of public attention. I hope through my account children and young people particularly of an underprivileged class will develop the right attitude to success through sheer determination and endurance in order to live a moral and fulfilling life. It is not where you were born and how you were born that determines your future, but how

you lead and spent your valuable time. Like anyone else I found through interactions, life to be an endless battle to which if one is not continuously alert, patient, and focused, will end up emotionally unstable, physically and mentally distressed, and will have few friends to rely upon in time of grief.

For those interested in reading this memoir, should note that whatever is written about any persons or events are based on my personal understanding, interpretation, perception and or recollections. My views, however, may not necessarily reflect the actual intention of the actors or views of other observers. Certain facts or descriptions of events may also hurt some people, but I did my best to hide the identities of those involved in horrendous acts against me. I have no intention of maligning anyone or assassinating their character, but I chose to report my stories in the most academic manner by reporting facts as I perceive them without fear of the possible consequences.

I was an average student in school, yet through conviction and hard work, I turned those disabilities to my greatest advantage in a positive manner overcoming my shortcomings within a record time. Despite my limited resources as a student, I was able to save enough money to enable me to achieve my life desires for traveling around the world. I had difficulty speaking English as a child, yet I was able to force myself to learn the language that gave me the opportunity to interact with different people of different cultures and religions and draw valuable life experiences.

I was an employee, yet after losing my job, I was able to start the small business ventures that turned me to be an employer of labor. I was hunted by adversaries to alienation, yet by Allah's grace survived their evil mechanizations and achieved my life ambition. I was an emir of a relatively new and unknown emirate, yet with the support of people around me brought it to an enviable position of authority whose voice always find headlines in National dailies.

My greatest asset in life was contentment a lesson I learned early in life from my father who always reminded us to count our blessings whenever we request for new things. It was much later that I realized the advantage of contentment when my roommate in the University from a very wealthy family, owner of an aircraft, a country home, a yacht, several SUVs, and plenty of money in his personal account, sadly engaged himself in gambling to earn more money. He became bankrupt and forced to divorce his wife and had to borrow from student loan fund to complete his degree. He was constantly relying on my counsel to reduce emotional stress and depression. I learned great lessons from this single incidence as his greed landed him into deep financial ruin.

Despite my great desire to be part of my culture after concluding my formal education, I had difficulty fitting into what I have always regarded as the good side of my cultural affinity. I found myself totally indifferent to some practices which earned me the derogatory nickname of (Bature) among my friends. I avoided

participating in many practices that I consider a sheer waste of time particularly spending valuable time engaging in discussing others out of envy and jealousy. I had for many years great difficulty in finding friends and readjusting to the society I nostalgically left behind as my value systems have changed dramatically and no longer interested in trivial or emotional issues. My definition of pleasure, happiness or success is no longer in the material acquisitions of big cars, mansions, or position in office, but in service, dedication, contentment, gratitude to Allah SWT, love of humanity, self-discipline, self-respect, and forgiveness.

In my leadership roles in the private sector and public service, I have learned to be extremely tolerant of diversities in people and not to look for carbon copies of them; but am totally intolerant when it comes to their performance, standards, and values. Many of my friends and associates asked me about my leadership. The only answer to effective leadership is ensuring followers do the right thing even if they hate you initially. I always wake up in the morning feeling the responsibility on my shoulders, and reminding myself that leadership is not rank, privilege, title or money but service.

Chapter One

The Early Childhood

"When you were born you cried and the world rejoiced, live your life so that when you die the world cries and you rejoice". Indian proverb

Yar'gaba, the Village of birth is a small sleepy village with a population of fewer than five hundred inhabitants in 1944, is located along a seasonal river emanating from Dutse rocky hills about eight miles downstream, on the eleven-degree parallel and 9-degree longitude, 1,300feet above sea level. On a clear day, one can see across the fertile planes teetering boulders balanced in dramatic formations on the horizon. The rocky outcrops', towering above the green valley of Date Palms, Deleb Palms, and Dum-palms or [Cucifera] is a great landscape of fine vegetation that provides herdsmen' a vast grazing reserve. The People in this village belong to either one of the four classes referred to as the 4M in Hausa prose [Masarauta, Ma'azurta, Malamai, and Matalauta]. This prose literally translates as 4R in English as the [Ruler, Rich, Righteous, and Ragtag]. All the four classes live in the same community, share a common belief, eat similar food, and drink from the same well, but lead separate life and hardly much intermarriage between the classes. Occasionally, a ruler or a rich person may marry a beautiful girl from the lower class but never the reverse.

Our compound was located at the north-east corner of the village and every road leading to the house. It comprises of a mud round huts for every wife and one for male children while girls cohabit with our mothers. The compound surrounded with a wall made with corn stalks, with a straw mat wrapped around, to give the compound privacy an essential in Islamic religious culture. One must pass through three halls to get to the inner compound. Several old women manned the entrance halls and regulate who gains entrance into the compound. They are permanently at the [Zaure] entrances chatting to one another and spinning thread that supplements their income. Every Saturday they will take the thread to the flea market for sale to the local weavers.

I was born on Friday morning of January 5, 1945, equivalent to 20th Muharram 1364 AH of the Islamic calendar. I am the third child of Fatsuma Binta, the most senior wife of Muhammad Sanusi ibn Bello ibn Muhammad Hamawabi, ibn Suleiman, ibn Musah.

Her position and generosity made her command tremendous respect not only in the household but also throughout the village and neighboring villages. Our family was large, even by African standards. Besides many brothers and sisters in the compound, Children of servants, and adopted orphans are also members of the family. I grew up well protected by the senior members of my extended family and loved by my juniors. None of the children under five years could tell exactly who

his maternal mother or his blood relations were as a result of a deliberate adoption policy in the family. After weaning, every baby is attached to a surrogate mother who will take care of him through childhood.

The major economic activities in the village are farming, livestock husbandry, blacksmithing, cloth weaving, calabash curving, mat, and basket weaving. Most men and women in the village had one source or multiple sources of income. While the men engage in mostly energy sapping activities such as medieval farming practices, fishing, and hunting activities, the women engage in small animal husbandry, cooking for the family and for economic returns, arts, and crafts.

On market days, women prepare all kinds of foods, including the most popular and cheapest form of protein the bean cakes. Other foods readily available on market days are boiled cassava, spiced radiated meat on skewers (stire), molasses (Mazarkwaila), gruel (Kunu), ghussb water (Kunun Zaki), fried Bambara nut (Gurjiya), fried peanut dough (Kuli-Kuli), sugar cane, locally produced fruits and vegetables, some catfish from the ponds around the village, and honey.

The Saturday flea market, located at the west end of the village adjacent to the village square serve its residents, and neighboring villages with their daily shopping needs, mainly food ingredients, fruits, clothing, farm implements, and household wares. The village square itself was about half an acre in size and it is where cultural and social events take place. On Saturday nights, the square is the meeting point of the young and the old particularly in the middle of the lunar month when the moonshine encourages more people to come out for recreation, as there was no electricity even in the district headquarters.

In the evening, most visitors to the noisy market will return to their villages with their purchases for the family. They will usually bring in chickens, eggs, goats, and grains for sale in the morning in exchange will purchase clothing and food ingredients for the week. The musicians will take over the scene after sunset when most of the crowd has returned to their villages. The music attracts a great number of youths from the neighboring villages with their suitors for the most part of the night.

In 1943, my father was deployed from Galamawa village at the bottom of the mountain to replace the deposed Village head of Yar'gaba, who was charged by a colonial officer as incompetent to handle the security of the area rated as harboring the greatest number of criminals in Kano province. It was a small, quiet village, yet larger than many equally important villages around the five-mile radius. It was the administrative headquarters of eight wards or hamlets under its jurisdiction. The village population may reach up to seven hundred on Saturdays when the flea market attracts neighboring villagers with their wares. Its serene setting, charm, and friendliness attract seasonal immigrants (Yan-chirani) from other villages to utilize the riverbanks for irrigation of mainly vegetables and fruits.

Every Saturday several people within the village and neighboring towns will converge at the market square to not only to buy and sell their wares, but also be entertained by itinerant minstrel performers who use wild animals such as snakes' hyenas, and monkeys, to entertain and sell their traditional medicines to the crowd. Fulani women from neighboring villages will be the first to arrive carrying milk and yogurt in decorated calabashes, neatly tied up with nets on a round pedestal to keep the balance on their heads in the early hours of the morning.

The market consisting of several random cone huts scattered in no specific order is attached to a slaughter slab in the west end. Butchers trade mainly small animal meat of goats and sheep and on special occasions such as Eid celebrations, cows and camels form part of the meat requirements.

The livestock market occupies the southern flank of the market where beasts of burden such as horses, donkeys, and all kinds of poultry are bought and sold. The textile merchants, blacksmith, calabash carvers, shoemakers, and other local industries such as brown sugar, potash, soap, radiated meat on a skewer, and threads occupy the northern part of the market. Hot and cold food and beverages hawkers go around the market advertising their stuff, while grain merchants occupy the east end of the market.

In the evening, the drummers and entertainers will take over the village square where all the youth will congregate around marriageable girls, with gifts of cash or goods purchased earlier at the market. Boys and girls of similar ages will gather in groups each sharing jokes, stories, and discussions of current affairs at the same time proposing for marriage partnerships. In most cases, such courtship will result in early marriages, fourteen for boys, and nine for girls.

Almost every house in the village is fenced with cornstalks, rank grass, and tall reeds excluding to a certain degree the eyes of the passer-by into the main courtyard. The (Bukka) round huts form the greater part of the dwellings arranged mainly with no other material than thatched reeds, cornstalks, and mud in very exceptional cases. The staple food of the inhabitants was (tuwo) a kind of corn flour paste eaten with (Kuka) baobab or ad Ansonia tree leaves stew. Other varieties of food that are uncommon among the three linguistic communities or tribes in the area (Hausa, Fulfulde, and Kanuri) are usually of commercial value. The Hausas produce a variety of other foods mainly made with black-eyed beans, corn flour, dried fruits, and nuts. The Fulani or Fulfulde love fresh and sour milk mixtures of dough called (Fura), and the Kanuri love (fufu) a kind of crushed and streamed millet called (Bura-busko). Although the Hausas were the major linguistic settlement group in the main village area, the other groups have several settlements along the seasonal river to which they depend for their livelihood. Despite their small settlements around the main village, they are important economically to the wellbeing of the larger community. Except if you live in the village, you can never distinguish between the communities except

in the choice of dress and colors. The interdependence of the three groups forced them to co-exist as one community with a common interest in agriculture, small-scale industry, and commerce.

The main source of drinking water in the village was the seasonal river that overflows its banks in the rainy season and recedes to ponds in the dry season. Pipe borne water was unheard of; therefore, in the mornings and evenings, almost the whole village women and children will assemble around the ponds to fetch water in guards and clay pots. Due to the nature of drinking water, several waterborne associated diseases particularly guinea worm, bilharzia, sleeping sickness, and river blindness were a common affliction in the population. It was only in 1951 that the village had a concrete open well built by the Kano Native Authority to reduce the dependence of the population on polluted water.

There was only one dispensary clinic operated by the Christian missionaries (Sudan Interior Mission) on the belief that through its charity will convert many nominal Muslims to Christianity. Even this clinic was ten miles away from Yar'gaba at Fagoji village, now in the Jigawa State capital. During the rainy season, everyone wishing to travel to the clinic must be ferried across the seasonal stream on a raft or carried on a shoulder for a fee of half a Penny by the young swimmers waiting for an opportunity.

Until 1940 when the colonial administration introduced modern farming methods using bullocks to increase farm output of both consumables and cash crops, agriculture in my village was mainly subsistence. In fact, the entire Dutse District was not any different before the introduction of bullocks into the farming system. The first group of farmers to benefit from the program were limited to five farmers per district and subsequently increased over the years until the project became part of the community.

My father was among the first beneficiaries of the mixed farming program when he was given two bullocks, and the required implements one clarifier, one harrow and a few small accessories such as the wooden crossbar, and chains in 1943. By 1953, there were over one hundred mixed farmers in Dutse District each owned at least a pair of bullocks and implements, enabling them to commercialize their operation by selling their free time to work on their neighbors' farms for a considerable fee. One of our domestic staff (Yaqub Washi) sent to a farm center at Birnin Kano for one-month training with the bullocks returned to the village with the newly acquired skill which became the subject of discussion in the village square and in the market place. He was the village hero of his time, as many people will leave their farms to witness how two bulls towing an implement behind them will make perfect ridges with relative ease.

The introduction of this new farming method came with a cost of about twenty-two West African pounds to be paid in five-year equal installments not only boost

agricultural production capacity of food and cash crops, but also increased the earnings of the beneficiaries by more than 100% in the first year with a multiplier effect over the five-year period. The success recorded by this experiment encouraged the colonial administration to introduce further several cash crops into the program by distributing free but controlled seedlings of groundnuts, soybeans, cotton, rice, and tobacco.

In December of 1949, the colonial administration introduced fertilizer into the farming scheme in Dutse District as well as other districts in Kano province, which replaced the dependence on organic manure. It took more than three years of a campaign before farmers in many parts of the province accepted the use of fertilizer as a substitute.

In 1953, only 22 bags sold in the entire district, unfortunately, because of miss application the yield fell below farmer's expectations. The following year 1954 only 10 bags were sold to the public. The bad experiences of the specific farmers resulted in a further systematic campaign against its use in the district.

Major crops are grown in Dutse District before the mixed farming program were sorghum, millet, groundnuts, beans, maize, cotton, rice, cassava, Bambara nut, and sweet potato. The program introduced other cash crops such as sesame, soybeans, and wheat. The program also improved on the dry season farming from manual (shadoof) irrigation to water pumps.

My father was deployed to Yar'gaba to replace the deposed Village Head in 1943 before I joined the growing family. One of his responsibilities as the village chief of Yar'gaba was among others crime prevention and ensuring the security of lives and properties of the people within his domain. He was active in pursuing and arresting criminals in their abodes, a very dangerous job, but he always believed in duty first. Most of the dangerous operations involving the hardened elements of the criminal world occurred under the cover of the night and we never worried about our father, for by the time we knew what he was doing, he had already done it and was safely home sharing the morning routine with us.

The level of crime was usually limited to petty theft, cattle rustling, and occasional brawl cases resulting from minor disagreements on women or at hunting ground over a catch; yet there were numerous Petty thieves of livestock, food crops, pickpocketing, and in rare cases homicide and manslaughter.

As village Chief, he regularly presided over cases of a civil nature and referred criminal cases to the District head, or to the sharia court. He sat under a tree or his main chamber on an easy chair depending on the weather, while the petitioners and defendants sat on the ground for him to listen and adjudicate their cases. Some of the cases took little time to conclude, while others required a further witness or the intervention of someone close to the aggrieved person. As the economic prosperity

grew, crime became more sophisticated and daring particularly in the cities and urban centers.

Yar'gaba in the 1940s was classified by the colonial administration as a high crime area because of its location along the seasonal river and an important Kano to Maiduguri roadway and to the north of the town a sizable forest area (Dajin Amuga) that provides sanctuary to cattle rustlers and armed robbery gangs. Their mode of operations generally limited to strategic and specific areas where their signature enables early identification. The most infamous gang leaders of the time (Juli Jidawa and Ahmadu Sanda), specializes in cattle rustling, (Dugo Shuwari and Idi Shuwari) famous for daylight robbery and (Daudu Buju) specializes in small animal theft. Other equally notorious informants or suspected accomplice such as (Gwanto Dillali, Jato, and Sarkin Saurayi) from Yar'gaba village served various prison terms in Dutse and Kano Jails.

Our father was constantly vigilant and perusing them from one hideout to another. On many occasions, they will dare him into a fight, but will always prefer to flee when they sense his presence. The ringleaders and their men also have served numerous prison terms in Kano ranging from one to five years, but in their organizations always other members are available to take up the challenge. One of the unforgettable encounters I could recall was when (Juli Jidawa's) gang attacked herdsmen on route to Kano from Borno and rustles away hundreds of cattle. The Shehu of Borno reported the case to the colonial administration in Kano. My father was instructed by the Emir of Kano to arrest every gang operating in the area.

On the appointed date, two emir's bodyguards a Native Authority police officer came in plain cloth and spent one week on surveillance mission after which, the operation commenced at midnight of February 16, 1949. Within six hours, they arrested several criminals including some notorious gang leaders (Shamaki Sakwaya, Abdu Maikudi Shuwari, and Shahon Makka Dundubus), and paraded in front of our residence in the early morning for the villagers to see. Several people from the neighboring villages were there to curse them with unpalatable words for their crimes. They were made to confess in public their individual roles in criminal activities and to seek forgiveness from their victims.

This traditional method of name and shame in public squares was an effective way of discouraging onlookers from engaging in criminal activities as that will tarnish their family image. Many of those arrested and shamed, either abandoned criminal activities or migrate to distant towns.

Chapter two

The Age of Innocence

"Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. It is not something to be waited for but rather something to be achieved". W.J. Bryan

Our father as a public servant received a net annual salary of £18, in the year I was born, plus a supplemented income from agricultural activities. His total annual income could not have been more than twice that salary, yet the family income is considered within the middle-upper-class bracket in Kano province. Most of the family members traveled on horses except on short journeys, which was a sign of nobility in those days. Seasonally, some villagers brought gifts of grains, fruits, chickens, and eggs to him as a sign of respect, and allegiance or to solicit small favors of used clothing from him. We had few horses and Donkeys in the stable, while commercially important animals such as cows, sheep, and goats were at the farm two kilometers north of the village. Every evening, someone in the family will carry a four-liter guard to the farm to collect fresh milk which will be added to specially prepared sorghum flower ground on a two-piece stone by the women in the house, to serve as the next day's lunch drink "Fura."

My mother was not only a gifted artist whose artworks sells at a premium in the village, but also a great storyteller. She will purchase reams of paper and dyes from the weekly market and paint on each sheet different ideas from contemporary to abstract which sold for a penny apiece the following week at the market to mainly local women who decorate their rooms. When the paper painting lost its vogue, she turned to canvas and bed sheet embroidery for the local market.

Every day except on Friday nights reserved for the recitation of the Qur'an, she will sit with us after evening meal to tell us inspiring stories and fables to reinforce our strong cultural values of courage and endurance. One of her most favorite stories was that of a princess that refused to marry despite her exhibited wealth and advanced age until her suitors can offer her a recipe for everlasting happiness. Numerous suitor princesses from every part of the globe came to meet her but could not pass her test of what true happiness is and how to achieve it, until a poor blind man came with a reasonable answer to her question. She married him despite strong resistance from her parents and friends.

The message in the story is not only about honor and integrity in building lasting relationships; but also, a lesson of love and hate, honesty and deceit, intrigues and provocations, conflict and humiliations, hope and disquiet, loneliness, isolation, and perseverance which an individual must experience in his journey to success and happiness in life. True to our religious and cultural beliefs, my parents have always encouraged me to be self-reliant. Her message us always is not to be dependent on

others, as there is nothing worse than depending on someone regardless of intimacy or social connections.

As I grew older, I realized that our mother continues to expand the story to our level of understanding and comprehension. The characters remain the same but their attitude and reaction to the conditions keep changing but all reinforcing compassion, morality, and values. She will group us according to ages and narrate the same stories but differently to the group's level of understanding. The popular Hausa fable characters [Gizo] the clever spider and his cunning wife [Koki]; emir (Sarki) and his chief advisor (Waziri) are central to all entertaining as well as character training stories. She uses them to frighten, entertain, and create suspense to capture our attention and imagination, by intermittently introducing songs and humor.

Some of the lessons I learned from such stories came handy much later in my secondary school days when my aunt's stepchildren out of jealousy resented my presence in their compound. They tried all forms of intimidation and lies against me to the extent of destroying my small possessions including books and furniture. When I complained to her, she respectfully asks me not to despair but to rebuild my life at an alternative place. I moved to my father's guest house at Indabawa quarters within the city which was uncompleted adobe structure in an isolated area. When I complained to her of the dilapidated condition of the building, she said to me "kudindirin gatarinka yafi sari ka bani" relying on what you have is far better than relying on someone else's, no matter how good. The decision to leave the compound was the beginning of personal independence and achievements as a young adult. I moved to the new accommodation with virtually no facility on the ground but day by day I was able to renovate the house to the envy of my aunt's stepchildren.

Quranic School

"The future belongs to those who believe in Allah and do good work"

I was enrolled into Qur'anic school within the village at the age of four; despite my insistent requests to pursue traditional scholarship (almajirci) in the [East] usually referred to Maiduguri the Borno state Capital. Maiduguri in Borno was in those days the citadel of Quranic and Islamic education where teachers always guarantee their wads of complete recitation within the shortest time. I started with the Arabic alphabets in Fulfulde and later in Hausa languages and graduated into phonetics and then memorization of the short [surahs of the Holy Qur'an], and finally learn to write the scriptures on a wood-slate. I must admit that it was not as easy as I previously thought and therefore had to endure caning the most used form of punishments and other hardships for failing to memorize my daily lessons. With time I gained some more experience, committing the short surahs to memory became much easier.

Our daily timetable starts from as early as one hour before sunrise when our father will wake us up and lead us to the family mosque for early Morning Prayer. Many a

time we will be half-asleep while in prayer, but that will not deter him from repeating the same choir the next morning. The Imam will lead the prayer, sometimes reading the verses we learned in school, but many times outside our comprehension. When the day breaks, we will take our breakfast usually, leftovers from previous night re-cooked and served very hot. The meal is mostly couscous made from coarsely ground millet prepared on a two-piece sandstone cut for that purpose. The women will usually sit on their knees bending forward while holding the smaller piece of stone and rubbing it against the bigger piece at the bottom, until the fine flour comes on a circular mat, in front of the stone crusher. If the grain is plentiful as always, the women will be singing local songs while grinding until it is over.

The women in the household will prepare with the assistance of other younger female members of the family a meal in two giant clay pots, one for the fufu, and the other usually smaller for the soup. This process takes many hours depending on the type of wood used to cook the meal. They will boil water, gradually add sorghum flour, and stir it until it is fully cooked. The soup takes a much longer time to prepare as the ingredients normally added to the preparation at different stages in the process. The distribution is an elaborate ritual that only the senior wives perform even if they did not cook the meal. Everyone in the family from our father to the last in the hierarchy receives his share according to his or her status. The best part of the meal particularly meat was first served to our father, then his wives who normally eat together; then the children and then the female servants and finally the male servants. The dishes arranged in that order as the distributor painstakingly uses a broken calabash to scoop the paste from the extremely hot preparation.

After the evening meal, we shall be ushered to school, where we shall sit on logs in a circle for about one hour, chanting our scripts aloud repeatedly until they stick into our memory. Every Thursday night we memorize our scripts in front of the teacher and pay our weekly dues. In the mornings, we shall after breakfast study for about three hours and return home around noon, lunch, usually of porridge with fresh cow milk or sour milk, depending on availability. We shall return after the noon prayer to fetch firewood in the bush that will light the fire for our night classes.

Saturday evenings reserved for the writing of new lessons after qualifying for the next lesson. Fridays are holidays, and congregational prayer days, when everyone dresses in his best clothing and head to the mosque in groups, until the area around the mosque is full of people from the village and many from neighboring villages. After the prayer, we shall take off our fine clothes and wear regulars and go around the village or disappear in the bush picking fruits and playing around.

Annual Social Events

"Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goals". Henry Ford

Usually in November and December after the harvest, the youth of different culture or trade organize special events from one village to another to celebrate the harvest season with activities such as (Kokawa) wrestling, (Dambe) kickboxing, and the most devastating game of (Sharo) stick fighting. The Hausas were famous with wrestling, the butchers with kickboxing, and the Fulani with Sharo or (Shadi). These are initiation games of which young unmarried male go through to prove their power, masculinity, and endurance. In the case of Sharo, the sticks used are sometimes poisoned whips of flexible tweed to make the greatest damage to opponents. The number of stokes will be agreed upon by the representatives of each participant called [Kwarijo] depending on the age and level of endurance of the participants, but normally between three and twelve strokes of the cane. The more one can endure the more popular he will be with marriageable girls when he seeks their hand in marriage.

The harvest time (kaka) is a time of plenty when most of the communities earn their annual income from cash crops mainly groundnuts and beans. The Hamatan season is the period of economic activity where most marriages and divorces take place. The dry and cold season of December and January not only coincided with the period of harvest but also a time when there were few bacteria carrying flies making circumcisions much safer. It also makes initiation ceremonies more affordable, particularly to rural communities.

Tax collection (Haraji) comes immediately after harvest, imposed on male adult suffrage. It was the duty of my father with the help of various ward heads under his administration to determine what everyone would pay. The Emir will select a day to announce in each district the total amount of money imposed on each community by the colonial administration. The responsibility of collection to the last penny, rests squarely on village and District heads, any shortfall on the estimate, depending on the amount may lead to deposition or even prison terms under the colonial act.

Once or twice a year the colonial District Officer will visit our village and sermon all village elders to our house for some important briefing. He will start his introduction with simple Hausa greetings, and then the interpreter will do the rest. On many occasions, the interpreter will only guess the meaning of some words by looking at the gesture of the colonial master. He will sometimes give a wrong interpretation or gobble up the meaning to save his ego. The colonial officers usually follow up the discussions with a translated written circular through the District heads office. I have always admired the ability of the translators to speak English and always wanted to be an interpreter for the white man, which re-enforces my thirst for western education despite the stigma of alleged conversion to Christianity to whoever attends [Makarantar Boko] western education.

Thrills and Adventures

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed". Albert Einstein

Ever since I learned to walk, I distaste staying in one place because inherently I was a gregarious person whose great sense of adventures in exploring new places takes me to remotest and dangerous parts of the bushes around the village. Many times my mother will threaten to cut my legs if I did not stop venturing into snake-infested areas in the bushes. Yet I found a way to carry on with my childhood fantasies of exploring my immediate environment because a friend of mine one day told me a tale that his cousin has been to the end of the world where he saw a great iron wall. It was not until I studied geography in my elementary school that I discovered his lies. Even then, I used to argue with my geography teacher that the world is flat and has an iron wall around it where God separated Humans from spirits.

Throughout my early childhood days, I hold such insatiable wild dreams and great ambition to go around the world by whatever means. On one occasion when a visiting dignitary to our primary school asked what I would like to become when I grew up; I replied a pilot because I want to see the end of the world. He laughed and encouraged me to study hard.

The main plant species around the village are locus bean, blanite, bombax, cassia Arabica, baobab, mango, Deleb palm, and several other non-commercial trees and shrubs dotted the landscape of the village. January through April of each year is the hunting season in the village when the bushes turn dry making it more visible to sight fauna. The chief hunter will set a date and will decide which forest to meet for a hunting expedition. On an appointed date group of hunters from neighboring villages will be seen dressed in hunting gears of charms and amulets, swords and sharp knives, bows and arrows, followed by their trained hunting dogs off the leach heading to the appointed location. A horn blower will pick individuals and sing praises of their hunting courage until the individual submits to his requests by bowing down in appreciation.

Few kilometers north of the village are a large expanse of bush with substantial grazing areas. The area has a substantial number of wild animals including gazelles, hares, foxes, hyenas, and several bird species. The hunting expedition normally ends in fatal fights between gangs, as every participant believes in possessing superior weapons and charms to protect him from any harm. Moreover, the drummers and other musicians escorting the gangs will invite and encourage their mentors to fight even if it is fatal.

At the hunting ground, the drummers pick a gang member and praise his courage and superiority of weapons and skill, the selected member will come forward with self-praises shaking his weapons and body listing his courageous encounters with

other gangs. Other gang members will be doing the same thing encouraging their members to challenge other gang members. The insinuations will continue until a member of different gang challenges the other by setting his dog to chase a hunted animal at the same time with his rival.

When the dogs made a catch, each of them will want to show his superiority over the other by claiming that his dog made the catch. If no one intervenes, the two rivals will start brandishing weapons against each other, until they caught the attention of their gang members who will in turn wade into the argument by siding with their member.

Circumcision Ceremony

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face". Eleanor Roosevelt

When I was eight years old, on a cold Friday morning in December 1952, our house was full of female maternal and fraternal relatives to observe my initiation into manhood. My grandmother and my aunts one by one will come to my room and give me the wisdom of life, according to their experience and understanding of events. One of such wisdom I will always recall helped me in later life.

"My grandchild, she said softly with a joking face, as you grow into manhood today, I want you to remember these five principles of success, knowledge, punctuality, curiosity, patience, and perseverance. Knowledge is the key to a decent life, punctuality is the key to success, curiosity is the ladder to advancement, patience is the foundation of any achievement, and perseverance leads to the achievement of any goal. These qualities are attributed to (Humans, Crows, Cats, Crocodiles, and Donkeys). These animals represent the five qualities required of a human to live a decent life. A human attains power through knowledge and intellect; a Crow finds great opportunities in punctuality; a Cat is known for its curiosity and swift response to situations; a Crocodile is an enduring but deadly in pursuit of its prey; and a Donkey has immense endurance in hardship which is a great quality for success as well as leadership role.

One by one each female elder in the family came into my room to offer words of advice. Many of such advice is basic and predictable, and quite a few are too advanced for my level of comprehension and experience. It was much later in life that many of such advise making any meaning. The last person that came into the room was my mother, with a bar of soap in her hand ready to give me her final bath as a child and prepare me for the occasion. While everybody in the family was jubilating, my mind keeps reminding me of the loss of freedom to play around naked, or the restriction of seeking permission to enter any compound in the village.

When the bath was over, I was ushered halfway out of the compound by my aunts and grandmother, to my father's stable, where several barbers led by the head barber

(Sarkin Askar Duru) who was one the wealthiest men of his time in the village. He was standing tall holding a giant spear while waiting to commence the circumcision. When I first sighted him my heart beats faster and faster as I approached him. My uncle was holding my right arm as we walked towards him, my thoughts and fear of the mutilation process humble me. As soon as he handed me over to him, I sat halfway with my legs at one-hundred-and-ten-degree angle sitting on the edge of a small-dugout pit of the size of a one and half liter bottle. The hole was meant to hold the blood that will flow after the mutilation. One of the barbers sat behind me and grabbed my arms from the shoulder and turned my face sideways away from looking at the sharp knife that will be used to performing the mutilation. Within seconds after taking some measurements with a twig the barber's knife cuts through the skin halfway and the second cut finally removed the final piece. Soon after the exercise, he commenced the cleaning process of the knife and then the wound with cold water. After a few minutes, he draws out a small number of herbs from his bag wrapped in a piece of dirty cloth and sprinkles on the wound.

I lost substantial blood in the process before it finally clots, each time he applies the herbal concoctions on the wound, the flow temporarily reduces. He finally brought out a red piece of cloth from his bag containing other herbal mixtures and dressed the wound. The healing process took about six weeks, each day the barber will come to re-examine the wound and apply his herbal concoctions.

He relied on his experience to control infections, as antibiotics are not widely available even in the nearest clinic which was eight miles away. Despite the long period of recovery, my mother was always supportive in terms of my welfare by feeding me with high protein diets of chicken and eggs [Farfesun Kaza da Wainar Kwai]. In addition to my usual diet of well-buttered local couscous, and radiated meat (tsire) my mother constantly asks if I need something else. I received several gifts from the family mainly clothing and livestock.

Death in the Family

"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away". Unknown

Despite the absence of modern medical care in the village, I survived the attack of major child killer diseases, particularly malaria that almost ended my life in 1953 and 1958; Small fox in 1948; measles in 1950; and chicken fox in 1952. Many of my peers did not get to celebrate their tenth anniversary, and those who survived the diseases left terrifying scars on them.

One of my close childhood friend (Namulodi) suffered leprosy and lost his limbs and sight before his 12th birthday, another (Kaila) died of sickle-cell-mania at nine, while two other contemporaries were crippled by poliomyelitis.

The final quarantine days was a special period for me as I look forward to the final initiation into manhood. It was a period of family reunion and thanksgiving celebrations as a great number of children die before their initiation. Immediately after healing, a child will have new clothing made to symbolize the transition from childhood freedom to enter every compound to restrictive and guided life of adulthood.

Tragically, my mother lost one of her five-year-old twins that week, and all arrangements for the ceremony ended up abruptly with the sudden death of the girl. It was my first experience to witness death in the family, and therefore quite frightened that it may be my turn the next time. The celebration was suspended; hence, members of my family were coming to our house to commiserate rather than to rejoice with other family members an eventful day.

Despite my mother's reassurances, overcoming this tragic event took me quite some time, as I kept having nightmares that someone will come in the middle of the night to take my life. My bond with the remaining sibling became stronger by the day as she needs someone to play with. Conscious of her agony, I always will go the extra mile to please her and assist her in the household chores.

Chapter Three

Loss of Freedom

"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering the soul is strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved". Helen Keller

I left my birth village of Yar'gaba to obtain a western style education at Dutse on March 29, 1952, on my black pony (Assabaru) which was a gift from my father. I kept gazing back with nostalgia after every few meters at my beloved village until its landmark trees in the horizon were out of sight. My mind was not at ease, leaving the comfort of my mother and family, yet I felt privileged to enroll in western education like my older brother who was there four years earlier. I looked forward to going and meet not only my brother but also be able to read and write in western scripts. My greatest ambition as at that time was to become my father's scribe and be able to translate English for him whenever a colonial officer pays him a visit.

On the morning of March 30, 1952, we were paraded at the office of the District head who was a maternal grandfather, for screening to ensure that we are neither too old nor too young for enrollment. One of the tests each of us must pass is the ability to place our left arm over our head and touch our right ear. Many parents have great misgivings of western education, therefore will do every trick to evade enrollment by teaching their children many tricks that will disqualify them from been admitted. The most common trick is playing dumb or failing health.

One of my mates (Iliyasu Musa) was admitted by sheer wisdom of the District head as he refused to talk and was listed as disabled dumb who was to be interviewed before me by age listings. When he refused to answer any question, the District Head ordered him to stay behind to collect disability release letter to his parents. After the exercise, he offered some biscuit and chocolate candies to him. A few minutes later, he asked him if he liked the taste; he answered in the affirmative by nodding his head indicating that he heard the question perfectly. This was how he was enlisted into our class in primary school.

I was finally admitted into pre-primary class along with sixteen other boys and seven girls of my age, selected from different villages of Dutse District. In those days, there was a stronger resentment among Muslim communities of female enrollment into western education. The colonial education was regarded synonymous to Christianization and therefore detected by the majority of Muslims in Northern Nigeria. The reason for strong resentment for enrollment of girls has to do with parents' desire to marry their daughters between the ages nine and twelve. Many parents would rather hide their female children for weeks or months to avoid detection during school enrollment exercise. Several male children will be sent to Quranic schools in other towns or bribe the village official not to disclose their where about.

It was the duty of every village head to enroll several children from his domain, failing which may lead to his removal from office. Because of the difficulty encountered by the village heads in this exercise, most of them find it easier to send their own biological children to meet their quota. There were less than thirty primary schools in the whole of old Kano Emirate in that year with a total enrollment of fewer than four thousand pupils in primary schools. Our Elementary School was established in 1945, and one of the oldest western-style educational institution in Kano province. It shifted site from its original site at Marabisawa to Katangare and later to its present site at Garu palace, for ease of administration.

Although I have been to Dutse several times before in the company of my parents, this time, I was going to live for at least four academic years. Few kilometers out of Yar'gaba, the rocky hills in the horizon and the Date palms below the hills was a great welcoming site. Dutse is surrounded by massive granite boulders and palm trees. It is endowed with beautiful sceneries that were unavailable elsewhere in Kano province. Its attractions to Colonial Officers make it a mini tourist site for environmentalists and leisure seekers. The villages around the town were not only enlightened, but also enterprising in their outlook, and less dependent on public jobs. Limawa village was as far as my pony-beast could go because Dutse town is on top of a rocky plateau that is accessible by horses or donkeys only through one entry point and had to dismount and walk uphill for about half an hour to the town where the school is located. It was a quite unique village with two relatively modern shops one owned by a Syrian (Hajj Saif), and the other by an Ibo trader (Mr. Izenwa), both selling textiles and basic provisions, (sugar, salt, soap, perfumes, shoes, concentrated soft drinks in one-liter bottles, and few other non-essentials). The village also serves as the leading market that provided the town of Dutse and environ with its daily shopping needs. The market holds on alternate days rather than weekly, because of its importance and proximity to Dutse town.

Adoption

"To the world, you may be a person; to one person you may be the world". Proverb

Since my parents were not resident in the town, they gave me two options before I left Yar'gaba, to live either with my maternal grandmother at the palace or with my aunt, whose husband was a court messenger. Initially, I chose to live with my grandmother at the palace for obvious reasons, but as I grew older, the attractions to the palace no longer suit my goals. I moved to my aunt's (Umbowa) home where I received more personal attention with greater personal privacy. She was the only wife to her husband (Alhaji Halilu) and had only one child (Yalwaji) who was two years older than I am. He was a messenger in the [Alkali Court], considered a top paying job in its time. They live in a family compound with his junior brother (Babiye) who had two wives and two children. The women jointly prepare meals in

an open kitchen located in the middle of the compound. Occasionally, other women from different villages seeking divorce or mediation with their spouses will help in the preparation of the day's meal in exchange for accommodation while awaiting a hearing in the court.

While I was staying with my maternal grandmother (Ummah) at the palace; not only I had to struggle with several other children brought to Dutse from other villages, to find a reasonable spot to spread my mat in a crowded room, but also had to be on time for meals as nobody will wait for the other. At my aunt's compound, I was alone, having my own room and toilet facilities. She was a caring person whose good nature and generosity were legendary, unassuming, and accommodating views contrary to her belief. When I relocated to her house, I knew it was in my best interest.

First day in school

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" Chinese proverb

On April 1, 1952, we lined up according to our heights in two gender rows; I was the smallest in terms of physical appearance and age, therefore placed in the front row. The teacher in charge of the School abbreviated [i/c] Isma'ila Tudun Wazirchi roll called our names while at the same time correcting spellings or mispronunciations of nicknames or villages. Until that day, I have not known my other names besides my nickname (Maigida), which everyone in the family addresses me. I have also known my father with his title, not his real name. The teacher in charge told me from now on your name is Nuhu Muhammad Sanusi not (Maigida Yar'gaba). It was a respectful way of avoiding calling my name in disrespect for my maternal grandfather who shares my name. It is culturally unaccepted in Hausa or Fulani societies to call real names of parents and or important members of the family. The change to my real name was as difficult for me as it was for other friends who would prefer to address me with my nickname.

School Rules

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm". R. W. Emerson

During the orientation exercise, the teacher in charge (Malam Isma'ila Tudun Wazirchi) introduced his members of the staff individually- Malam Sule Wudil, Malam Isyaku Kazaure, Malam Muhammadu Gaya, and Malam Umaru Dan Jinjiri Dutse. He warned against any form of indiscipline, read out the six important school rules allowed to everyone's hearing, and repeated them over and over each time stressing with emphasis that we should understand to avoid punishment.

Personal hygiene, - No uniforms are required but your clothes and body would be inspected daily by your class teachers. It is therefore compulsory to keep clean and use school toilets properly.

Punctuality- You must report to school immediately after sunrise and remain in school until the end of lessons in the afternoon.

Show great interest in your lessons and keep school supplies in a secure place in the cupboard. Your teachers will regularly test your abilities in the lessons taught.

Fighting or abusive argument is prohibited within and outside the school premise; bullying is a big offense regardless of its nature. It is therefore punishable corporally by several strokes of the whip.

Extramural activities are as important as your regular school activities. You must engage in extracurricular activities.

Catapult or any weapon is not allowed in the school, violators would bear corporal punishment.

On the second day of April 1952, after the enrollment exercise, we were sent to Sudan Interior Mission clinic compound, the only medical facility in the District for medical examinations and vaccinations. One by one, the health officer checks our mouth, skin, ears, and eyes. At the completion of the exercise, some of us were dropped on health ground, while some were required to take some medications for a period. We spent the rest of the day been oriented to the school environment before we were dispersed.

Since there was no dress code, everyone wears what he could afford in terms of quality, or color; the only prohibited part of the dress is footwear. Wearing shoes to school or any respectful place is a sign of disrespect, and therefore no student allowed wearing shoes in the school premises. We endured the hash Dutse climate from the extreme heat in April through June when the ground becomes so hot, to the extreme Hamatan cold from November to February when it becomes so cold.

The daily morning assembly in front of the Head Teacher's office, one can see the variety of colors and dresses depicting the status and or a child's position in his family, but when it is time for morning drills everyone except the girls would remove his top dress leaving only the underwear or pants. Everyone half naked from the hip up will line up for the forty-five minutes drill exercises in the military fashion. After the drills, everyone wears his dress and returns to his classroom for the day's lessons.

The School Curriculum

"Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration". Thomas Edison.

Subjects of study in the junior primary school were, reading, writing, arithmetic, hygiene, drawing, geography, general knowledge, religious instructions, health, craft, and from class three English and use of ink- pens are compulsory in the curriculum. Other extra-curricular activities include football games, gardening, and stitching. Occasionally, our teachers will take us on short excursions in the nearby rocks.

Over a period, I was able to identify the names of the many rock formations around Dutse. My most favorite as a child and still many years later is [Dutsen Tasa] behind my grandmothers' compound is a rock formation that gives a view of not only the surrounding rocks but also many miles of the valley beneath. It was also most popular with Colonial Officers and European tourists coming into the town. Because of its privileged location, it was the chosen place for Empire Day bonfires and cultural activities during the colonial period.

The two major subjects to which our aptitude will be measured at the end of the four-year period was English and Arithmetic. Under the curriculum, we expected to learn and be able to write in the first-year English alphabets and numbers (1-100). Our second-year curriculum was English vocabulary and simple additions. The third-year curriculum was English sentences and subtractions. In the fourth-year curriculum were Grammar and multiplications. In the fifth-year curriculum were stories and fractions. In the sixth-year curriculum were essays and decimals, while in the seventh-year debate and calculating areas, and volumes.

First Gramophone in town

"Minds are like parachutes they only function when they are open". Thomas Dewar

In 1953, my late uncle Alhaji Aminu (Wamban Dutse) was a clerk in Madakin Kano's office, who in those days considered one of the modern elites of his time, bought a (His Masters Voice) gramophone. He was the first to own a gramophone in Dutse and whenever he was on holidays, he will come to Dutse with his family to entertain us at the Palace. He will sit on a large mat surrounded by the town youth for many hours of the day and in the evenings playing the large plastic discs repeatedly.

The crowd will sit around him in complete silence as he draws from a wrapped paper a fourteen-inch diameter disk and plays it on the manual phonograph. The playing process includes fixing a small needle on the tip head and winding a special handle clockwise several times to tighten the loose spring that powers the engine. He will replay popular artists depending on the interest shown by the audience.

Life in Dutse Town

"If you advance confidently in the direction of your dreams and endeavor to leave the life which you have imagined, you will meet with a success unexpected in common hours". H.D. Thoreau

Coming from a very small and remote village to a District Headquarters has its fascinations for many reasons. It is the District headquarters where the District head, the judge [Alkali] and several other Native authority officials' in charge of different departments reside. Moreover, it a much bigger town, and therefore more activities, more challenges. I spent most of my free time exploring the beautiful surroundings of rock formations within the town, with my friends picking fruits, and playing

around. There are so many places of interest to keep any young adult busy throughout the day. Swimming, rock climbing, hunting, and many other activities kept us away from during the weekends.

Dutse is a town built on rock formations bordering Basement complex to the west, and Chad formations to the east. The underground formations do not allow surface water to penetrate deeper into the ground, causing the wells to run dry as soon as the rainy season was over. Every child in a household must find a way of bringing water from the valley two kilometers away from the town to his or her household. The journey back from the water source was most daunting particularly for children carrying about four gallons of water on bare head up the steep hill. At her compound, her husband has a donkey assigned to me for that purpose. The use of donkey not only saves me time and energy but also carries more water per trip.

Our greatest discomfort as children in the town is during the dry season when the streams and springs run dry in the mountains. In my aunt's household, we use donkeys to carry the water clay pots every day except on Fridays when the owner carries their wares to a popular market outside of town. Regardless of age, children with no such facilities in their household must make three to four trips carrying water calabashes weighing about five kilograms.

End of the month is always special, as all the village heads will travel to Dutse on horses, to receive their salaries. On that day, we will not only receive tips for watering their animals; but also have a free ride to the watering point. We will ride them bare and race one another until the horses become so tired. On the following day, we shall use the money earned in hiring the only bicycle in town to run around. It took me very little time to learn a bike, as I have substantial skill in horsemanship at the age of four. The most intriguing and difficult thing about bicycling is how to keep a balance at the same time coordinate the body movements required to push the cycle moving. Bicycle riding became an obsession for me for many years, but my parents refused to buy me one. My aunt thought bicycling will take my mind away from studies and therefore ensures that if I had to go out of her compound in my spare time, that I do not have money on me. Many times, I will smuggle myself out cleverly pretending to be feeding the horse at the stable to join my friends at the bike hiring point in front of the palace.

Leisure activities

"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great people make you feel that you too, can become great" Mark Twain

Like all other children in Hausa land of that material time, late evenings are times of pastime activities. The most popular late evening games for male children were wrestling, hide, and seek, one-legged race, and storytelling. The female children spend most of their pastimes singing and dancing, and occasionally listening to

storytelling. For those enrolled in western educational schools, evening games of soccer, hockey, handball, and athletics were compulsory.

On one occasion in December of 1955, our school invited another primary school [Shahuchi] from Kano City for football competition. We spent weeks preparing the playground, burning the thorny weeds that infested the playground. It was tedious work and many of us developed sore feet because of the exercise, but we did it willingly to impress our visitors from the city. On the appointed date, our visitors came in a Kano Native Authority open truck, singing victory songs in different melodies. The entire village crowd that was supposed to cheer our team turned their attention to the city boys in utter curiosity.

They wore red and white jerseys and wrapped their feet with white bandages as no school could afford boots for its team. Our team was wearing a white singlet and white shorts, intimidated by the appearance of the opposing team. Many of us thought the bandages in their feet were wounds, and therefore were cheering our team to attack their wounds when we realized we could not match their skills after the first half score of eleven goals to nil against us. Despite our terrible disappointment with the city boys, one of such players from Kano was later to become my best friends at Birnin Kudu boarding primary school.

My best and greatest pastime as a child was horse riding, when we were unable to secure real horses, we mimic horses with corn stalks and dress them as real horses. I was so interested in horse riding that I formed my own team of horse riders where several children of my generation in the town consider me as their leader. We developed the sport to an unimaginable standard thereby attracting the attention of elders to donate valuable regalia to our group. Another popular pastime activity we usually engage in was rock climbing, stilt walking, and hunting of small animal species inhabiting the rock clusters, particularly gastropod snail shells, squirrels, and mountain grouse.

During the second week in the month of Ramadan Muslim fasting period, we spent the evenings entertaining adults with different kinds of games (tashe) from the straightforward mockery of certain social behaviors, to entertainments like clownish (a trick a treat). We visit from one house to another house seeking gifts from adults. Ramadan month is also a period when children permitted culturally to bully adults that refused to marry or are single.

Family transferred

"When life gives you a lemon, make lemonade". Unknown

Barely eight months into primary school, was my father relocated to another village of almost equal distance from Dutse. Shuwari is not much different from Yar'gaba, except its highly popular Monday Livestock market, and transit camp for guides that walk cattle from Maiduguri to Kano before the advent of motorable roads and

railways. I received the news of the transfer with mixed feelings of missing my childhood friends, and a place of my birth; on the other hand, I feel relieved that I can travel by lorry, to our new home any time the opportunity arises.

The official residence of the village head was at Gurduba a remote village a few miles away from the main road. My father decided to relocate his residence to Shuwari for obvious reasons with the full consent of the District head and the Emir of Kano. I was with him when he selected the site, which eventually became our new home. The entire wall of the house built with cornstalks reed and tree branches, except the immediate area where the main family lives. It was a new life for the family, as everyone must adjust to the new environment and completely new friends and acquaintances.

Shuwari in many ways was a more civilized community and had a great advantage over Yar'gaba been on a major cattle route from Maiduguri to Kano, yet Yar'gaba was bigger in size and older as a community. The main advantage of Shuwari over Yar'gaba was the market, while Yar'gaba market served only the immediate local communities; Shuwari market has a national appeal that attracts people from considerable distances. Livestock, grains, textiles, household wares, apparels, and foodstuff were in abundance.

Hamatan Cold Season

"You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it within himself" Galileo Galilei

The Sahel region has three distinct seasonal variations, the rainy season from June to September, followed by the dry Harmattan winds from November to February that brings dust from the Sahara Desert, and the hot dry season usually from March to May. The most dreaded condition for me was the Hamatan period because of my allergy to dust and dry weather. And for most people, the Hamatan means substantial hardship of temperatures dropping to sometimes zero degrees at nights.

Those that could not afford to live in modern structures must improvise by keeping a fire burning in their rooms and or sit around fire throughout most of the night.

Others buy heavy blankets to cover themselves and or secondhand winter clothing.

On cold Sunday nights when traders congregate in preparation for the next day's market day the three-hectare Shuwari market area looks like burning bush fires or bonfires each surrounded by few individuals to keep themselves warm. Every group uses whatever it could find from old tires, cornstalks, wood, and rubbish dumps to keep the fires burning. The thick smoke from burning rubbish affects greatly the air quality around the village particularly in the early hours when the wind condition is mostly dormant. Several people particularly infants and old find it very difficult to breathe properly, which induces them to cough constantly throughout the night.

The Hajj Pilgrimage

"Nothing can stop a man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude". Thomas Jefferson

Eighteen months after we moved into our new house at Shuwari, our father's application to travel to Saudi Arabia was granted. His permission to make pilgrimage was conditional to paying a return airfare to Jeddah plus Saudi royalty fees and in addition to paying other charges for road journeys to Mecca and Medina from Jeddah. There was great jubilation in the family the day the permission letter came from Kano Native Authority signed by the Chiroman Kano Muhammad Sanusi. In great contrast to my fraternal grandmother who made that journey three times on foot in sixteen years between 1937 and 1953 more than 4,400 miles round trip through the harsh desert of Chad and Sudan. In addition, she made it a duty each time to visit the Caliphate tomb [Hubbare] another return journey of 1,000 miles from Dutse to Sokoto before embarking on each journey of pilgrimage.

His journey unlike his mother's took him less than 12 hours, in a small Fokker propelled plane with a total passenger capacity of less than 40, making three fueling stops in Maiduguri Nigeria, N'djamena Chad, and Khartoum Sudan. It was the first opportunity for me to see an Aircraft on the ground when we escorted him to Kano aerodrome (now Air force base).

The official policy of the British Colonial Administration in Nigeria was to discourage Muslims from performing the annual Hajj. The policy was necessary not only to conserve the small national resources but also to discourage contacts between politically active Muslim communities, as well as to discourage contacts with the Mahdi resistance movement in Sudan that has given the British administration serious challenges in the region.

My grandmother (Hafsatu), as an ordinary citizen and a woman, does not need permission from the Colonial Administration to make the journey that takes several months on foot and camel through land routes. Even though her journey will take her through Mahdi enclave of Chad, Sudan, she was of no political consequence. She also had to cross by boat the red sea to Jeddah which at that time costs seven pounds twelve shillings for sea fare plus the cost of transport and royalties in Sudan and Saudi Arabia. On her first return from the spiritual journey in 1945, she encouraged my father to give up his job and travel with her on her second trip, but he thought of seeking official permission to travel. He consistently applied but refused permission to perform the Hajj until August 1954, when he finally obtained approval to make the journey by air under the supervision of the West African Airways Corporation the only approved carrier by the Colonial Administration. That year fewer than five hundred pilgrims qualified officially to perform the Hajj by air in the whole country. My father was quick to make the full payment of one hundred

and seventy-three pounds and six shillings. The amount needed to cover return fare, basic travel expenses, medical services, royalties, and official documentation.

Chapter Four

Journey to Kano City

"It is difficult to say what is impossible, for the dream of yesterday is the hope of today and reality of tomorrow". R.H. Goddard

Even though I had always known that my mother had once taken me to her birthplace in Kano as an infant, I could not remember a thing about the trip. I prayed for an opportunity to visit [Jalla Babbar Hausa Yaro kodame kazo an-fika] Kano, the largest and most fascinating town in Hausa land where everything reaches its peak. Leo Africanus who traveled through Kano city in the 15th century describes it in his memo in these words.

"There has been evolved in this region a civilization combining a curious mixture of Africa and the East, to which no other parts of the tropical or sub-tropical continent offers even a remote parallel. Even though they did not acquire the art of building stone but have raised a great city of sun-dried clay encompassing their agricultural farmlands with mighty walls (20-50ft high and 20-40ft wide) digging deep moats outside. They knew how to smelt iron and tin, to tan and fabricate many leather articles durable and tasteful in design. They grow cotton and fashion it into cloth unrivaled for excellence and beauty in all Africa. They know how to work on silver and brass, to dying in indigo and coloring juice of other plants. They developed a system of irrigation which in its highest forms has surprised even experts from Europe. They are great traders who extend their influence throughout the whole western portion of the continent. They accumulated libraries of Arabic literature which compile local histories and poems, and in a measure, the city is the center for the propagation of intellectual thought".

I lobbied intensely, through my mother for permission to travel with my father's entourage to Kano Airport to bid him farewell on his Hajj. I felt great joy when I heard that I could make the journey! The site I could see! The adventure I would have! The stories I could share! Kano the seat of the Emirate, the provincial headquarters, the commercial nerve center of Northern Nigeria filled my imagination with thoughts of fascinating streets, colonial shops, unique housing, and ancient Kurmi market. Visiting Kano was a lifelong dream for many and for me, as a child, it was a source of pride. Well before our departure date I had my clothes washed and pressed with a charcoal iron. My anticipation marked this as one of the great journeys of my childhood.

The road journey by lorry was fascinating, as my first long-distance trip in the passenger truck. We departed Shuwari in the early evening, but it took us twelve hours to travel the 89-mile distance to Kofar Nasarawa Motor Park the terminal point of the journey. The same journey today takes at most 90 minutes. The road and the vehicle were so rudimentary that a healthy passenger could dismount to urinate and

catch up to the moving truck with a sprint. As we arrived at each village on the way, the driver broke the journey to allow his mate to check the condition of the radiator, tires, fuel and oil level before we continued. The driver's mate was a vital crew member who must be a mechanic, conductor, and jack of all trades. Vehicles of those years have no kicks tarter; therefore, it was the mate who cranked up the engine with a long iron rod until the engine kicked into life. It was the mate who had to apply the park brakes by jamming large wooden wedge under the tires whenever the vehicle stopped and removing them before we continued. It was the mate who ensured all passengers were on board and let the driver know to move on. He carried a metal jerry-can of water at every point of the journey to keep the radiator topped up, and a metal drum of fuel for refueling. He knew the right places to hit a spark plug and could fix deflated tires and mend a broken axle with scavenged scrap metal if necessary. Such jobs are still carried out in rural Nigeria where the road network is poor and only proverbial oily rag vehicles ply the roads.

Since I received his approval to travel with him to Kano the full departure information from the airport authorities and the colonial office including schedules of flight that was sent to him was made available to me to keep for him. The take-off time was at 4.00pm on 24 August 1954 and passengers were expected to be at the airport at least six hours to the time. The road journey to Kano by lorry was most fascinating, as it was my first long trip in a passenger truck. We started the journey at about 4 pm on a Saturday evening, from Shuwari to Kano and arrived at Kano Motor Park the following morning a journey of about 89miles.

The closer the journey to Kano city, the more civilized its villages. Ten hours into the journey, we sighted bright lights of Tilley lamps as we arrived at Wudil a town on the bank of a river. It was a privilege not only to see for the first time in my life a tarred road of surface dressing but also a steel covered bridge. The traders surged forward as we stopped, advertising their wares from fried fish to sweets. My father who is comfortably sitting on the front seat along with the driver suddenly called my name and asked me if I am hungry. I did not hesitate one minute to jump down from the truck for a late dinner. He sat on a mat provided by the driver and ordered fried fish and radiated meat [tsire] with some bread. We ate and rested for an hour or more and preceded with the journey to Kano; but as we are about to continue with the journey, we were compelled to sit in fives on the benches provided in the truck and remain seated, until we arrived our destination. I discovered later that the reason was not only to avoid falling off from the truck which will obviously drive faster on a tarred road but also to avoid heavy fines by traffic police that are stationed along the road.

At around 5.00 am on August 17, 1954, about twelve hours into the journey, we saw in the horizon a bright light indicating that we are approaching the city of Kano. It was also the first-time experience to see electricity light. Suddenly, the driver

stopped, and everybody in the back of the truck remained silent. A Nigeria Police and a Native Authority police climbed up into our truck each carrying a torchlight counting the number of passengers and checking under our benches for stowaways. Luckily, our driver's documentation was in order and no overload detected. We proceeded into the city. Within no time, everyone seems to be sighing relief that the dusty and bumpy journey was over. I kept thinking and wondering how the little light bulbs hanging on the steel post illuminate the streets as against my village that has no such privilege. I was counting as our truck passes but could not keep up with the speed to which they came to my view. Eventually, we were in the lorry park at Kofar Nasarawa, where all passengers disembark. The park was the size of a soccer field, with one filling station and an electricity transformer at its entrance. Within a few minutes, everyone has cleared his belongings. Those with heavy loads use the services of porters that are waiting patiently to be engaged; others with the heavier load still must use a wooden wheel borrow constructed from scrap chassis of a small car.

For those with the heaviest or bulky load, must use the services of [Yan Kura] pushcart. It was a four-wheeled wooden platform constructed from scrap chassis of a truck or pickup. Its drivers or pushers were usually well-built individuals in their prime ages strong enough to push up to one ton of cargo. The lead drivers will hold a long metal rod in their hand to steer the truck and at the same time use it as a braking system. Three other able-bodied young men pushing the truck from behind under the direction of the driver will be chanting songs along the way. To cope with the sweat and drudgery associated with their work, they have devised several rhythms in chorus such as [Hinja-Hinja] depending on the size of the load and the road condition; the note will be played faster or slower.

Our father negotiated with a porter to carry his metal box to our destination, which is about two miles from the motor park. He led the procession and we followed behind with uncle Suleiman and one of my father's servants holding my hands to keep me from been hit by cyclists or the trooping donkeys carrying firewood into the city from neighboring villages. We walked through narrow allies crossing over open Sewage into the city of Kano to our destination at Mandawari quarters. I must admit despite my village upbringing, I was not impressed with the level of hygiene in the old city. In many places, I will hold my breath and cover my nose with part of my gown to avoid the rotten smell of pits created along the alleys for almost every household to store their wastewater. There was open sewer everywhere along the route and everyone seems to be cautious not to fall in any of the deep pits. People walking in opposite directions sometimes must wait a few seconds for the elderly to pass to avoid a collision. As fate will have it one day while we were returning from the airport at night, I fell into one of the horrible pits near our residence while trying to avoid a cyclist. I plunged three feet into the rotten pit in a dark night while trying

to avoid an upcoming cyclist who created confusion by constantly ringing his bell to warn his presence. I will always remember this nasty experience in the street-alleys of old Kano city as one of my saddest days.

When we arrived our destination at Mandawari the porter received three pence for his labor, and we sat down for a breakfast of [Gurasa] a whole wheat bread eaten with pumpkin and tomato source. While we are taking our breakfast my father's companion to the holy land who was a renowned Islamic teacher in the area, called in to welcome us and to inform my father that checking at the airport will start at nine o'clock the following morning. I used most of the days after his departure exploring the city; with the help of a new friend I met in the neighborhood who tries to impress the young villager.

He took me on a bicycle tour around town; I sat on the carrier support at the back of the bicycle with my legs facing one direction but looking at both sides of the road for upcoming donkeys, pushcarts, or another bicycle. There were less than twenty-five cars in the city numbered in serial order. Each vehicle registration number is associated with its owner. After exploring the inner city, we took a tour of the commercial part known as the Syrian Quarters, The Kantin-Kwari, and then the Strangers Quarters known as Fagge and Sabon-gari.

I must admit that this part of the city is much livelier and more cosmopolitan than the old city. Here they have tree-lined streets with several shops mainly of textile, bicycle shops, and packaged provision food items. Our last part of the tour took us to European Quarters known as Nasarawa, where the Colonial houses built in the woody part of the city. It is almost impossible to see the compound from the road as the gardens cover most of the compounds. On our way, back we passed in front of the Emir's Palace and the Native Authority Office directly opposite the Palace. It was a modern building with a mixture of Arabic and traditional architecture. A minaret-like entrance has a large clock in roman numerals ticking and ringing every hour for the workers and public to know what time it is. A wristwatch is virtually unknown, and the only watch available was the pocket watch chained and pinned to the pocket to safeguard it from slipping away.

My maternal grandfather Malam Nuhu (Dako Mai Kaji) sent his car to pick us to the airport in the early hours of the following day. We drove by [Kasuwar Kurmi] the ancient market that serves the city and indeed West African countries, through to Koki quarters, the residence of Alhassan Dantata the richest man of his time in West Africa. The Airport built during World War II served as an important refueling stop for the colonial military planes, at the northern outskirts of Kano. It was about two miles from the city gate, served by a narrow road winding its way through a Military camp. When we arrived at the Airport, the port manager an Englishman wearing a white shirt and white shorts with a matching white cap and socks received us. He spoke to my father through an interpreter and took his luggage and gave him some

assurance of the safety of air travel. I could see my father, nodding his head in acceptance; but most of us were skeptical of what he is saying to my father and another handful of passengers.

Few hours, later an announcement made over public address system for embarkation, a quick prayer for a safe journey was led by the Islamic scholar Malam Hussein Mandawari traveling with my father. We waited, patiently with a sense of anxiety, hoping that nothing will go wrong. Finally, from a safe distance, we noticed one of the propellers was turning at a slow speed, increasing by the second; then the other until all are in full speed and roaring. A ground staff holding two yellow pieces of circular plates directed the captain to move into the runway. The plane makes a turn and headed for takeoff as we continued our prayer with the rest of the families that have come to see their loved ones. The propeller plane roared on the tarmac towards the runway gradually lifts until it disappears in the air through spatial clouds. The following day, I visited my maternal grandfather at his Mandawari residence less than half a kilometer away from our residence. Malam Nuhu Yaqub nicknamed (Dako Mai Kaji) was a very wealthy man of his time who made most of his money in trading of agricultural produce. He took me in his car to his merchandise store at Kurmi Market and treated me as a grandfather would to his grandson. He had several employees and errand boys sitting in front of the market shop all waiting to take his orders. A sizable store with double doors lied behind the main trading shop used for storing various grains in 100kg jute fiber sacks.

He introduced me to several of his customers as his namesake and a prince of Dutse. He jokingly teases me with other names such as (Dan Makarantar Boko) pupil of western education, or (Yara manyan gobe) children of today are the men of tomorrow.

One day he told me a funny story about his contract with an American military Officer stationed in Kano during the World War, who contracted him to supply five hundred dressed Turkeys for his troop at Thanksgiving. It was unthinkable to find that number of turkeys anywhere in Nigeria at that time, but he accepted to supply him with that number. He subcontracted the supply to (Sarkin-fawar Kano) head of the butchers to supply him on a specific date five hundred mature dressed vultures. On the appointed date, he loaded them in the boot of his car and headed to the barracks where he made the delivery and collected his payment. A few days later he met with the officer in the bank, and after greetings, he asked him if he enjoyed his turkeys. His reply was, the soldiers complained about its tenderness. He said in reply what tenderness you would expect of a vulture. The Officer was furious and left in distress and informed his men what they had in their Thanksgiving dinner. This story was, in fact, true as I later read the same story in a colonial diary of similar nature.

Welcoming Pilgrims back

"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now it is time to understand, more so that we may fear less." Marie Curie

One month later, we were at the same Airport to receive him, after performing the Hajj. His arrival was a little more dramatic as the plane could not exactly locate the runway, due to poor weather and lack of modern landing facilities. The plane kept circling overhead around the airport, until one of the air controllers, came down, and floated a big balloon into the air. Half an hour later, the plane was rolling on the runway and heading towards the terminal building. The anxiety, of whether our loved ones are alive and, in the plane, seems to occupy everyone's mind in the crowd; as there were no telephone or telegraph services between, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia at that time. Everyone in the crowd was nervous and expecting good or bad news. The ground staff moved the five-foot ladder towards the door of the aircraft, one by one all the passengers disembarked from the small propeller engine aircraft. There was intermittent applause as the passengers disembark from the plane. One by one all the passengers alighted from the aircraft with their hand luggage's and headed to immigration and customs checks. Most of the pilgrims were dressed in Arab gabs, as was the vogue at that time. My father was one of the few that have not changed their traditional dressing. We left the airport and headed back home with a great sense of relief that our breadwinner is back safely. On our way, he told us many stories, in confirmation of what my fraternal grandmother told us many times before. The only difference between their stories was my father's brief stay in the Holy Land and his inability to experience the treacherous and inhospitable road journey through the desert.

Encounter with Telepathist

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience". P.T de Chardin

In every primitive culture, people tend to believe in miracles and the power of spiritualists to cure or harm an individual with their hidden power. I have learned from my first Islamic teacher that believing in the power of anybody except God to change things is considered (shirk) un- Islamic deed. To dabble with such behavior and thoughts is to step beyond Islamic guidelines.

Every festival period a woman spiritualist (Boka) that lives behind our compound at Shuwari organizes spiritual ceremonies in remote locations outside the town to avoid detection because some of the rituals were considered blasphemous and therefore liable for prison terms. She took advantage of my father's absence to organize the ritual ceremony at her house that year.

On the Eid-Kabir day of 1954, the woman took advantage of my father's absence to arrange a special session of exorcism to cure the sick and the possessed. I tried to

convince her husband that if she holds any spiritual ceremony in town, my father will find out when he returns but, she refused to listen to my advice. Instead, she threatened to hurt whoever informs my father of her activities. In the evening of that day, I noticed many people tramping to her compound to seek her assistance in the cure of their ailments. I followed the crowd to witness firsthand what she was doing and to report to my father when he returns.

Generally, people believe in her power to drive away evil spirits from possessed victims, therefore she has no difficulty in convincing the crowd whatever she says about anything in a state of trance. She claims to have the power of curing all afflictions or cursing anyone were taken by the general public as a revelation from the spirits. She was revered and feared by the local community.

Her ceremony began as soon as the crowd assembled in her courtyard with a musical invitation played with a mandolin (Garaya) calling the different Jinni with their signature tune. The musician played the tunes until she was possessed with the spirit and enters a state of trance. One by one the musician calls the different spirits. She will appear to acquire the characteristics of the invited spirit.

The (Boka) woman, in a state of trance, spoke indistinct language apparently understood only by the musicians, or those possessed by the spirit. While she was in a state of trance and supposedly speaking with the spirit, she noticed my presence and walked towards me with anger "This young man is you laughing at me?" I picked courage and told her at her face yes! You are not supposed to hold this session here. She walked away and immediately returns to me and warned me to be careful not to intimidate her. My friends held my arms and took me out of the compound in a hurry to avoid any clash between her spirits and myself. They thought I was foolish to dare the devil and predicted something terrible will happen to me soon.

I was least afraid of her or her evil spirits because I knew she will not risk challenging my father over this issue because the assembly was illegal. She was doing that to frighten me not to tell my father or stop her from receiving the few coins from her clients.

Back to School

"It is not whether you get knocked down; it is whether you get back up". Vince Lombardi

Few weeks after my incidence with the woman spiritualist, I had severely attacked of malaria from mosquito bites that I was exposed to in Kano. It took three months of crushing pain, loss of appetite, dehydration, hallucinations before I could find myself back to school. The devastation of this disease almost destroyed my memory and my sight because of the long confinement in bed. Physically, my body became a mere skeleton, my eyes lost in my skull, while my face looks more of a ghost than human. Luckily, I survived that ordeal.

My friends and many people in the village that witnessed my encounter with the woman spiritualist believed my illness was a curse of the spirits I offended in my encounter with her. Some medicine men and women came to my aunt with their different herbs or rituals to save my life. Some brought concoctions that are administered orally, some brought weeds that are added to my drinking water, some brought crushed leaves powder that was added to my bath water, and some of the medicines are applied to burning charcoal to inhale in smoke. The worst of these medicines was the mixture of raw butter and smelly herbal remedies that I applied to my body that leaves my skin with enduring body odor for weeks.

Each time a medicine man or woman attends me; my aunt pays their dues in cash or kind, but mostly in livestock. Within the two months period, her goat and sheep pen were depleted. Some of the medicine men had some idea of my illness but many were there to make their fortune by relating the disease to mysterious or spiritual affliction. They performed several rituals to drive away the evil spirit by pretending to be talking with them in the process. The high temperature associated with malaria attack constantly causes hallucination and loss of appetite that re-enforces the spiritualist belief that I was afflicted by the demon. Everything within my view seems to be talking to me at the same time.

I will not say for sure what or who cured me, but it was a miracle that I survived the devastating disease that destroyed my body immunity to a level that would have been interpreted today as AIDs. The local clinic in the town had only quinine tablets as a cure to all malarial parasites.

Severe Malarial attack

"God gave us the gift of life; it is up to us to give ourselves the gift of living well". Voltaire

I suffered a similar devastating malaria attack in August 1958 while I was at Birnin-kudu boarding senior primary School. My grandmother came to the school and took me away for medication at home where the same process was repeated except this time, she paid more attention to prayers and incantations from the Holly Qur'an written on a wooden slate and washed with clean water as my permanent drinking water.

When I return to school, I was fully recovered but have lost so much weight and was venerable to bullies from other children. One bully (Jazuli Gaya) in my compound made my life very miserable as he persistently bullied me at any time, he sees me. One evening while playing hockey, I used the bamboo stick to hit him hard on his feet pretending to be an accident, he was rushed to a hospital for treatment from the wound. He later became a close friend and never bullied me again.

The Big event in town

"Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action" Benjamin Disraeli

Beside annual agricultural shows, one of the greatest events in Dutse was the commission of a reading and recreational room in August 1955 by Mr. Reid the Colonial Assistant District Officer in charge of the southeastern division. Few weeks to the event the entire town took a new look. Streets and allies were cleared of rubbish, the buildings whitewashed, and our school classrooms and latrines immaculately clean. Everyone in the town was warned by the village head not to drop any rubbish or write anything on the whitewashed walls. The donkeys, goats and other domestic animals were kept on halters.

On the appointed date the Assistant District Officer arrived in his small two doors black Hillman car dressed in colonial regalia of white shirt, shorts, socks, hat, and black shoes with a sword dangling on his left arm. He was received by the District Head and ushered into a waiting room where he signed the visitor's book. A few minutes later he came out in the company of some local dignitaries to the venue a few yards away. The District Head read his welcome address first praising Her Majesty's Government, the Governor General, and the Provincial Resident for establishing the library in Dutse for the benefit of the local community. He assured the Assistant District Officer that the facilities will be used with the greatest care and would guard against destruction of any of the facilities.

In his commissioning speech, the ADO said the purpose of building the Library recreation center was to encourage western literary scholarship. He listed the facilities in the center and urged the first librarian (Shehu Nananiya) who had a few weeks refresher course in Kano to take full responsibility and care of the reading room that was equipped with a bush radio, dart, domino, and lido games, magazines, newsletters, and other reading materials. The area around the reading room becomes the main recreational area of the town particularly in the evenings when the attendant will bring his table outside the room and tune the bush radio to (Radio Kaduna) the only Hausa station at the time to entertain the community with the only source of public news in town.

One evening in December 1955 we were playing hide and seek games around the reading room, I tripped over the leading antenna wire hanging on a bamboo pole and to the destruction of the Bush Radio shattering its wooden cover to pieces. I tried to push the blame on pears, but my psychological condition of terrible freight of the consequences of destroying such a magnificent monument in the community lead me away. I tried to escape but overpowered by older children and taken to the District Head for adjudication. A few weeks later, the District Council bears the cost of repairs and returns the radio to the public.

The Radio is the only source of news as well as entertainment for the entire community, its value to the community was, therefore, better imagined. The few weeks of its absence were a mourning period for the entire community particularly the youth who blamed me squarely for their predicament. My peers humiliated me with unkind words and shunned by elders because of the incident. It was one of my most reflective moments as a child that humbles me to a point of complete remorse. I avoided the area for many months after the incidence to save myself from further embarrassments.

The Fire tragedy

"The most wasted of all days is one without laughter". E.E. Cummings

One of the unforgettable depressing days in my life was in the mid-day of March 1956, when a fire smoldering in a rubbish dump blew to neighboring house fence of a cornstalk. Within a few minutes, the fire engulfed several houses and took several human and animal lives and property including grain silos and fruit trees. The fire would not ordinary consume more than a few houses within one hour, but the dry Harmattan wind blowing normally at more than 45 mile per hour, and combustible building materials fueled the fire. The intensity and sporadic attack of the fire made it impossible for everyone to assist his neighbor. It reduces to ashes more than half of the dwellings in the town. Every household was left to protect its properties by whatever means as there was no fire service and water was normally in short supply during Hamatan period. The firefighting ability of the people with tree branches and sand has done nothing to stop the spread and devastation of the fire.

The fire raged on, spreading devastation through the town. The lives of several humans were lost within hours. Animals, grain silos and fruit trees were not spared by the inferno.

Hunting the Leopards

"Everything created by nature has a useful purpose". James Altenburg

The second unforgettable sad event was November 11; 1956 a day the Kano chief hunter (Sarkin Maharba) celebrated the final extermination of leopards within Dutse. Ironically, this was (Armistice Day) which the Colonial Government commemorates the end of the war to end all wars. Out of ignorance, several people gathered in front of the Garu Palace to cheer his so-called great bravery and adventure. Many men and women came out to procure its body part for medicinal purposes. I remember, arguing with a classmate whether hunting such a rare animal should be condemned or be heroic and praiseworthy.

I have a special liking for Leopards and other wild animals that have lived for many centuries in the rocky terrain with my ancestors in harmony. My grandmother's house was on the edge of the valley where animals drink from the water hole. She

also loved wild animals and will ensure every night that she provides drinking water during the dry season for thirsty animals coming down from the surrounding rocks. Out of curiosity, my cousin and I will remain awake just to view the animals as they drink from the open clay pot. The day this hunter displayed the body of the last leopard, remained one of my greatest gloomy days as a child.

Chapter Five

Enjoyable Recollections

"Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don't recognize them" Ann Landers

One of my most memorable events of the 1954 year, was the first Dutse agricultural show in January when important dignitaries from Kano including the Native Authority Police Band lead by Maigari Yola. The other notable event was in December when my father purchased a Philips Bush Radio and His Master's Voice Gramophone. It was a great pride for all the family members and a great source of pleasure. He receives instructions by the salesperson how to operate both gadgets and the simple rules of dos' and do not. He has special days for entertaining members of the family and other special days for entertaining the village community. Occasionally, I will smuggle the gramophone in the absence of my father to entertain my siblings and friends. I forced myself to learn the operation to avoid making mistakes that will give my father cause to suspect any abuse.

It was in the same month he purchased a seven-ton Mercedes truck to haulage his groundnut stock to Kano Cooperative Society, which he was a founding member.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth Regina II

"Life is either a great adventure or nothing" Helen Keller.

The year 1956 was a lucky year for me, as I was the chosen candidate to represent our primary school in Kaduna to welcome Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth Regina II to her first visit to Nigeria. My grand ambition to be an explorer and or a traveler resurfaces again after been rejected to go to boarding senior primary school at Birnin Kudu because of the age factor. In consolation, my excitement for this trip was more than to see the Queen; it was because I have always nurtured a dream of visiting Kaduna the Headquarters of Northern Nigeria and to see the seat of government in the Lugard Hall that symbolizes power and the famous Kaduna Radio Station.

In our classrooms, there were pictures adorning the walls one of which was that of The Queen and her family, The Governor of Northern Nigeria Sir Brown Show-smith with his emasculate white uniform and white bobby hat, and of course the imposing structure of the Lugard Hall. Kaduna, therefore, represents many things that I wish to see and be proud I was there. If Kano has the Colonial Resident and District Officers, Kaduna has the Governor and top Colonial Officers that supervises all Provincial Residents and District Officers.

We were first camped at Kano provincial Secondary School [now Rumfa College] for several weeks, undertaking medical examinations at the Kano General hospital (now Murtala Mohammed General Hospital) near the Rimi market. Every morning we shall march in single file to the Hospital for one test or another by the education

officer in charge of our affairs. The evenings are reserved for sports, drills, and practice parade at the school playground. Situated opposite to (Sabuwar- Kofa) one of the old city gates with proximity to the famous Kano Groundnuts Pyramids, the school was in that year housing the first batch of Secondary school and the last batch of middle school students with late Ibrahim Baban-Kowa [Walin Ringim] as the Head boy. It was also providing temporary accommodation for the first batch of students of Wudil Teachers College. Our accommodation was on the first floor, directly above the teacher's college students as both of us are on transit.

My cousin Muhammad Sanusi [Chiroma] was a student in the school, which makes me feel very much at home in an entirely new environment. Our dormitory was situated few yards away from the main railway line coming from Lagos into Kano. Everything associated with train, the locomotive motion, the whistle, and thick smoke and the wagons fascinates me coming from a remote town. One of my greatest pleasures is watching the locomotive engine from my bedroom window coming into the railway station about one mile away; and or leaving the station for Lagos whistling along the line to warn people not to attempt the crossing. Its cargo to Lagos was always livestock, agricultural produce, and passengers, while from Lagos the trains bring in Kola nuts, imported textiles, vehicles, and industrial equipment. The locomotive drivers always blew the wagon whistle a few meters before the Nasarawa level crossing where a giant (W) sign was erected. The most entertaining event was the skill played by cattle attendants, jumping on top of the wagons from one to another in a sequence to ensure the safety of their herds.

In this camp, I met late Aminu Inuwa a young man from Dawakin-Kudu, who became my very good friend during and after the event. His father was the Galadima of Kano and later Emir of Kano Muhammad Inuwa. He took me to his father's residence at Galadanci quarters in the city and showed me every room in the old Palace. One of the fascinating things I saw at Galadanci Palace was electric kettle that his father uses to boil water for tea or bath in the cold season. I was overwhelmed by curiosity on how it operates, but he too was ignorant about its operation. To please me he connected it to the power without checking the level of water, which almost caused a serious fire in the room. He was a very generous young man full of stamina, and piety. Every day at our leisure time, we will play around a scrap Leyland truck at the school gate, with other children from our camp. When we are tired, we shall move to the school ground for soccer game which I am not very good at.

Road Journey to Kaduna

*"The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning".
Jiddu Krishnamurti*

On our last day at the Kano Provincial Secondary School camp, we were issued with new uniforms, blankets, mats and a sling with identification disk indicating province

and your number. My identification bears an inscription KN-14; from thereon we were identified by numbers, not by name. The following morning at around 5 am, we were ready to make the long journey to Kaduna the administrative headquarters of Northern Nigeria. Two new Kano Native Authority open Desoto trucks were at our doorsteps as early as 4 am on Friday to give us time to prepare. One by one, we boarded with our survival luggage the two waiting trucks. The only road from Kano to Kaduna in those days goes through Bichi in Kano Province; Gidan mutum-Daya, Malumfashi, Funtuwa in Katsina Province; Samaru, Tudun-Wada Zaria, and Kawo Kaduna in Zaria Province.

The journey took us a total of sixteen hours due to the condition of the road. The maximum speed limit on the road was 25 mile per hour with many narrow bridges and culverts that were designed for single lane traffic. Bichi 27 miles from Kano was as far as the tarred road covers; the rest of the journey was through dusty roads that emanate thick powder that billows the entire passengers, particularly those sitting at the rear of the vehicle.

Immediately after Bichi, the road becomes bumpy as we drove on the corrugated surface. We reached Malumfashi at about 12.00 noon where we had a brief stop to cool the engine and give us time to stretch our legs from the long uncomfortable journey. When we reached Funtuwa the next stop, Muslim worshippers were coming out of Friday congregational prayers at 2.30pm. Our faces undistinguishable, our white uniform turned brownish red, because of the dust. We were thirsty from the sun exposure in an open truck and hungry for lunch. Water sellers by the mosque where we parked our trucks under shed trooped to sell about one liter of water in clay pots for half a penny. Our day traveling allowance was one shilling each, enough to buy three good meals.

Zaria was the next big town infect bigger than the previous towns but unfortunately arrived after sunset. The only visible thing to me at that time was the row of silk trees at Tudun Wada where we stopped for the evening meal. When I left home my parents gave me a one-pound note for emergency or should I wish to buy some memorabilia. I had this note in my small pouch throughout my stay in the camp and had no need to change or buy anything that will force me to reduce the balance to coins. After taking our evening meals along the road at Tudun Wada, I thought of going around the small shops to see if there are some interesting things to buy. My attention was caught by a display of some embroidered caps and wanted to buy one for myself. The trader offered the that fits into my head for two shillings which forced me to bring out my one-pound note for a change. Immediately I handed the note to him he called the attention of a nearby policeman to interrogate me on where I got one pound at my age. After several minutes of cross-examination, the policeman escorted me to our waiting vehicle and demanded to see our boss, who spoke with him for a few minutes and let me go with my pound note.

We reached Kaduna at about 10.30pm and headed to our base camp where children from other provinces converge for the final rehearsals. The dormitories of Kaduna College located on Governor Road are less than one mile away from Governor's Residence, where Her Majesty the Queen will be staying during her visit. It was a rare privilege to meet for the first time an array of fellow Northerners from different provinces and interact with them freely. I was afraid to talk to some of them because my English vocabulary was not enough to make any meaningful communication, while their Hausa was as bad as my English. I confined myself to speaking with Katsinawa, Sakkwatawa, and Zage-Zagis, who speak Hausa, even though with a different dialectic accent which was at variance with my Kananchi dialect.

Kaduna Town in 1956

"We do not remember days, we remember moments" Cesare Pavese

Kaduna in the fifties was quite a small semi-urban town of a population of fewer than 100,000 people. The population was concentrated at Anguwan Shanu, Anguwan Sarkin Musulmi, Kano, Benue, and Katsina Roads. A small settlement at Kawo, Anguwan Rimi, Tudun Nufawa, and a military camp built in mud round huts along Ahmadu Bello Way. The only noticeable buildings are the Lord Lugard Hall and few colonial houses around it. The Kaduna Nursing Home and the Military Headquarters along Independence road form a cluster of buildings in the middle of nowhere. There were a handful of people at the market selling vegetables and fruits, behind Emir of Kano's official residence along Kano Road. We used to walk along the railway line from our camp to the market to buy some fruits, to supplement our food, which tastes different from our usual meals at home due to the usage of palm oil and strange ingredients that we were unfamiliar with in our diet at home.

We were visited by several important dignitaries from the Colonial Office, and the Governor of Northern Nigeria Sir Bryan Sherwood-Smith; and the emerging political leaders such as Hon Minister of Local Governments Sir Ahmadu Bello the Sardaunan Sakkwato, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa later prime minister of Nigeria, Alhaji Aliyu Makaman Bida, Michael Abdu Buba and Sir Kashim Ibrahim. (Later became Governor of Northern Nigeria).

Among the Northern Royalties who visited our camp was the Emir of Ilorin Alhaji Sulu Gambari, Alhaji Aliyu Obaje the Attah of Igala, Abraham Ukpabi the Och'Idoma, Alhaji Usman Nagogo the Emir of Katsina, the Lamido Adamawa Alhaji Aliyu Mustafa, and the Aku Uka of Wukari Adi- Byewi.

Other lesser-known personalities that visited our camp include singers, such as Mamam Shata, Jankidi, and a multitude of other entertainers, health officials, and civil servants. We were in the camp for two weeks before the arrival of Her Majesty, rehearsing every detail of the protocol. It was a very hectic two weeks but enjoyed every part of the rehearsal.

My father who was also a participant at the Grand Durbar was camped in temporary shelters along with all other durbar participants from all parts of Northern Nigeria. Their camp and their horses were at a different location near the Kaduna River. Our accommodation is far superior to theirs, but in fact, their camp was a cultural melting pot depicting the real life of the Northern people. Musical extravaganzas, dances, and many other cultural events and activities of Northern Heritage were taking place in every part of the camp. From Kanuri and Nupe graceful dancers to Kabba active masquerades; from Zazzau harvest dancers to Katsina rap singers; and from Kano and Bauchi war dancers to Adamawa and Ilorin women dancers, all in carnival frenzy.

The day of the Queen arrival, we left our camp as early as 5.00am to take our positions along the road from the airport [now air force base] at Kawo through a narrow winding road to her accommodation at Governors' lodge. The Streets gaily decorated with union jack colors of red, blue, and white makes the entire town look friendlier and accommodating. We were all dressed in white except the girls who wore dresses reflecting their school colors and uniforms. We waited anxiously for any sign of our Queen, but fatigue was setting in like four hours has passed without any sign of her arrival. Suddenly an information van was approaching with Malam Yusuf Maitama Sule [Dan Masanin Kano] holding a microphone inside the van, announcing the order of protocol in the motorcade and urging us to welcome Her Majesty the Queen by waving the small Union Jack flags in our hands.

It was a fulfilling day for all of us when we went back to the camp describing to each other how close we were to the Royal Motorcade. In the evening, we went to the durbar ground to entertain the dignitaries with a well-rehearsed von fire to which Her Majesty the Queen and her entourage including the Governor General Sir James Robertson. Those who participated at the night entertainment includes Malam Muhammadu Buhari from Katsina provincial secondary school. Later in life, became a General in the Nigerian Army, and Head of State, elected civilian President, and Commander in chief of the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Late Malam Hamza Rafindadi Zayyad, from Barewa College Zaria; who became my boss at NNDC ltd Kaduna in 1975, and Wazirin Katsina. There was Malam Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida from Bida provincial Secondary School. Later in life became General and Commander in chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces and President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He created during his time our State [Jigawa] out of Kano State in 1991. Also, at the camp was Malam Muhammad Sani Abacha from Kano provincial Secondary School. Later in life became a General and Commander in chief of the Nigerian Armed forces, and Head of the State-Federal Republic of Nigeria. Many others who became National icons in later life entertained Her Majesty the Queen and other dignitaries that night with various plays.

The next day we lined up at the venue province by province to formally meet the Queen who drove in an open Land Rover jeep with the Governor General through the crowd of children from all over Northern Nigeria waving their hands in white gloves in appreciation. Soldiers, Policemen, and Paramilitary men were at the occasion all lined up for the event that took more than an hour. Finally, the Queen and her host the Governor General climbed on a specially built podium to address the rowdy crowd. She spoke in Queens English which very few people in the crowd could decipher, but nevertheless were clapping endlessly after every sentence.

The third day was for the Grand Durbar and the final event in the visit, although we were not participants to any of the events that day, never the less we took our seats at the popular stand. Province by Province in alphabetical order, the emirs and chiefs with their retinue of musicians and dancers pass by the grandstand with their horses paying homage to the Queen. Occasionally, they will display their skills to impress the august visitor. I have never seen anything like this before; neither do most of the crowds. I tried to identify my father in the Kano contingents but kept guessing what kind of dress he will be wearing. At the end of the day, we all went back to our camps fulfilled with lasting memories. There was no doubt it was the greatest Durbar ever attempted in Northern Nigeria. The following day we lined up the same street to bid Her Majesty farewell as she left for Ibadan and Kano in continuation of her visit.

On my return to Dutse, I have not only widened my horizon considerably but also had an opportunity to make very good contacts and acquired new friends who will in later life become close friends. The journey back, seems much quicker, as all the anxieties are over. We arrived at our old camp in Kano late at night and the following day we left the school camp to our various towns. When I returned to Dutse, some of my colleagues and classmates with great love and admiration received me as if I have been to the moon, while others were extremely jealous of me. I managed this situation with great diplomacy by trying to make my story less interesting even when the school authority asked me to give details of my journey at an assembly. Deliberately, I refused to show my acquisitions such as medals and other gifts given to us by the various dignitaries that came to see us at the camp. The medals themselves mattered little compared with the benefits of the interactions we had and the contacts I made.

Chapter Six

Boarding School

"Whatever you can do or dream you can begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now". J.W von Goethe

Few months after my return from Kaduna, my father arranged for me to have private lessons in preparation for the entrance examination to senior primary school at Birnin kudu. I studied hard mainly because I was inspired by many secondary school students, I met during our camp from all over Northern Nigeria. I was particularly impressed with the level of sophistication of some students at Kano Provincial Secondary School and whose command of the English language gave me further encouragement to study more. The extra lessons gave me an added advantage over my mates who sat for the same examination considered the litmus test in our future endeavors in modern life.

A day before the examination, the invigilator [Late Malam Mu'azu Hadejia] arrived at our school with his British made (AJS) motorcycle and talked to us on how to conduct ourselves during the examination with do's and don'ts. It was a very nervous experience, but luckily, for me, the lessons I received from my teacher (Malam Ibrahim Jingino), were like the questions on the examination paper.

When we reviewed the examination questions in our class after it was over, I was confident in getting good marks. One of the arithmetic questions that I surely missed was to add together a score, a gross, and five dozen. I had no idea of what a score, or a gross was and therefore failed to attempt the question. The other question which all of us missed was based on logic, not arithmetic. The question said a hunter saw three birds on a tree and fired his gun and shot one, how many birds remaining on the tree? All of us answered two, but when we were revising the teacher said the logical answer was nil.

Two months after, we received our results qualifying eleven of my classmates to go for higher studies at Birnin Kudu Boarding Senior Primary School. I was very familiar with boarding life as my ever loving and caring senior brother Basiru Sanusi [Galadiman Dutse], has occasionally invited me for weekends with him during his boarding days in the school. I was full of confidence that life will be much better for me from that time on. I was proud that from that moment on I will be wearing school uniform to distinguish me from junior primary pupils that wear any dress to class. I was fully confident in myself and my achievements as I left my childhood friends many of whom have not had this great opportunity to move forward in the education ladder.

For many days, the excitement of attending boarding school occupies my mind to the extent that my mother sought I was going crazy. One of my main reasons for wishing to enter senior primary School is my insatiable thirst for knowledge of the

universe which was triggered by our geography teacher when he gave us a lesson on the solar system describing the movement of planets around the Sun.

After the euphoria of becoming a boarder, I soon realized the difficulty of making the transition from the protection of childhood life in the family compound to the independent middle years of youth. The hierarchies in age and grade played a significant part in any encounter. In the first year, we were victims and underdogs, bothered by one bully or another, doing all the difficult work of cleaning, sweeping, and mopping like fags in "Tom Brown's Schooldays". Seniority was synonymous with absolute power over juniors in the boarding school. The older students were free to punish, intimidate, and harass without remorse. Many a time, children who could not endure the humiliation, dropped out of school within the first few months. I learned to respect even the weakest of my seniors as a survival tactic.

Difficult journeys

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving". Albert Einstein.

The distance from Shuwari where my parents live to Birnin kudu at that time was less than forty miles, but it was only during the dry season that the journey could be covered the same day. The road was so difficult and dusty in the dry season, and muddy in the rainy season. There was no other route linking the two neighboring districts except through Kwanar Fuguma. The first leg of the journey ends at Fuguma junction, where all passengers going south to Birnin kudu and beyond would disembark and wait for another lorry heading southeast to Maiduguri. This waiting may take from one minute to twenty-four hours depending on the day or season. The location of this junction near a river makes the nights most miserable due to mosquito and other creeping insects thirsty for blood.

One of such miserable journeys I will never forget was August 28, 1958, on my way back to school. My father was away in Kano, and my mother insisted that I should not wait for his return and must leave by whatever means. I hired a young man (Umaru Soda) to carry me and my wooden box on his bicycle to Kwanar Fuguma where I expect to catch a vehicle to school. August is the wettest month in our region, and in most of the month, the streams and rivers overflow their banks, while roads are nearly impassable. At the initial stage of the journey, my box was firmly tied on the bicycle carrier while I sat on the metal bar between his seat and the handlebar. It was so uncomfortable for me after a few miles that I opted to follow him on foot most of the remaining journey. The terrible condition of mud and pools along the road held us back to less than two miles per hour. I was very exhausted and shivering from the cold rains, and with blisters in my feet, I could hardly walk a few meters more when we reached Kwanar Fuguma at around seven o'clock in the evening. There was nobody on the road that passes through the small village. I walked a few hundred meters to the house of vehicle commission agent where waiting passengers

usually stay. To my dismay, he told me that I missed the connecting lorry by a few minutes and must stay overnight at his house. I took a room where I offloaded my box and found a half-torn mat and a bowl of sour milk as my dinner. Barely a few minutes after I lay on the mat, hundreds of leaches emerged from the soft ground floor to feed on my blood. I sat on my box and lean against the wall to find relief but was covered by swam of mosquitoes wanting to take their meals. I was cold tired and shivering, yet there is no way I could sleep in this miserable condition. I walked out in the dark waving away the terrible insects with a twig, but they kept following me as I roam aimlessly through the dark night. Throughout the night, I shed tears and prayed for the daybreak. Within a short time, several rashes appear on all parts of my body because of the bites; leaving a crushing itchy sensation all over my body.

Adopting to boarding life

"The greater an obstacle, the more glory in overcoming it". Moliere

After the euphoria of becoming a border, I soon realize the difficulty of making the transition from the protected childhood life to independent middle childhood. The hierarchies in age and class seniority always play an advantage in any encounter. The first year we were the victims and underdogs from one bully to another, doing all the difficult work of cleaning and moping. Seniority is synonymous to absolute power over juniors to punish, intimidate, and harass without remorse. Many a time, children who could not endure, drop out of school within the first few months. I have learned to respect even the weakest of my seniors as a survival tactic. I was weak in sports, and constantly bullied by schoolmates for my weakness, but I fought the bullies by either ignoring them and walk away or by challenging most of them in academic performance.

The second year was relatively easier, as the burden shifted to the newcomers. With the newfound freedom, I was able to join various clubs and associations that occupy my spare time. I was an active member of Boy Scout, Young Farmers Club, and Debating Society. We traveled to various schools, villages, and attended agricultural shows as part of the advantages of belonging to a club. In one of our survival expeditions as a Boy Scouts, one of our members found himself in a hyenas' den. Eureka, he yelled, and the rest of us rush to him only to find him playing with its litter. Our Master Zakari Kofar Mata quickly blew his whistle and guided us out of the immediate danger. When we returned to base, he tutored us on its behavior and warned against future expeditions in that area.

Thursdays were short working days, to give us time to wash and iron our white uniforms in preparation for Friday morning inspection. Thursday evenings are the only days we could go into the bush around the school compound to pick wild fruits, under strict regulations. The two-hour period of relative freedom was a great relief from environmental boredom and harassment of seniors and bullies of colleagues. It

was a period where everyone enjoys the company of his close friends and towns mates. Everyone belongs to a group of pears; our group comprises of about seventeen children mainly my classmates and some from Dutse district. We shared not only our thoughts about life and the future but also share whatever fruit we collected, except if it is too small to be shared. Some of these members became close friends in later life, such as Justice Tijjani Abubakar Gwaram, Dr. Aminu Yakasai, Barrister Muhammad Rabi'u Yakasai, Barrister Abdullahi Mahmud Koki, and many others.

When we reached our final year, life in the school became more challenging and interesting, as we no longer fear anyone except our teachers. Even our prefects were our classmates and age group, who are not necessarily superior to us physically or in intelligence. I was highly respected by my subordinates particularly from my hometown because of my generosity and support to their cause.

In our final year, my bed became a small rendezvous for many who want to share my special rich diet, sent every day from my aunts' house in the school compound. (Hawwa Nini) was my father's first cousin married to our class teacher (Malam Adamu Minjibir) and our Housemaster at Birnin-Kudu House? This was the compound I stayed throughout my boarding years in the school. Everyone was fond of Malam Adamu because of his patience and piety towards students. He was the most respected teacher in the school at that time. His wife was a little different in temperament. She was quick in judgment, impatient with explanations and reacts to relatively small issues, never the less she was generous to a fault.

I developed a good relationship with my teachers and was very polite to the non-academic staff. Our Headmasters late Malam Sule Gaya [Sarkin Fadan Kano] and his successor Malam Mahmud Koki were products of strict colonial upbringing dedicated to their jobs, and orderly in their behaviors. When Sule Gaya won an election to the Northern House of Assembly in 1958, Muhammadu Koki took over from him as the new Headmaster. Sule Gaya rose to the position of a Minister (MP) of Local government in Northern Nigeria Government. Many others who taught us during the three-year period, notably Malam Adamu Minjibir, Malam Wada Kura, Malam Iliyasu Wudil, Malam Adamu Gadama, Malam Zakari Kofar Mata, Malam Adamu Gwaram, Malam Nuhu Kurawa, and others were professional teachers who were dedicated to the profession.

Frightening Moments

"The true mystery of the world is the visible, not the invisible" Oscar Wilde

One of the momentous days in 1959 was the day we observe the eclipse of the sun. We received warnings about two weeks before the event by our geography teacher and later radio broadcasts, warning people not to look directly into the sun as that may cause permanent damage to their vision. Many Ignorant people denied any

eclipse will happen while those that accepted that it could happen believed it will be the final day since it was happening on a Friday. Several rumors were circulating depending on the level of their understanding of the phenomenon which had been clarified by Islamic scholars for more than a thousand years.

My keen interest in astronomy made me very aware of the realities but was afraid to explain to people in the town for fear of been branded ungodly or a liar. Nevertheless, I told my host family not to panic, as the eclipse is a result of the moon coming in between the sun and our earth casting its shadow on a limited area of the earth.

Many people were hilarious on the due date, the mosque was full to its capacity, the market was empty, and the only audible sound in the praise of God everywhere in the town chanting in chorus [La-ila-ha-ill-Allah] God is the Greatest. For me, it was an opportunity to observe possibly once in a lifetime event and to further confirms my conviction of the universal phenomenon. I bought dark glasses for three pence in the market and took my notebook to a relatively quiet location in the school compound to make a sketch of my observations. I later shared my notes with a pen pal in the United States of America, who later sent me a gift of a small telescope to encourage me to study astronomy.

Discussing the event with my mother later, told me that she witnessed this event in 1947 when I was just two years old. She narrated the pandemonium in Yar'gaba village. She said mothers carried their infants on their backs and held the older ones by their hands not knowing where to go for safety. The men and elderly frantically congregated in the only village mosque to seek forgiveness. The younger children went around wondering around in the village in great shock and fear beating drums to wade off the fear of the consequences.

Guidance and Counseling

"All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence, and then success is sure". Mark Twain

In the last quarter of our senior primary school days, a few institutions wishing to recruit or enlist us into the various post-primary institutions from craft or technical to clerical visited us. One of those visits was by the commandant Boys Company Zaria was my first experience of listening to a lecture delivered by an Englishman. It was difficult for most of us to understand what he was talking about, therefore was unable to enlist anyone from our class. Majority of us went into a regular secondary school or teachers' college, which are most familiar. Few seek to go into clerical and Paramedical schools. We took our general examination for two months to our graduation and interviewed one month after the examination for various schools.

Disconcerting time

"Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside them was superior to circumstances" Bruce Barton

I reached puberty in the later part of 1959, with unprecedented physical growth. My height suddenly surged to about five feet six inches from my regular height of four feet nine inches in 1958. The psychological and emotional changes have somewhat affected my outlook and goals in life. On the one hand, I would like to continue with my education, on the other I was contemplating seeking a job and getting married. When I finally convinced myself to go to secondary school, I was unsuccessful at the interview due to my height. The average height required for secondary school was four feet six inches; anyone taller than the maximum height required will be sent to teacher training college. Many of us over that height tried to deceive the interviewer by bending a little backward or forward to fit into the measured requirement. For those wishing to go to teacher training and do not have the requisite height will try to raise their heels as they lean against the wall.

I was not in either list to go to teacher training college or any other institution when the result was out. I was aggravated by the jubilations of some classmates who secured admissions of their choices. I went to my aunt in tears to explain my predicament hoping that her husband (Malam Adamu Minjibir) will intervene. He summoned me at his office and said to me, I am saddened with the outcome of your result, but never lose hope in Allah's mercy. Initially, I accepted the verdict with great pleasure because my mind suddenly settled on the last option of seeking a pupil teacher job like my senior brother whose impressive salary of £12 a month was adequate to for decent living in rural areas. I was calculating what £12 could buy and how much I could save in six years when my classmates would graduate from secondary school. The other side of my mind again keeps telling me that those classmates going to secondary school will not only earn more money after the six years; but also, be my bosses in the future. These thoughts made me change my mind very quickly thought of going home to plead with my father to intervene by presenting my case to the Kano Education Administrators for a review.

When I returned home to break the sad news, my mother's reaction was supportive. She says to me not to despair Allah knows what is best for everyone; you should put your trust in him alone, as temporary setbacks do not prevent success in life. I tried to pretend that I have no problem starting over, but emotionally my physical appearance shows how disturbed I was. I had all reasons to feel aggrieved because my grades throughout my years were above average and many of those that found admission into secondary and teacher training could not match my academic performance. I was in my heart frightened to meet my father, who has done so much for me to get a good education; yet I must face him with the bad news. For a few days, I avoided him, and he sensed that something is wrong and wanted to know why I have not been able to see him.

My mother first approached him, explained to him my situation, and begged him to take it easy with me as I was in a distressed situation. When I finally met with him,

he asked me to give him my previous report results, which he presented to Kano Education Authority Chief (Malam Ahmadu Daura) who assured him that he would do something about my admission into a secondary school. He further assured my father that my academic performance was above average, but my height was four inches above maximum height required for secondary school and two inches short of the required height for teacher's college. However, the real reason for such strict admission procedures I later discovered was that there were only two post-primary institutions in the whole Kano province serving four senior primary schools each with an output of sixty students.

The Kano Native Authority was under great pressure to find some additional post-primary schools and expatriate teachers to operate them, within their limited resources. The regional government had approved its 1960 budget only the upgrading of Birnin Kudu Senior Primary School to Secondary School in Kano province as against the two applied by the Native Authority for partial support. The Native Authority had to find its own financial solution if it decides to establish another one at Gwarzo.

The Kano Native Authority budgetary allocations to Education even though a large percentage, could not finance new buildings, and still be able to provide teachers' salaries and education materials. The decision taken by Kano Native Authority to convert two of the four senior primary schools in the province to secondary schools was necessitated by the expansion in the primary schools' intake of the early fifties. While the regional government supported Birnin kudu with expatriate staff, the Native Authority administered school at Gwarzo was not so lucky. Its immediate problem was not only limited to the serious shortage of qualified teachers but also accommodation for staff and students which the resources of the Native Authority could not support.

I was unlucky to be included in the Gwarzo list, which barely two years into school calendar was forced to abort in 1962 because the Kano Native Authority went into bankruptcy and unable to pay salaries of its staff. The Regional Government commission an inquiry into the Native Authority finances and found that the Kano Native Authority had only six thousand pounds in its account and indebted to the tune of more than five hundred thousand pounds. Its monthly salaries alone were in excess of sixty-five thousand pounds. The situation became so critical leading to the deposition of the Emir of Kano Sir Muhammadu Sanusi early in 1963. The Education Authority could not pay teachers' salaries let alone provide us with our educational requirements including feeding; we became one of the first casualties of the bankruptcy.

The two years we spent at Gwarzo was merely a waste of our time, as we lack the quality of staff to bring us to the required standard. Our principal Malam Mijinyawa Aliyu was a fresh Post Graduate Diploma in Education holder from London, while

all the others held Grade two teachers Certificates, equivalent of secondary school certificates. When the school failed to provide us with academic challenges, many of my colleagues resorted to truancy leading to clashes between the student body and the school authority.

One of such incidences was our collective decision to go to Kano and report our predicaments to the higher authorities. We left Gwarzo very early in the morning, headed straight to the Education Office, and lodged our complaints setting out conditions if we are to return to the school. The education authority promised immediate recruitment of qualified teachers and teaching materials. This promise never materialized, as the Kano Native Authority could not afford to finance such requirements. Two years into our secondary years, some of us decided to look for other schools, while a few opted for employment elsewhere.

Life at Gwarzo post-primary was very turbulent, full of anxieties and life challenges within the larger society and us. We were beginning to assume our role as adults, but society still recognized us as children. When Nigeria was celebrating its independence, we were gradually losing our freedom to be ourselves. The frustrations of not knowing our future and peer pressures made me pick up cigarettes smoking along with my close friends as an escape mechanism. This vice will remain with me until my graduation from university in 1971, after attending a lecture in New York about the dangers of cigarette smoking.

One of the good lessons I learned in Gwarzo, however, was honesty and integrity. The school authority operated honesty shop where any student can open the door of the school shop located adjacent to the principal's office, purchase whatever, and leave the money on the counter. The system worked well until it was forced to close for lack of classroom space. An appointed caretaker looks after the finances and was responsible for all purchases and stocks daily. He will submit the statements to the supervising officer in charge on stocktaking and for re-stocking. The moral lessons not only to myself but also to the entire school community were far-reaching as it was not simply teaching the difference between right and wrong but taught us the strength of character and discipline.

For many of us this was an honor code whereas community we learned to share a set of values that will not only make us lead a better life in the future but also inculcate in our minds the qualities required of future leaders.

Chapter Seven

Independence Celebrations

"Sometimes our lights go out but are blown into flame by another human being. Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this light". Albert Schweitzer

Within four years of Queen Elizabeth II's royal visit, I was granted another honor to attend the greatest event in Nigeria's history. I was chosen to represent our school at independence celebrations in Lagos on October 1, 1960. It was a great opportunity for me not only to attend the greatest event in Nigeria's history but also the opportunity to visit the Capital City of Nigeria. It was a moment when I expect to see Nigeria and its geography, its culture and more importantly its diverse people. Sitting in a third-class wagon of a locomotive train from Kano to Lagos, I felt most privileged as few Nigerians could afford the luxury of traveling by train from Kano to Lagos which costs up to one guinea [one pound one shilling] for first class passengers. The third class was the lowest class except if you are traveling on a goods train. My curiosity increases as we pass through cities and towns that I have heard of but never thought I will ever see in my life. We passed during the day familiar towns of Zaria and Kaduna and then into the Northern Nigeria's savannah region the towns of Mina and Ilorin which were culturally different from my home.

The City of Ibadan

"He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life". Muhammad Ali

City of Ibadan at night was terrific, watching from the window the place was crowded with bustling traffic that looks endless in a single lane on both sides of the train waiting for us to pass the railway crossings in the city. The vehicles were mainly two-doors black Taxis (Vauxhall cars) used as city cabs which the Western Regional Government introduces to serve the city. At the train station, more of such cars were waiting to pick up disembarking passengers lined up in a single row in front of the station entrance. To my recollection, there were no taxis anywhere in Northern Nigeria in 1960, except the Kano Native Authority Red City Buses. It was not surprising because Ibadan was at that time generally considered Africa's second most populous city after Cairo in Egypt. Compared to the cosmopolitan city of Kano Ibadan had a skyscraper and numerous networks of roads. Yet the difference between Northern cities and that of the western region was the level of environmental hygiene. The city of Ibadan was unfortunately filthy during the day and too noisy for my liking. What strikes me most was the lack of trees in the city exposing the rusty tin roofs that change the landscape from its rain forest looks to the arid region.

The City of Lagos

"Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it". Charles R. Swindoll

Lagos, as compared to Ibadan, was a much cleaner town except the mainland, which was very much like the city of Ibadan, but with dotted skyline along the marina. The streets linking Tinubu square considered the heart of Lagos, were illuminated with neon lights, water fountains splashing water with different rhythm and style for the independence celebrations. We found accommodation at Yaba in the suburban city a short distance away from the famous Carter Bridge the only link between the Lagos Island and the rest of Nigeria across the lagoon. My greatest fascination in Lagos was watching the ships streaming through the Apapa Harbor of different sizes. My first encounter with the sea at Bar Beach was most fascinating as I watch bathers floating on the giant waves splashing its water across the sandy beach. Since I have never learned how to swim, our caretaker advised us not to attempt to swim in the water. I watch with greater amusement several anglers in their dugout canoes battling the waves into the ocean to catch fish.

On our third day in Lagos, I took a ferry ride from Lagos marina to Apapa wharf a journey of approximately ten minutes either way for three pence return ticket. I sat with great amusement as the ferry's anchor removed for the commencement of the journey. After reaching the wharf, I curiously walked along the concrete pavement to watch train wagons offloading agricultural produce of groundnuts and cotton from the North by crane into the waiting ships. Many wooden crates leveled Lagos via Apapa were offloaded from the incoming ships along the concrete pavement and covered with tarpaulin, and some been loaded into the empty train wagons for onward journeys. I spent most of the day exploring the port and watching its activities because I am sure my teachers would ask me to describe my Lagos experience when I return home.

On the night of September 30, 1960, we gathered just before midnight at Tafawa Balewa Square where the final handing over of independence will take place. There were soldiers, police officers, students from all parts of Nigeria and the public dressed in ceremonial dresses as early as 7 pm loitering around the square. The euphoria of independence pervades everyone and every activity, an Ibo Youngman sitting by my side embraced me with a great bear hug when the union jack was lowered, and the national flag been raised. The entire crowd sang in Unison the new national anthem.

"Nigeria, we hail thee, our own dear native land.

Though, tribe and tongue may differ, in brotherhood we stand.

Nigerians all are proud to serve; our sovereign Motherland.

Our flag shall be a symbol that truth and justice reign.

In peace or battle honored and this, we count as gain.

To pass on to our children A banner without stain.

O God of all creation, Grant this our one request.

*Help us to build a nation, where no man is oppressed.
And so, with peace and plenty, Nigeria may be blessed."*

The crowd roared exultantly, and then the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra a beautiful young woman read the Queen's speech in queens English, followed by the golden voice of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa the Nigerian Prime Minister in his famous "Today is Independence Day address." This is an occasion when our hearts are filled with conflicting emotions: we are, indeed, proud to have achieved our independence, and proud that our efforts should have contributed to this happy event. But our pride for arrogance was tempered by feelings of sincere gratitude to all who have shored in the task of developing Nigeria politically, socially and economically.

On October 3rd, 1960 we set out for our journey back to Kano, but before we left Lagos, I went on shopping at the famous Kingsway Store along Marina, where I saw the first escalator and was my first time to be in a truly department store. The shop floors divided into different shops from groceries to household items to sports gears and many more. I took more than an hour exploring the store and looking at price tags. Eventually, I settled in buying some headscarf and perfumes for my mother, turban materials for my father, and assorted chocolates for my siblings.

Black and White Television

"Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all". Dale Carnegie

While in the store, I was amazed to see for the first time black and white television sets on display. The sales clerk dressed in a white robe was describing to several audiences how it works and what is needed for its installation. The following years, in March 1963, the Northern Nigerian Government commissioned its own television station in Kaduna, which telecasts also in black and white to a limited number of cities mainly Kaduna, Zaria, and Kano. The programs were local news, entertainments, and foreign documentaries that, usually telecast between 6 pm and 9 pm every day.

The only public viewing center in Kano was the central office opposite Emir's Place. Many people young and old will congregate in the open space as early as 5 pm to find an ideal viewing position as the screen was about nine inches square. As the sun sets, the signature tune will play for some time before the commencement of the program. The newscasters are encouraged to wear a non-white uniform for easy viewing.

The train journey back to Kano was not as interesting, because the train was full of several people hanging on the isles and on wagon steps. Several pickpockets and cheats were busy in operation throughout day and night. I was hanging on to my possessions throughout the journey even when visiting the toilet. Several passengers

lost their money and belongings because of their dubious activities; I was only relieved when we finally arrived at Kano terminal. I was full of stories to tell my friends and family who listened on the radio the memorable events of significant historical value.

US-AID Project

"Being defeated is often a temporary condition. Giving up is what makes it permanent". M. V. Savant

On the first anniversary of Nigeria's Independence Day in 1961, a friend came to our unhappy circumstances at Gwarzo from Kano, with the good news that the American Government has entered into a bilateral agreement with the Northern Nigerian Government that may be of great interest to us and a solution to our predicament. Under the agreement, the Northern Nigerian Government will allow the US Government to set up a NASA tracking station in Kano in exchange for providing much-needed teacher training institution. The US will build, equip, and operate the College through US AID program. We rushed to Kano after the holidays and were lucky to meet someone at the Education Department who has the full details of the admission procedures. We picked up application forms and submitted them the following day to his office. One month after the interview, the results placed me in the third position out of one hundred and twenty students admitted.

We started our studies at a temporary site behind Gwale Veterinary hospital in the old city. The northern regional ministry of education posted the initial staff and one year later twenty-eight Americans from Ohio University joined the existing staff of two British, one Canadian, one Indian, and two Nigerians. The academic atmosphere provided by the college makes learning easy and pleasurable. We have at our disposal in addition to the qualitative staff, a well-stocked library, a language and science laboratories. Our curriculum was a mixture of American High school and British Grammar school. At the end of our six-year term, we attained a broad base education on the American model.

In October 1963, Emir Muhammad Inuwa Abbas, the person who succeeds Emir Sir Muhammad Sanusi after his deposition died and was succeeded by his nephew Ambassador Ado Bayero. Kano once more was alive with a young and progressive Emir, whose attitude towards rulership was a remarkable departure from traditional norms. For example, it was unthinkable to until then to see an Emir at cinema houses or seen to be driving himself in a private car. His new approach to life as an emir coupled with his youthful looks endured him to the youth and the radical politicians. Barely, forty-two days into this mood, we received the terrible news of the assassination of the American President John F. Kennedy on the evening of 22 November 1963. Considering what we went through at Gwarzo Post Primary School as a result of Kano Native Authority's bankruptcy, we were terrified by the

possibility of closing our college should the next American president decides to cancel the treaty that created our college. Our teachers tried to assure us of the future amidst confusion and despair. We kept hoping that our educational future would not be in jeopardy by the new administration of President Lynden Johnson.

Early in January of 1964, an august visitor the president of Ohio University Professor Emeriti Vernon Alden came to visit us with the good news that the project life extended to 1973. The college authority will set an examination to select sixty students to continue with the grade two teachers' program while the remaining sixty students will graduate after the third year with grade three teachers' certificates to fill the vacancies in the newly created primary schools. We were further assured that those of us with exceptional aptitude will start a pre-degree program, after our graduation as grade two teachers at the end of the six-year period.

There was great jubilation for many of us with the required academic record; now the future suddenly becomes clearer and hopeful. I sat up my mind to excel in my studies to reach the ultimate level that the opportunity provides. I was confident, that I would be among the best three out of the one hundred and twenty students taking the promotion examination. When the result came out, I was in the fourteenth position, but this did not deter me, nor does it affect my outlook for the future.

It was a thriving period for me and some of my colleagues. My mind was stimulated and reinforced in physics, Mathematics and Geography classes, while I had above average grades in English language, History, and Educational psychology. In my quest for knowledge of the universe, I was a very regular visitor to the school library and a member of the British Council Library along Emirs' Palace Road in the city. I used the two Libraries quite frequently and had a strong desire to read and explore non-fiction materials. I acquired speed-reading skills from our English master Dr. Mien-hold and was able to read several books in many subjects and comprehend the message with ease despite my initial weakness in the language.

We were paid £3.5s.0d [Three pounds five shillings] a month as pocket money to cover our accommodation and feeding expenses as day students. Throughout our six years, neither the value nor the commodity prices have noticeably changed. The only time our purchasing power drops would be because of fines imposed for breaking school rules. The fines reciprocate the severity of the offense, usually from sixpence to two shillings. It was very difficult to escape any of the finalities, as professional offenders, unusually try to trick unwilling persons, particularly in smaller offenses such as talking in class. I have managed my small resources and lived quite comfortable in a two-room apartment that has a small back yard to park my motorcycle and do small gardening.

During that period, there were only three government-run Post Primary Schools in Kano metropolitan; the Provincial Secondary School British based educational system, the Kano Teachers' College based on the American, and the School for

Arabic Studies, Arab-Islamic based. The schools were remarkably different in their orientation, outlook, and dissemination of knowledge based on three distinct and competing systems. For instance, our contemporaries at the British oriented secondary school place great emphasis on rote memories and fully proud of their educational upbringing and curriculum; those at the School for Arabic Studies place greater emphasis in spiritual and moral life of society; while at Kano Teachers' College, we were encouraged not to memorize but to understand. The most common advice from our teachers did not study too hard but just understand the principles. It became a cliché "don't study at all just pay attention to class work" by students who do not want to study.

In other words, while the British curriculum encourages purely academic exercises regardless of their relevance to the environment; the American encourages understanding of the immediate environment; while the Arabic or Islamic place greater emphasis in the moral and spiritual development of the individual over all other considerations.

Tempestuous Nation

"Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strength. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength". Mahatma Gandhi

During the first five years of our independence, Nigeria went through turbulent socio-political and economic tensions occasioned by several conflicts. Malam Aminu Kano the leader of Northern Elements Progressive Union a registered National party was a regular visitor to our school and kept us abreast with happenings in the Regional Assembly in Kaduna and the Federal Parliament in Lagos. He enlisted several students in our school and rhetorically widen our horizon in political education through informal meetings and revolutionary works of literature. One day while he was conducting such informal lectures in our school, I asked him why he thinks Northern Nigerian traditional institution was a surrogate of Colonial Lords and the institution of the Sultan and Emirs was inimical to modernity and democracy. He replied Youngman; do not divert our attention from realities. Are you in any doubt of the misappropriations, corruption, injustice, and nepotism, in the Native Authorities? Are you oblivious to the sufferings of the Talakawa meted by the feudal lords in flagrant abuse of human rights in your village? Or are you not aware of the violence against Talakawa to force them to abandon opposition of the tyrannical Fulani aristocratic establishment? He said to the thunderous crowd of students (Power to the People) in a high tone and in anger. He continued "As to why I am here today is a similitude of a farmer, your school as the farm, and you as the crops, if I do not tender and nurture your minds now, the aristocratic environment would contaminate your thoughts as future leaders to the destruction of your future and the country". He was referring to the conservative aristocratic establishment of

the Northern People's Congress. Gradually, his consistent visits indoctrinated many of us into joining the resistance (NEPU) as active members. I registered in the youth brigade [Rundunar Samarin Sawaba] and later became its secretary one year later. However, when my father discovered my involvement in opposition political activities, he discouraged me to save his job and integrity in the face of his bosses. Even after I reduced my involvement in active politics, I continued to attend covert political meetings and public lectures.

Political Crisis

"A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself". Joseph Campbell

The national election in 1965 brought about more dissatisfaction and acrimony among the political class leading to many events that changed Nigeria and Nigerians forever. The Prime Minister Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa addresses the Commonwealth Conference in Lagos amidst tension and violence in the Western region. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the first Premier of Western Nigeria was, sentenced to life imprisonment on treasonable felony charges. The Northern Nigerian premier Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello was becoming too domineering in the political arena nationally, and his political enemies were fast becoming more insecure. In the Eastern region, the Premier Dr. Michael Okpara was facing resistance from the ethnic minorities on the river delta region. The Awolowo supporters of Action Group accused Chief Samuel Akintola [Western Region Premier] of being a Northern stooge, whom the North uses to fight Western regional interest.

Amidst these serious political crises, a second national election result which favored the ruling party which was contested by the opposition parties as not been credibly free and fair. The ruling party (NPC) won a substantial majority in the North with marginal success in the Western and Eastern regions through alliances. The Akintola faction in the Western region captured the heart of (Action Group) territories that sparked riots, forcing the Federal Government to declare a state of emergency in the entire Western region.

First Military Coup

"Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs are people who have come alive". Harold Whitman

In the early morning of January 15, 1966, the nation woke up with the sad news of several assassinations of democratically elected political leaders mainly Northerners, and their perceived sympathizers in the military. The success of the coup encourages anti-Northern propaganda by the southern press to humiliate the Northerners who dominated the political scene for five years. The new leaders tried

to end the perceived Northern political domination by a unification decree number 32. The announcement by General Agui Ironsi on May 27, 1966, was viewed by Northerners as a premeditated plan to dismantle Northern political dominance by transferring political and administrative power to central government.

Our student union leader now Professor emeritus Dandatti Abdulkadir called for a demonstration tagged (Aware) on May 27, 1966, seeking the abrogation of the decree as a pre-condition. We met a day earlier on May 26, at the old Bayero College Campus near the old Kano Airport to decide on our resolve to break away from the Nigerian federation if the decree is not abrogated. We wrote letters to notable northern leaders including Malam Aminu Kano, Sir Kashim Ibrahim, Joseph Tarka, Aliyu Makaman Bida, Michael Abdu Buba, and the Sultan of Sokoto. We did not wait for their replies, the next morning we headed for the Emirs' palace in Kano and handed over our letter of protest to the Sultan through the Senior Councilor Madakin Kano Ahmad. We proceeded through Kofar Nasarawa towards the provincial office to hand over another letter to the Governor through the provincial commissioner. Unknown to us a gang of young people from the market area were waiting for us at the railway crossing and started throwing stones at the contingent of riot police stationed at the railway crossing to guide our procession. The Police responded by tear gassing what was meant to be a peaceful protest now turned into a riot against Easterners mainly of Ibo extraction. It was a terrible day of revenge killings that resulted in the death of hundreds of innocent people. The crisis continued throughout major northern cities and counter attack of northerners in the eastern region. Our student's union dispatched members on May 29, 1966, to go to several towns to plead with the local communities to stop the carnage. We organized lectures in schools and several places to calm tempers and reconcile our mutual suspicion with our fellow citizens. Our team of six students traveled to Malumfashi, Funtuwa, and Gusau on 31, May despite the curfew imposed on most Northern cities, the turnout in those towns was quite impressive.

The great damage to relationships between the Hausas and their traditional political allies the Ibo and the other minority southern tribes has its root in the 1966 military coup. Each group blaming the other for starting the crisis, but whoever is responsible is not the issue. Nigeria is one of the few countries in the world to fight a civil war and reconcile within the shortest possible time. General Yakubu Gowon would go in history as a great leader that created the policy of no winner no vanquish. Other countries such as Ireland, Cyprus, and Columbia that were at war the same time with Nigeria are still at reconciling stage.

Teacher Training

"Education is not filling a bucket but lighting a fire". William Yeats

The year 1966 was our graduation year and was, unfortunately, a year full of uncertainties, anxieties, and frustrations throughout the country. The prospect of a civil war suddenly diminished our ambition for brighter educational opportunities and hope of attending higher institutions of learning. We graduated that year, and I was lucky to be among the only five students that qualified for the grade two teachers' certificate throughout Kano province. I was then faced with the dilemma of going for further studies outside my chosen profession or venture into an unknown future.

I was born after World War II, and have several childhood friends nicknamed Hitler, Churchill, or even Joji after King George as part of a Hausa tradition of naming people after big events. My childhood ambition was to become a pilot or soldier so that I would have the opportunity to see the world, but my family and particularly my mother were not in favor and always discouraged me. My wild idea of military adventure often frightens my mother even though sometimes I do so to tease her. Regardless of my mother's sensibility, I pursued my ambition by exploring ways of joining the Air force. The opportunity came when we received admission forms from the Kano Air force Commander's Office for pilot training to meet the war requirements. I understand the feelings of my family members towards military service particularly in wartime, yet I was hesitant to consult anyone until after the interview a few weeks later. When the news broke out, they were visibly unhappy and asked me to reconsider my plans and go for higher training in the university instead. In view of the political situation in the country at that time, coupled with family pressure not to join the military, I deliberately failed the examination to please my family.

I took up a teaching job and was posted to teach at Warure primary school in the city as a classroom teacher. This was a one-year mandatory requirement for enrollment into the NCE program. I took the entrance examination into Advanced Teachers' College Kano my alpha matter in June of 1967 and had no difficulty passing the written examination and the interview, as most of the teachers were my teachers at the Kano Teachers College. Unfortunately, I was not on the list of admitted students for the physics majors. When I complained to the Principal Professor Albert Ogunshola, he advised me to change and major in Geography, which still has two vacancies. Out of frustration, I declined his suggestion and returned to teaching job until the following year 1968.

During that year, a new Principal Dr. Timothy Afolayan replaced Ogunshola as the new Principal. He introduced two additional major subjects of study Accounting and Economics. The Program attracted my attention for several reasons, but most importantly my close friends Isma'ila Usman, Bashir Umar, Sani Said, Abdullahi

Mahmud, and Abubakar Rano were all students of Accounting in various institutions. I was fortunate to gain admission into the program despite my lack of relevant experience in these subjects. Mr. Dada the head of the program interviewed me and encouraged me to take these courses, which he said has great potential in the future particularly for a Kano man. He understood the commercial opportunities of Kano where trade was thriving occupation yet there were few accountants. He told me by following this course of study, I would be able to double my job opportunities.

Chapter Eight

Anxiety and optimism

"Peace is the beauty of life. It is sunshine. It is the smile of a child, the love of a mother, the joy of a father, the togetherness of a family". It is the advancement of man, the victory of a just cause, the triumph of truth. Menachem Begin

The mass movement of Ibos to the eastern region in 1967, as a result of the civil war, has created a serious vacuum in the commercial life of Kano. The Sabon Gari market, which previously been dominated by Ibo traders, has become a ghost of its own self. Wartime shortages of many consumer items have created spiral inflation, while resources available to government diverted into war efforts. My friends and I decided to organize lectures and seminars for local businesspersons to take advantage of the circumstances and expand their businesses.

The response to our call was overwhelming, particularly the support we received from the Kano State Ministry of Trade. Our first lecture was at the Rex Cinema opposite the Sabon Gari market that attracted thousands of small businesspersons eager to learn how to form Partnerships and Limited Liability Companies. Our group worked with several businesses daily and organized their accounts and legal status. Within a few years, many of such businesses blossomed and some of them later became conglomerates.

A classic case in point was the Kano merchants trading company, which metamorphosed into the IRS group, an industrial giant that had several million-dollar turnovers in the early 1980s. The group owned several industrial outfits ranging from textiles to soft drinks, sugar processing, suitcase manufacturing, and vehicle assembly, vegetable oil processing, commodity-trading, and shipping company. Its charismatic and dynamic chairperson Alhaji Isyaku Rabi'u and his son Nafi'u Rabi'u as Managing Director were very amiable to advise and always believed in their staff to achieve results. Their confidence in professional advice and by delegating substantial powers and responsibilities to the management led to the phenomenal growth of the group.

Advanced Teacher Training (ABU)

"The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of awakening it afterward" Anatole France

The college has just moved to its new site from Gwale, with the state-of-the-art facilities properly staffed and donated to the Nigerian people by the United States government. An Italian architect, who understood our local environmental conditions, designed the college buildings to look and feel like giant African huts. It was a masterpiece architecturally and inspiring academically.

I started my advanced certificate program in Business studies, which was an entirely new field for me. Besides my two major subjects, accounting and economics, I took general science and shorthand and typing as auxiliary subjects. Although I devoted most of my time into studying the majors, I was equally enthusiastic in learning the minor subjects. The psychological effects of the civil war during the years 1967-1970 was too overbearing for me as a young man; particularly the loss of several close friends that joined the military. I lived throughout the war years in fear of uncertainty of my future ambition of reaching the highest level in my carrier, but I continued my studies as if the war has little or no consequences on my future.

Getting Married

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart". Helen Keller

In Hausa tradition, it is the responsibility of parents to provide accommodation for their male children in their first marriage. Our father divided his house number 416 at Indabawa quarters in the old city of Kano into two and allocate one piece to my elder brother and the other piece to me in preparation for my marriage. I have no idea who will be my first wife because I was considered too young and inexperienced to assess the status of a girl's family. One day my aunt indicated to me that it might be one of my distant maternal cousins. True to her speculations one day, my father instructed me to travel to Kaduna to meet my proposed wife, a second cousin and a daughter of a senior civil servant. Initially, everything went well with our parents leading to the formal consummation of marriage on condition that she will finish her secondary school education before taking up matrimonial duties. A few months later, I was under pressure to get another wife, because it will be another five years before she completes her education. The tension between our families was growing by the day, and nobody wants to back down on his stand. Eventually, the marriage ended in divorce even before the formal ceremony.

A few months later I was asked to meet with the daughter of my father's close associate Alhaji Musa Gumel at Kofar Nasarawa even that did not work out the way our parents would wish. The idea died even before my second meeting with the girl. My parents again approached another famous family [Raban Garko] another friend of my father, to marry anyone of his daughters to me. One Sunday evening I was asked to go into the Emirs palace Kano and meet with my new suitor, who was staying with her aunt. The meeting took only a few minutes, as both of us have no control over our choices of life partners. A few months later, I was married to her formally and the ceremony followed a few months later.

The idea of all, customary arranged marriages consummated as early as possible was not to allow the young adults the privilege of wider choice for easy match. My chosen spouse was barely twelve years old just finishing primary school when the

marriage knot was made. She was too young to take any marital responsibilities, but since our parents consented to this arrangement, we have no option but to comply. She was constantly on the run between my house and her parents until I permitted her to continue with her education. I encouraged and supported her by enrolling her into a six-year boarding teacher-training program at Women Training College Kano, in order to satisfy my parents, desire to see me married. While she was pursuing her education, I was free to concentrate on charting my future goals and objectives.

Scholarship Award

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you imagined". H.D. Thoreau

My twin desires for travel and scholarship have always been my greatest ambition in life and therefore have not allowed anything to interfere with my dream to travel abroad for higher education. The end of the civil war in 1970 re-enforces my thirst for admission into an American university. I sat for the admission test into Ohio University in the same week I was completing my National Certificate examinations. The results of both examinations gave me the confidence to pursue my dream goals. I applied for a state scholarship to go for a Bachelor of Science in Finance in 1970 and granted after a series of interviews with the Scholarship Board and written verifications from Nigerian Universities that the course was not available locally. My interest in further Education has attracted me to several American, British, Japanese, and Canadian research fellows working in Kano. I was particularly close to Professor John Paden, Dr. John Chamberlain, Professor Philip Shea, Professor Philip Jaggar, and Professor Shuji Masuishita among others. I worked with all of them as an interpreter, and a friend in the neighborhood. My association with these men has further re-enforced my desire for an academic scholarship.

Departure to London

"Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become the character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny". Frank Outlaw

Few weeks before departure date September 12, 1971, to the United States of America, I was once more in a great dilemma of leaving my young wife and my parents for an extended period. I spent quite some time pondering on several family issues, but surprisingly my mother and the rest of the family were solidly supportive by encouraging me to leave things to sort them out. The scholarship board has generously awarded \$8,000 as feeding and accommodation allowance per academic year in addition to a local allowance in Nigeria (£2:10s) per month payable into my account. I left this amount for my mother as pocket money while I was away.

One week to departure date, I was given a docket to present to Nigeria Airways booking office in Kano where I met an old classmate in primary school at the

ticketing office. He suggested a longer route to enable me to visit more places at government expense. The flight air ticket reads Kano, Rome, London, New York, Washington DC, and Cincinnati, from where I will take a bus to Athens Ohio campus. We left Kano at 12.00 hours on 12 September 1971 on a Boeing 707 Nigeria Airways flight to London via Rome, barely twenty-two months after similar aircraft on route London, Kano, Lagos crashed at the vicinity of Lagos killing eighty-seven passengers and crew. Several members of my family came to the airport to bid me farewell. It was a moment that will remain in my life when I saw my father shedding tears as he blessed me and warned me not to divert my attention from my studies.

I had a window seat, giving me the advantage to see and watch the vast landscape of the Sahara Desert. After four hours in the air, the sand dunes and barren mountains of the Sahara gave way to the Mediterranean Sea and later to the beautiful landscape of Italian shores. We landed at Rome airport and allowed to disembark for one hour while waiting for Rome passengers to disembark. My impression of the Italians was based on my high school history of the Holy Roman Empire. I expected to see Italians as very rugged individuals whose main occupation is work and worship; to the contrary, even their language sounded to me very romantic.

The sun was setting on a clear spring day over the red-roofed city of Rome when we embarked on our second leg of the journey to London. We took off and headed for London over the Alps mountain and then over the English Channel. As we approached the city of London, skyline the bright orange lights looked from the air so spectacular that I thought it was a dream. I fixed my eyes on the traffic movement below and kept wondering what is like to live in such an environment of abundance and affluence.

When I left Nigeria, it was coming out of the civil war and arrived in London a few days after IRA bombing. The airport officials were courteous but very thorough in their work. A potter jokingly asked me if I were going to Northern Island because my bag seems too heavy for its size.

My two close friends studying in London met me at Heathrow Airport and took me through my hotel room. Malam Isma'ila Usman was my role model and embodiment of honor, integrity, and honesty, and Malam Abdullahi Mahmud who was in London earlier than Isma'ila was in his third year of ACCA at a North London College. I had a transit visa and my connecting carrier The British Airways provided a one-night accommodation at The Trust House Forte Hotel adjacent to the Airport. I checked in and had barely a few hours to see London at night. We took a bus to the nearest underground train station known as [Tube Station] Hans low West, to central London. The brief night tour enables me to see a few places in central London including the Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, and Piccadilly Circus before we had our dinner at a student's hostel. I returned to my Hotel at around midnight and the following morning the airline sent a bus to transport us back to the airport.

My first impression of London after the brief night tour was that it is a fascinating city, which spreads out for a vast distance, a labyrinth of streets, narrow and wide, houses that all look alike, well equipped small shops, little green parks punctuated with church spires, and long rows of smoking chimneys.

Final lag Journey to the USA

"The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences, and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon, for each day to have a new and different sun"
Christopher-McCandless

On the morning of 13 September at 10hours, we took off from London Heathrow on a Boeing 747 British Airways flight to New York. The seven-hour flight was full but quite comfortable as we flew across the Atlantic Ocean. It was my first real experience of time zone. We learned in High School geography that heading west you gain time, heading east you lose time. We left London 10hours and arrived at New York JFK International Airport 14hours same day. We circled over the city suburbs, Queens, and Bronx, Brooklyn and a fantastic view on the right side of the aircraft was the skyline of Manhattan looking downwards was like flying over a cluster of anthills. It was a fascinating view, which engages my mind for some time as to its reality or just my imagination. Before then the tallest building I have ever seen was the center point in London's Oxford Street. Here the same building will go unnoticed among the very tall high-rise buildings clustered in a strip of a peninsular not more than three miles wide, but several miles long.

After going through the customs formalities, we boarded a bus that will transfer us to LaGuardia domestic airport on our next journey to Washington DC. When I was leaving Kano, a research fellow friend John War Chamberlain has given me his hand-written Ph.D. dissertation to deliver to his mother in law Mrs. Kreszner, who will meet me at LaGuardia Airport New York. I phoned her from JFK to let her know my arrival and she was to meet me and pick the documents before my next flight. We chose LaGuardia Airport because of its proximity to the city and her home at 95 Cabrini Boulevard in the Bronx district. It was easy for me to identify her as she was holding my name on a piece of card. I introduced my colleague who was traveling with me to Athens Ohio. She invited us for lunch at the Airport cafeteria where we discussed issues including our civil war experiences and general political situation in Nigeria.

While we were eating, a boarding announcement for our flight American Airlines Boeing 737 to Washington DC was made through the public address system and we quickly finished our Hamburgers and chips and headed to the departure gate. Throughout this flight, my eyes were fixed on the window viewing the beautiful American landscape and its intricate network of roads. It was a spectacle watching the traffic in all directions speeding on an eight-lane highway. Intermittently, the

clouds beneath will interfere with my vision but for a few moments until a descending announcement was made into Arlington National Airport now Ronald Reagan National Airport.

The airport was only a few miles from the downtown area, as the imposing structures of Capitol Hill were clearly visible as we landed on the runway. We took a taxi driven by a Nigerian who addresses himself as a Biafran to a small hotel on the 14th street. It was getting dark and my colleague was hungry. He went out to see what was available and brought with him a fried chicken that looks like our turkey back home. It was too soft and oily unlike our chickens at home. We managed to eat a small portion and dumped the remaining into a trashcan. We spent most of the night watching television from one channel to the other in sheer amazement of the quality of black and white pictures and the presentation of soft opera programs. It was my first time to see a documentary of wildlife in its habitat, tagged the untamed world. In the early morning, we sat for a buffet breakfast at the hotel cafeteria I absolute amazement of America's affluence. There were plenty of selections from cereals, eggs, meats, potato, milk, cheeses, fruits, and vegetables, which was a privilege at home. We pondered over the selection undecided for several minutes going around the vast table with greedy eyes holding our plates in our hands. Typical of our culture, we filled our plates to the brim with assorted foods occasionally asking the attendants to explain if a selection contains pork.

We checked out of our hotel rooms and headed for the airport on our final air journey to Athens Ohio. The flight was again on American Airlines to Cincinnati Northern Kentucky Airport our destination. Our greatest mistake from Kano was that we relied on our friend at the Nigeria Airways desk to find an airport closest to Athens Campus, and he chose for us Cincinnati instead of Columbus Ohio. We landed at Cincinnati Airport and took a bus to downtown across the bridge to a Greyhound bus terminal.

In view of the remoteness of Athens a small University town, we waited for a whole day at the bus station to catch our bus. We left Cincinnati at sunset and after several stops along the way; we were exhausted when we arrived in Athens at midnight, not knowing where to go. Waiting for a few minutes deciding what to do, we stopped a University Security patrol vehicle and requested for assistance. They took our luggage, loaded it in their car trunk, and drove us to temporary accommodation on the east green for the night.

Early in the morning, we headed for the admission office less than one kilometer away from where we slept. On our way, we had to wait for a moving train that pulled more than two hundred wagons took several minutes to pass. While waiting by the rail-roadside, a man behind us in his car driving towards the college green greeted us in Hausa "San'nun Ku" with an Ibo accent. Initially, we were afraid to respond, and he continued "Ina zakuje" we politely said to him that we are new students,

heading to register at the admission office. He opened the back-seat door on our side and said come in I will take you to a Hausa man on Campus. As soon as we get into the car, he asked sarcastically "how is the situation in Nigeria?" We were hesitant to say anything that might hurt his feelings; I reluctantly said to him "we hope things will get better". He tried to keep the conversation, but I kept giving him a one-word answer. Finally, he pulled his car in front of the foreign students' office at Burson House and took us right to the Director Dr. Jeff Wood who was at the reception desk talking to some group of foreign students. When we showed him our admission letters, he telephoned Dr. Zakari Kano, who was there many years earlier as a lecturer in Hausa language.

In a few minutes, a man appeared and greeted us in Hausa with a typical Kano accent "Barkan'ku da Zuwa" we responded "Ina Kwana" then the conversation continued for a few more minutes, mainly centered about the condition at home. He painstakingly took us along with him from admission, to academic, to finance, to accommodations offices. The whole process took three days to complete, including placement examinations that determine our educational level above the first two years of college. This technically places me two years ahead in my studies; giving me, a saving in my scholarship that could benefit me in my postgraduate studies without reference to my State government.

The Athens campus is one of the oldest public University campuses in the United States. Its parameter divided into areas suffixed Greens. The College Green is the oldest part of the campus. Its buildings and historic sites including the brick walkways and trees were part of the American education tradition. Most of the other academic and administrative buildings are in the North and West Greens, on the ridges or in the service center. University student residence halls were located on the East, South, and West Greens, while fraternities and sororities buildings were located on the College Street. At the heart of the campus is the gateway to the administrative block, the seven-floor Alden Library, and the Galbreath Chapel. The College Green entrance class gateway facing the Baker Center built in 1804 is the heart of campus activities. This gate has great significance to me personally; as it was the year, my great grandparents joined the Islamic revolution in support of their teacher Sheik Othman bin Fodiye. It was also the year Ohio University was established. Boldly displayed in marble at the College Green entrance is the American Education Ordinance of 1787 which states: -

"Religion, Morality, and Knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind; Schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

These wordings had a great impact on my life during my stay at the University and in later life for the Simple Reason that the wordings have great similarity to my

grandparents' reason for fighting the jihad. Sultan Muhammad Bello once said in a letter to Sarkin Gobir-

"Establishing true moral ideas through Religion, Knowledge, and Justice, is the major reasons for fighting the Jihad and we shall continue until our society is placed on the right path."

More importantly, it was like the parting words of my father at Kano Airport, when he asked me to seek knowledge in whatever form but, should always in my quest for personal achievements remember my obligation to God and the people of Kano State who made my scholarship possible.

During our familiarization seminars as foreign students at the Baker Center, I was introduced to a man named Adam Ali from Biu in North Eastern State who was a graduate student in economics. His support in my adjusting to the new environment particularly finding cheaper accommodation off campus helped me to save a substantial part of my small resources. He negotiated for me an accommodation with a Hungarian American family for a small room in their house for \$50 a month.

The head of the family Mr. Lazlo Krompecher was a professor in architecture in the University, whose family migrated from Europe during the Second World War, to Kentucky State. His wife Susan was an American Indian from the Appalachian area of southern Ohio. They have three children, Erica, Zoltan, and Bella. These children became my closest friends in their curiosity of having a black man and an African in their family.

I agreed with the family to share cooking, cleaning, and other domestic work to allow Susan to attend to her postgraduate studies. I was to cook on Tuesdays and Fridays, while Susan and her husband will cook on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays are cooking free days, to allow the family to go out for dinner, as was the practice in most American families. This arrangement worked very well for the two years I stayed with the family. I introduced to them many Hausa dishes and learned from the family some American and Hungarian dishes. House number 85 Sunnyside drive in the suburban area of Athens was ten to fifteen minutes' walk to campus depending on the weather condition.

Culture Shock in Yankee Country

"The grass is not always greener on the other side of the fence. Fences have nothing to do with it. The grass is greenest where is watered. When crossing over fences, carry water with you and tend the grass wherever you may be". Proverb

Academic and institutional education formed only one part of the knowledge and understanding I could find on distant shores. I chose to actively engage with people from all walks of life and I was open to the socio-cultural experiences that were found in the extra-curricular opportunities. I arrived in America during the most interesting times of the early seventies, which was considered the watershed of American post-war History in terms of industrial, economic, and political

development. American Industries were producing more while consumers were consuming more because the real per capita incomes rose to more than 32 percent in the '60s. To many Americans particularly the politicians saw such prosperity as a vindication of the free enterprise system.

In Agriculture as well as in agro-allied businesses new mechanical machines such as cotton, grapes, and tobacco pickers, revolutionize farming methods. The increased use of fertilizer, chemicals pesticides brought an about huge decrease in agricultural labor and a huge increase in output.

The first year was quite interesting, as I made up my mind to adapt myself to the American way, except things that my religion forbids. Apart from the differences in the food, which was my least problem, I had to learn and adapt very quickly the American English vocabularies, and grammar for obvious reasons. For example, day-to-day words like Hi! instead of Hello, Guy instead of bloke, Cool instead of nice, etcetera, but the real problem arises in class work where most of the time my professors hardly understand my spellings let alone my Nigerian English.

I found myself in the richest and most powerful country in the world. My mates in the university were referred to as the Baby Boomers, who unlike their parents were born in affluence; where majority of families own a house, have a second car, a washing machine, fitted kitchen, television set and many more; [heaven on earth] or the American Dream was the norm, not the exception.

Their children, on the other hand, were undergoing a cultural revolution called the "Hippie" counterculture. Young children from middle- and upper-class families were revolting against what their parents hold as the goal of life. Majority of young Americans in colleges throughout the United States during that material time were protesting materialism. Many were drug addicts, from simple marijuana to hard drugs. There was no formal dress in classrooms or anywhere on the campuses, as that was considered conservatism or pro-establishment. Everyone is in competition as to how dirty or how many patches there were in your clothes.

Several non-conformist organizations were springing up everywhere in the United States as a protest to the affluent members of society who ignored evidence of poverty in the inner cities of America. While the mainly white middle class move to suburban areas, the inner cities were merely ghettos for the poor mainly Blacks and Hispanics, who form about 13 percent of the population.

The unprecedented military spending of the 60 stimulated rapid advances in the electronics industry. From the transistor in the 50's, to the computer revolution; the silicon microchip- "a computer on chip" in the 60's that facilitated the shift from heavy manufacturing to "high tech" industries in fiber optics, laser, video equipment, robotics and genetic engineering, creating unemployment among many unskilled workforces.

I have always until then associated happiness with material acquisition, as depicted in James Bond and other western movies. The opportunity of meeting many young affluent students, I realize that they are most insecure mentally, and spiritually bankrupt. The total effects of pursuing material wealth have created a large puncture in the moral and ethical fabrics of their society.

The America I met was a land of contradiction. America's poor were the most underprivileged poor on earth because of materialism or the American Dream. Gay rights, Women liberation, Black struggle, are manifestations of the pressure of oppression of the weak in society by the most powerful and richest men and women in American society. The poor live in misery because the great majority of the nation sees itself as been "affluent" while they dropped out of the minds of comfortable suburbanites. Athens is part of the Appalachian Mountains, and its inhabitants were mainly poor farmers and coal miners. It does not take much time to discover the agonies of the American poor as I ventured out into the countryside, and inner cities of Columbus Ohio and Charleston West Virginia making friends with many of the poor families.

Between 1966 and 1968, many American cities exploded in race riots, leading to the setting up of National Advisory Commission on Civil disorders; whose report blames white racism for the riots. The nation was rapidly towards two separate Americas; "a white society principally located in suburbs, and a Negro society largely concentrated within large central cities." A popular cliché was then referring the two divisions as "Chocolate cities Vanilla Suburbs."

Clearly, by the end of 1968, many blacks, especially in the North were beginning to question whether the nonviolent civil rights movement was serving their needs. More black Americans were attracted to Malcolm X, the idea of seizing power by "any means necessary." Although Rev. Martin Luther King continued to be most admired civil rights leader, many young black American youth on campuses questioned not only his tactics of nonviolence but also his dream of racial integration. Several militant organizations were springing up in the inner cities and campuses in defiance to nonviolence. The most radical of these organizations was the Black Panther Party, blending Black Nationalism and revolutionary communism. The Panthers dedicated themselves to destroying both capitalism and the police in the ghettos. They wore leather jackets and carried rifles in homage to Mao Zedong's revolutionary slogan: "Power flows from the barrel of the gun."

I was a happy person both in my association with particularly the white Americans, and in my academic pursuit. Unlike the hardship and shortages caused by Nigeria's civil war, I left at home: America was fighting its own war in Vietnam, yet the only visible evidence is on campuses, where anti-war diehards stage daily protests on the College Green. Out of a population of more than forty-five thousand students on our campus, less than twenty thousand are male students mostly war veterans. A

substantial number of undergraduates on campus are under the ORT scholarship program, returning from Vietnam or awaiting conscription. Several have escaped to other countries such as Latin America or Europe, to avoid the draft.

The College Green is the place to be if you are interested in socio-cultural issues, within the campus or society. Daily, you will find several groups trying to display or propagate their causes. From religion to paganism; from art to sciences; from women liberation to Gay movement; the College green is always jam-packed with activities.

David and his wife are typical of Vietnam War veterans that are always on the College green protesting US involvement in the war. He was such a visible figure in the campaign that I always want to meet to discuss anti-war issues. One day I invited them for lunch at the Baker Center Cafeteria to find out their views. His wife was also a veteran but a little more patriotic. I discovered through our conversation that he has since his return to the US from the war front decided to live with his wife a Hippie life. One day while he was watching Presidential broadcasts on the war, he went upstairs, brought his short gun, aimed at the president, and fired three shots blowing the television set.

In November of every year, foreign students on campus are requested to sign in if they wish to spend the (Thanksgiving) holiday with American Families. I signed in along with many others to travel out at the University's expense to celebrate the important American festive holiday. My host family from Dayton Ohio signed in for one African, one Asian, and one European student. The head of the family was a NASA sound engineer whose house was not very far from the NCR headquarters. Unlike my property owners in Athens, these, are well to do family living in absolute luxury. I was assigned a room that was beautifully decorated with blue shag carpeting, and a private bathroom.

They have two children who spent most of their time with me being a Blackman and African asking curious questions about wildlife in the Tarzan movies which I have no knowledge of, to religious issues. I managed to make them happy by creating fictitious stories about the jungle and wildlife. The few days of luxury reminded me of our religious description of heaven. The food was exquisite, fruits of all descriptions placed on the corridors, and the super-size refrigerator has almost anything imaginable. On return to Athens, it took me several weeks to return to the reality of life. From time to time, I kept hoping that one day I would be able to build a house of similar comfort.

Dayton Ohio was the home of the famous Wright Brothers, the American airplane inventors and aviation pioneers who turned their bicycle sales and repair shop business into glider and later aircraft manufacturing business. The host family took us around the city and to the site where once Orville Wright and his brother Wilbur lived and conduct their flying experiments near the city center.

Back on campus after the short three-day recess, I worked so hard to make good grades in all my major subjects. The Alden Library in the college green became my second home. It was open every day from 6 am until midnight. Unless I have other, pressing engagements within the campus or outside, one could find me on the third floor at any time of the day. I made quite several friends in the Library whom we reserve seats for each other during peak study periods.

Potluck dinners are always part of the international students' culture on campus. Many a time I was invited by friends from different countries particularly the African Arab students, whom I meet every Friday at 10 am at the Galbraith Chapel basement for congregational prayers. Our Imam was a Pakistani American professor who lives on a farm in the outskirts of Athens. His house served as a meeting point for all Muslim students and occasionally, will obtain permission from the health authorities to slaughter a sheep for an important day such as the Eid-Kabir or naming ceremonies. I always take with me to such dinner's bean cakes which I learned to make in Nigeria. It was so popular with many international and American students that I kept increasing the quantity from time to time.

Halloween "Trick or Treat"

"Human Life is full of adventures that could only be explained by the affected" self

One of the most intriguing cultural similarities I experienced in my first year in the States was Halloween celebrations marking the end of summer and harvest in preparation for the dark cold winter. Halloween was originally an ancient Celtic tradition "festival of Samhain" in Ireland to ward off spirits of the dead from haunting the living that metamorphosed to "All Souls Parade" in England.

During the festival, poor people will beg for food that will see them through the winter months, and families will from their harvest prepare pastries called "Soul Cakes" to be distributed to the poor in return for their prayers for the dead relatives. The poor will dress in costumes to disguise them to look like ghosts believed to come back to the earth to haunt the living.

The homeowners therefore for fear of the spirits entering their homes will keep the ghosts out by placing bowls of food outside their homes with a camouflaged candlelit pumpkin cut to look like a ghost to appease the ghosts visiting their homes. Children from our neighborhood knock door to door collecting candies like our annual Ramadan festivities (tashe).

The University Ombudsman Committee

"All life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better". Ralph Waldo Emerson

November 7, 1973 is the date, I was appointed to serve in the Ombudsman Committee on the recommendation of Ms. Rimfa England the deputy Ombudsman. Mr. Lester Marks the chief Ombudsman was particularly interested in my

appointment as the first African student to serve on the committee. Serving as ombudsman gave me an insight into the complex political as well as administrative organization of American Universities. Our role as ombudspersons or officers' functions independent of the University Board and serve no role in the organizational structure; yet we had the power to investigate and or mediate in the affairs of the university management.

Any "ombud" officer has by virtue of his status can track problem areas and make recommendations for changes to policies or procedures in support of orderly systems change. One particularly important function expected of us as "ombuds" officers were the quarterly review of University policies and procedures as it affects students, staff, and the local community.

My areas of specialty are the race relations and intercultural exchange of ideas and communication. Through the ombudsman committee, I was able to remain neutral in mediating issues affecting race relations even as a gang of rednecks physically attacked me. This job gave me not only personal satisfaction but also created several opportunities for me to meet with the people of authority in the University circle, as well as in the county.

Christmas in Boston

"We act though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life when all that we need to make us really happy is something to be enthusiastic about". Charles Kingsley

During the Christmas break of 1971, I saw an advertisement on the campus paper, which a student was looking for someone traveling to New England for the break to share fuel and driving. I enthusiastically called the phone number and a woman student by name Louise Bourgault answered and confirmed that she was willing to travel with me. I telephoned Mr. Edmond and his wife the parents of Philip James Shea my American friend whom I left in Nigeria. I asked them a favor to spend the Christmas with them at their 122 Auburn Street, Newton residence in the outskirts of Boston. Mrs. Shea was highly excited about my visit and she gladly offered me an invitation to visit them for as many days as possible. We sat out for Boston a journey of more than ten hours from Athens. On my arrival, the family took me out for a lobster dinner near the port, which was my first time of eating any seafood other than fish. I managed to conquer my emotional fear of crabs immediately and grab the whole lobster with my two hands. I pretended to enjoy the meal not to hurt their feelings. It was an expensive treat by any standard but left to me, I would have preferred normal fish, which was more familiar.

In the mornings, they will take me after breakfast to their printing press to help them sort out the various orders for shipment to their customers. It was quite interesting for me to see how postal stamps were printed and many other security-printing papers contracted to them by the Government. After the two weeks holiday it was

time for me to head back to Athens, but before I left, I took a tour Boston, and Cambridge where Harvard University and MIT are situated. The following year, I took a more extensive tour of Boston with my friend Philip Shea who came from Nigeria on holiday. From my experience of traveling throughout the mainland, few cities in the United States offer the visitor more sights to see than Boston. It is such a fascinating city that I always enjoy taking my family and friends to visit after I left America.

Campus opportunities

"Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging after others have let go". William Feather

Life in the United States is not like what I was used to at home, under the extended family system. Here everyone must fend for himself particularly after reaching adulthood status. Many colleagues were from average families, yet during the holidays must find menial jobs to survive. Living on a monthly income of \$600 is barely enough to pay \$200 per month for accommodation, another \$200 as my contribution to monthly communal feeding while \$200 is what left for books, eating out during weekends, clothing, and local transportation.

Realizing that without pecuniary means my greatest ambition to travel and see this country could not materialize; I decided to take whatever job available on campus to affect savings. I was constantly checking in the local papers, school bulletin boards for local employment that suit my time of classes. The first opportunity was a renovation job for \$3 per hour in our neighborhood, but the job of removing hazardous materials from the debris, and the smell of paint does not particularly suit my health conditions and therefore had to abandon for any easier and cheaper job.

My second job was in the delivery salesmanship with a local pizza hut. After taking the job, I soon realized why delivery boys in the mid of winter abandon the job. Yet to secure such a job I had to fulfill their conditions including an American driving license, which I did not possess at the time and twenty-five percent commission on first-month payment to the agency that recruited me. Because of the desire to find some form of employment, I registered with a driving school on campus. It took me only a few weeks to master the actual driving because of my previous experience in unauthorized driving of my father's trucks. Where I encountered a major problem was in the technicalities of written examination, which requires absolute common sense and memorization of road signs. It was a one-hour examination of more than three hundred multiple-choice questions, ranging from situation test to basic intelligence.

After about two trials, which was the limit, I obtained an American private driving license, which qualifies me to drive cars only. I sat to memorize the locations of streets within Athens and the neighboring towns, which is the basic requirement for a delivery job. The job was \$3 per hour, plus tips and eats as much as you like while on the job. On a weekend, I work as much as eight hours earning more than \$30 on Saturday nights. In addition to the delivery job, I was importing leather wallets from Nigeria and selling them to students on campus.

Though most Americans think of themselves as globally aware, the truth is that they are the most provincial culture on earth. Even the most educated were unaware of African and non-European cultures. In my first year, I was astonished by the

questions people Black and White alike put to me about Africa. My astonishment led to our establishing a club to propagate the essence of non-European Cultures to young Americans within the State of Ohio. We approached Churches, Schools, Fraternities, and Sororities with our ideas for cultural dialogues.

On weekends, we used to give lectures to church groups, high school clubs, and local communities on different topics ranging from polygamy, Islam, non-European cultures, art, music, and architecture. We also give lectures on our individual lives in our native communities, traditional beliefs, and many other topical issues for twenty dollars an hour plus mileage. Through these interactions, I learned quite a lot about America and its cultures and etiquettes. The question and answer sessions are most interesting as they show the extent of American parochialism and Hollywood influence on the average person's psyche. Children in primary schools and High schools are particularly more inquisitive.

One time I was giving a lecture to primary kids in Zanesville, Ohio, about family ties in Hausa communities, a young and brilliant young boy asked me whether and why do Africans still love to live on trees, despite the support aid we receive daily from the US government? Again, do we have our toilets on the trees or on the ground? Moreover, what form of lighting do we use at night when it gets dark? His teacher was trying to stop him but was urged by his colleagues to keep on with his questions. At the end of my attempt to explain the geographical regions in Africa, I gave them the assignment to find out in their library the different climatic regions of Africa and see how the climate affects their housing and environment. One of the teachers that listened to my lectures confided in me during a coffee break that he is totally unaware of the diversities of Africa until today.

Canada by Road

"It's not the years of your life that counts; it's the life in your years" Abraham Lincoln

I saved \$2,620 during the winter, which I used to buy my first car a 1968 maroon Ford Mustang from a used car dealer on campus for \$1,200. This vehicle gave me a new sense of freedom of movement as I begin to explore neighboring towns and States on leisure time. During the Christmas of 1972, I sat out with two friends of mine an Indian man and his Hong Kong Chinese wife to travel through Canada by road. We shared driving and fuel costs among ourselves. We drove through New York via Buffalo to meet an old friend late Ahmed Beita Yusuf who was a Doctoral student at the University of Buffalo. When we arrived at his residence apartment, we were surprised to find out he was out to Hospital to see his newborn baby girl. We anticipated staying with him for a few days, but in view of his commitment to his wife who was still on admission, we left the next day to Toronto via Niagara Falls. Despite the short stay, he took us on a quick tour through the city to Buffalo Museum

of Science in Humboldt Park and South Park Conservatory where we saw many rare specimens of plant life.

We drove North West of the city of Buffalo to Niagara Falls, which is about 20-mile from the city. The fall was on the Niagara River, shared by New York State and Ontario Province in Canada. It is probably the most visited natural site in the United States and Canada. From the Goat Island that separated the two countries, we took an elevator that descends to the Cave of the Winds. The tour operators supplied us with raincoats and carried in a diesel-powered boat to the base of the fall. It was the most spectacular natural site I ever visited, and the sound of a cascade of water causing rainbow colors under the semi-bright winter sun remains in my memory until today.

We drove eastwards late in the evening through the industrial city of Hamilton to Toronto where we checked in to a Holiday Inn. In my diary, I have the telephone number of an old Canadian Volunteer friend Ms. Jenny Dickey who served in Kano in the late sixties. By chance, she answered the call and immediately arranged to pick us to her apartment at 676 Huron Street for a Hausa dinner. Surprisingly, she served me "tuwon shinkafa da miyar taushe" and some yogurt mixed with cornflower as her version of "Fura." We spent most of the night discussing life in Kano and her experiences as a teacher at Government Girls Secondary School Dala. The following morning, she took us on a tour of the city of Toronto along the harbor and downtown area. Toronto is the largest city in Canada and the English-speaking city of Ontario province with several skyscrapers dominating the skyline of the downtown area. We then took a tour of the Canada National Tower the tallest building in the world at the time. We concluded our tour at Queens Park and China Town where we had our lunch. The following day we visited the great Zoo where over 5,000 animal species were residents.

Our plan was to spend only three days at Toronto before we proceed to Ottawa the National Capital City, but due to bad winter weather, the road to Ottawa was closed for two days. When the road finally opened, driving became more dangerous as the road surface turned into ice. We spent the night in a motel at a small town called Naples at a freezing temperature. The only vehicles in the streets were snowmobiles roaring all over the place in such fun over the more than four feet of snow. My partners and I were beginning to question our mad decision to travel across Canada in the winter, with a vehicle ill-prepared for the treacherous journey. Our earlier plan was to go to Ottawa and take the northern route towards the west coast where I will sell my car and travel back to Ohio by air. The road to Ottawa was so dangerous, that my companions decided to give up and return to the United States from Ottawa. When we finally arrived in the city, it was dark at 3 pm and had combined our lunch and dinner and decides what to do the next day. We were too exhausted to go out that evening particularly with the heavy snowfall that day nobody wants to do

anything that will compound our difficulties. We checked in to a small motel in the outskirts of the city for one night and armed ourselves with city map ready for the morning. We visited the Parliament Building, which was Gothic style architecture in cut stone overlooking the Ottawa River. Standing in front of the imposing structure, was the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on guard watching over visitors in the cold Canadian winter.

I decided to travel to Montreal alone to see the site of the just-concluded Olympics Games and from there back to the United States. Entering Quebec province is like traveling to an entirely different Country. It is French in language, customs, and food but English geographically. I was in Montreal city in the afternoon, and I drove through the city center and checked in a small motel within the downtown area. It was an exhausting day for me but was able to take a hot bath and walked into the metro shopping area. This Mall built entirely underground for the convenience of shoppers during the harsh winter months of the Arctic, is the largest underground shopping mall I have seen, which provides all the conveniences of a modern shopping Mall within the city center. I spent a few days exploring Montreal including sites of the just concluded Olympics Games, Montreal harbor, before proceeding to Quebec City, the capital of Quebec Province.

Quebec is Canada's most romantic and probably the only walled city in the entire country, it is to my mind, the most interesting city in Canada. I walked my way through the city within three days with little difficulty despite its French influences. I took one segment of the city one at a time starting from the Lower Town towards the Upper Town. After exploring the city, I took a trip to the Zoological Gardens just north of Quebec City which housed thousands of animals and a tropical conservatory. After covering a substantial part of the gardens, I proceed to Lac Beauport resort a beautiful small cluster of homes on the Eponymous lake about 16 miles north from downtown Quebec. It was a scenic drive through Lauren tides, Provincial Park.

Returning from Canada

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail". R.W. Emerson

On the New Year eve, I sat out to return to the USA through Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, into Massachusetts where I spent a few days with the Families of Professor Philip Shea and my old friend Malam Yusha'u Anka who was a student at Boston University. It was already wintering dark when I arrived New Year festive Boston covered by almost two feet of snow on the highway. I drove cautiously through the city center to take my bearing to Boston University where I will be accommodated at Malam Yusha'u Anka's apartment; suddenly a drunken driver in a hurry to cross the junction tailgated my car. Understanding his fault, he quickly gave

me his no-fault insurance details to lay my claims. On locating the street and the apartment block where Yusha'u resides, I had to find a parking space, already tied and sleepy, I drove around the block looking for any available space to park my car even if illegally to no avail. I kept driving around the next block and the next until I found an empty parking space. I quickly full my car in and while trying to carry my bag and my travel documents; a man in a blue winter jacket appeared as if he were going to take his car. I greeted him as he approached me, but he refused to answer. Suddenly it occurred to me that Boston is a cosmopolitan American city, I started praying as he got nearer to my car. I was frightened by the way; he was behaving as he immediately pointed a pistol at me and asked for my wallet. I had a few hundred dollars in my wallet and a few more in my glove compartment in the car. I quickly handed over the wallet to save myself from further dangers. Spontaneous compliance saved my life as he immediately disappeared on his bicycle and left me there in shock unable to do anything for about fifteen minutes. I summoned the courage and walked towards a phone booth to call the emergency services but could not even remember and identify the 99 digits due to the shocking state of my mind.

I attempted several times to call the police, but I am too confused to talk when I finally reached the 99. When the woman on the phone realized I was in a state of shock, she tried to calm me down as she sent some assistance to me. When the police finally located me, I could hardly give any coherent statement. They took me to my address, rang the doorbell, and ushered me into the apartment. When I related the two incidences to Yusha'u and his wife, they were not entirely surprised but very assuring. I spent five days with them and took them with me to New York. It was their first time but living in Boston has prepared them to cope with the dangers of American cities.

We drove through Rode Island and Connecticut states to New York where I have quite a few friends and a quittance. New York City is anything but dull, it is friendly, beautiful, ugly, cosmopolitan, provincial whatever your imagination. It was my third-time visit to New York City, and therefore quite familiar with the important places of interest that I can show them around Manhattan. I took them to Times Square to Fifth Avenue, Staten Island, Central Park, Madison Avenue, Wall Street, Statue of Liberty, various Museums, and Radio City, Rockefeller Centre, Greenwich Village, and many other places of interest in the City. One week in the City, I drove back to Athens Ohio, after dropping them at the Grand Central Station.

Towards the afternoon, I was out of New York City through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia states into Athens Ohio. I was totally exhausted and fatigued when I finally reached my residence in Athens, due to the terrible winter condition of the road. The nine-hour journey left me in bed until noon the next morning.

I sat on my bedroom desk to recount my adventures and to write few letters to my family back home, suddenly a friend knocks at the door to welcome me and to hand over a sealed transcript from our College.

Concluding Degree program

"Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out". Art Link letter
Though I worked so hard to get the much higher point, nevertheless I was satisfied with [Cum Laude] a significant achievement for a black foreign student in sciences at that time. Now returning to the campus, from my trip to Canada, I must brace up for the more challenging task ahead in the Graduate School. I had several options open to me with my grade average. The first was to continue in the College of Education and graduate as an Accounting and Finance teacher, the second option was to enroll in the School of International Studies and specialize in international curriculum development and administration, and the third is to enroll in the MBA program under the College of Business Studies and specialized in International Business or Development Economics.

I chose the last option to satisfy my curiosity and desire to work for Multi-national Corporation. I have always been fascinated by their size and enormous influence in the global economic and political life of many nations. These multi-national companies or corporations as they are called have dominated the world industrial and economic spheres in a manner that threatens even the most powerful nations. Consumers, white- and blue-collar workers, businessmen, taxpayers, and governments of poor countries and particularly OPEC nations which my country belongs were at the mercy of their policies.

The Graduate School

"To succeed in life, you need three things: a wishbone, a backbone, and a funny bone". Reba McEntire.

July 15, 1972, I was back in the United States on a flight to New York from Brussels. In the same evening, I boarded a Greyhound Bus to Columbus Ohio, arriving early in the morning the next day. I phoned a friend from the station to come and take me to Athens. The campus was already busy in the fall quarter as most students have finished registration formalities and classes have resumed one week earlier. Unfortunately, for me, I had to not only go through the registration procedures but also must look for new accommodation. The Krompecher host family in my absence has been granted divorce by the court. They had for some time disagreed on matrimonial duties that started before my departure. The house and the custody of the children bested in the hands of the mother, while the husband and I were asked by the court to vacate the property.

After several failed attempts to find a reasonable accommodation, a friend of mine by the name Charlie Weideman met me at the college restaurant on High Street and offered me a room in his six-room house on Stuart Street not far from the College of Business Studies and college of International Studies where most of my classes were held. Charlie was from an upper-middle-class family in Chippewa Lake Ohio, who owns a small private plane and a leisure boat. Every weekend he will invite me to his home for recreation in the lake area. He was once married with a daughter under her mother's custody. Every month he will send a fixed amount of money to her as alimony and upkeep of his daughter. I thoroughly enjoyed my association with him except a few times when he was drunk and had to put up with his stupidity.

During the short winter break of 1973, I was invited by Philip Shea to meet him in Chicago where we shall spend a few days together, and drive to Madison Wisconsin to defend his Ph.D. thesis. He was the first student to research on textile trade in sub-Saharan Africa with special reference to dye industries in the sub-region. We went around the city with his old friend and had meals together. On the third day, we drove to Madison campus where we met Professor Ibrahim Makosy then a Hausa lecturer and a Ph.D. student. Wisconsin winter was extremely severe, particularly around the frozen lakes; yet several students on campus defy the miserable weather to find recreation on the frozen surface. It was a real experience for me and had a good tour of Madison particularly the campus magnificent buildings and the 1,200-acre arboretum.

Chapter Ten

USA "Diary of a Bus Journey".

"You can have anything you want if you want it badly enough. You can be anything you want to be, do anything you set out to accomplish if you hold to that desire with singleness of purpose"
Abraham Lincoln

Encouraged by my successful trip to Canada, an opportunity to make similar journeys in the United States came on April 4, 1973, during the University's summer break. I used my savings to embark on a solo journey that started from Washington DC on a pre-paid ninety days see America ticket offered to foreign students by Greyhound Bus Company. I planned to spend an average of ten days in each region. I changed my mind even before I sat out for the journey because of the impracticability of the idea of crisscrossing the regions. I took as much as possible the most convenient Bus route from one state to another regardless of whether it is in the same region or not. Even the selection of the Greyhound bus system and timing was a great education for me; more importantly, was the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life especially low-income Americans. Many of the people I met on these journeys were open-minded and often ignorant of the world outside their own country.

The American Mid-South

"The biggest adventure you can take is to live your dreams" Oprah Winfrey

My first stop was Baltimore in the state of Maryland, where I visited a friend working with the Johns Hopkins Medical Centre. I took a tour of Mount Vernon Place and climbed to the top of the monument. Later in the day, a friend and I visited Mount Clare Station, the first railway station in the country converted to a museum. From Baltimore, I left for Delaware, one of the smallest states of the union, and is known as "The First State" because it was first to rectify the constitution. I was in Dover early hours of the morning, to enable me to see through the city in a day's visit. The most notable place that I visited was "The Hall of Records" where state's most important documents were preserved including the original Royal Grant from Charles II and Penn's order for laying out of the town.

Despite its size, the State is far from being homogenous. It has a substantial number of communities of English, Scots, Irish, Germans, Italians, and Poles. I was able to transverse most of the state in a matter of sixteen hours including a visit to the famous coastal line scenic route 9 that ends at the Getty Oil refinery.

Late in the evening, I boarded the bus to Richmond Virginia's capital and the capital of the Confederacy from May 1861 to April 1865. I took time to visit Jefferson Davis White House, and the Edgar Allan Poe Museum, and in the outskirts of the city the Richmond National Battlefield Park where I saw landmarks of Civil War battles. I

spent the night in a motel near Petersburg National Military Park, to enable me to leave early in the morning to Charleston West Virginia.

This is the most familiar State to me after Ohio, as it is the nearest state from our campus. We often leisure drive into many of its towns on weekends, or on special occasions attending garage sales or games. On one of such occasions, in 1973, I was racially attacked and beaten by hillbilly's in a restaurant, resulting in my hospitalization. I, therefore, decided not to spend any time at Charleston except to change my bus.

The next stop was Louisville Kentucky. On the morning of April 8, 1973, I left Charleston arriving Louisville in the afternoon. I had the greatest interest in Kentucky mighty Mammoth Caves, which lie about forty miles due south of Elizabeth town. I have learned of the existence of caves in my geography class at Kano Teachers' College, but it was my first time to see a natural cave. The fascination of the wonders left an indelible mark on my mind for quite a very long time. Kentucky like West Virginia is the immediate neighbor to Ohio State, therefore very familiar in terms of landscape and culture. The greatest difference between Ohio and Kentucky is that the latter has so many plantation farms all over. It is also famous for horse breeding and races, which I have witnessed many times.

The American Midwest

"Be happy for this moment in your life; this moment is your life" Omar Khayyam

April 10, 1973, I joined the bus to Indianapolis the capital of Indiana State. Like Ohio, Indiana is also one of the eight Midwestern states and immediate neighbor of Ohio State to the west. I have on many occasions, visited the state before this trip, and am quite familiar with the terrain; particularly the famous 500-mile Memorial Day automobile race- staged on a two- and half-mile oval track in Indianapolis.

On 12 April 1973, I arrived at Chicago union station in the early hours and took a subway train to an appointed station where I met with an old friend John and his family waiting to take me around the city. I was able to visit this region in the winter of 1972, with our friend Philip Shea when he was defending his Doctorate degree at Wisconsin University. I am therefore familiar with the city and had visited many important landmarks including aquarium, planetarium, and Museum of Natural History. On this trip, I wanted to spend some time visiting the Museum of Science and Industry and the University of Chicago. After two days of an extensive tour of the city, I changed my mind not to go to Wisconsin again, but to travel westward to Iowa City and Des Moines.

Driving through vast natural mainly prairie grassland, Iowa was mainly an agricultural state with substantial agro-allied industrial businesses. I was in Iowa City on 15 April 1973, on transit to Des Moines. I spent only a few hours at the bus station and took the next bus on nearly an hour and a half journey to Des Moines.

What interests me most in this city is the massive and ornate state capitol with its commanding hilltop setting. Within the limited time I had, I took time to visit my former Professor who retired to his farmhouse near Drake University. His family are quite familiar with me and were happy to give me accommodation at their house for the night after our dinner conversation and exchange of pleasantries.

In the early hours of 16 April 1973, I took a bus to Minneapolis and St. Paul Minnesota, known as the twin cities that lie on either side of the Mississippi River. I was able to visit the capitol buildings and the University of Minnesota a highly ranked public research institution. The following day I had plans to go to High Falls on the Pigeon River; but later changed my mind and traveled west to Pierre, on my way to Mount Rushmore National Memorial in Rapid City South Dakota.

The gigantic size of the curbed heads of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln better imagined than described are visible from several miles away. A full-size human can easily stand comfortably on the lower lips of any of the heads. It was a typical day in the spring with the woods generating different aroma of leaves and flowering. I spent the whole day wiling away in the park appreciating not only the great work of art and human ingenuity but also natures gift to mankind. Rapid City has so many attractions that forced me to extend my stay for another two days just to enable me to visit the natural wonders of famous Wild Cat and Wonderland Caves. These Caves attract a huge number of American families, vacationers, students, as well as foreign tourists every day.

The American Plains

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands but seeing with new eyes". Marcel Proust

April 21, 1973, I took a bus south through the northern tip of the state of Nebraska to Cheyenne Wyoming. I made a night stop over at Scottsbluff just to see its beautiful irrigated lands and livestock farms during the day. From my bus window seat, I kept self-busy viewing with great fascination the number of cattle and sheep grazing in the fields. On the bus, sitting by my side was an elderly American Indian woman who gave me her name as Shirley advised me not to leave Wyoming without visiting the Yellow Stone National park.

I spent a night in Cheyenne and headed north to Yellow Stone National park, a vast expanse of land covering several hundreds of square kilometers. There is no doubt that the beauty of towering snow-capped mountains, clear lakes, and streams, makes Wyoming one of the best landscapes in the world. There were so many recreational facilities ranging from fishing, horse trails, birds watching, and hiking. There were several hundreds of hot springs in the park, where thousands of tourists' flock around to watch the wonders of nature. Three nights in the Yellow Stone offered me an

unparalleled opportunity to actively experience this environmental beauty and the activities on offer.

The Rocky Mountain States

"People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing – that's why we recommend it daily". Zig Ziglar

April 26, 1973, my Greyhound journey took me back via Cheyenne to Denver Colorado. The journey through rugged mountains was the most exhilarating experience. I was in Denver union station in the early hours of 27 April 1973, and straight away headed for a sightseeing tour of the great city. I was able to visit many places of interest in the city as most of the attractions are within a few blocks of each other. The state museum and capitol buildings are quite close, as city auditorium and civic center. I was quite lucky to be in Denver on clear days and had quite a remarkable view of the city from the sky deck on top of the National Bank Building. My most remarkable tour was to the Museum of Natural History, where I saw several skeletons of prehistoric creatures, and displays of minerals, meteorites, and fossils. On 29 April 1973, the bus journey onwards to Salt Lake City, Utah through more rocky and rugged desert mountains. This is a predominantly Mormons state, where strict religious codes are observed. Our bus operator warned us on the no smoking law in public places, and several other laws in existence in the state. He read from a prepared text and warned all passengers to observe the rules. Utah is the only state in the union where the practice of polygamy persisted, despite Federal Laws prohibiting the practice. Several Mormons went jail under the anti-polygamy laws after the practice outlawed in 1895. In the evening, I took a tour of the visitor's center at the Mormon Tabernacle, one of the greatest buildings in Salt Lake City. The temple is strictly out of binding to non-Mormons but was said to be the world's largest domed roof of its kind, seats 8,000 persons and contains the famous Great Organ. In the early hours of 30 April 1973, I took a tour of the Great Salt Lake, northeast of the city, where remnants of the prehistoric freshwater sea-called Lake Bonneville that once covered the greater part of northwestern Utah. There were swimming beaches; commercial salt operations; Antelope Island and many more attractions for a visitor. In the afternoon, I visited Hogle Gardens Zoo, where I saw a variety of animal species including Shasta a unique crossbreed between lion and tiger.

On May 1, 1973, my journey continued from Salt Lake City to Reno Nevada through the Great Basin and desolate desert mountain ranges and mesas, blanketing most of the state. We were at Reno late in the evening, and the city was waking up from the days' heat to a cooler evening where gamblers flock to downtown Casinos clustered around Virginia Street, in search of fortunes and pleasures of the nightlife. Almost everyone you see is busy trying his luck with the roulette wheels, slot gaming

machines, crap, and poker games, faro, chuck luck and other games of chance. Nevada was about the only state in the union to allow gambling at such a scale. Coming from Utah a conservative religious state to Nevada where everything goes, one can feel the air of cutthroat competition for the green buck. Everywhere in the city, you could see evidence of preparations for the annual Silver State Square Dance Festival; but I had little or no time to wait to experience the great occasion.

I made a brief stopover at Carson City, the State Capital of Utah considered as the smallest state capital in the United States, on my way to Sacramento the capital of California State. There was not much to see in the city except the Nevada State Museum housed in the Old Mint Buildings, and the Carson Hot Springs. Late in the evening, I boarded the next bus to Sacramento a beautiful Spanish like city, with its exotic varieties of trees and shrubs beautifully laid out at Capitol Park in the middle of the city. It is by any standard a beautiful city, which offers many convenient and cheap accommodations to visitors. One of my favorite high school teachers Major Knilance is from Sacramento, whom I maintained good contact since he left Nigeria. I phoned him to let him know I was around and wish to visit him at his convenience. He was already in his early 70's, and in relatively good health, but very lonely, as he has never been married. Major Knilance drove us around the city, later in the afternoon went fishing on the Sacramento River discussing Kano events and our acquaintances. We returned to his residence in the evening where he showed me several slides from his stay in Kano and several pictures from his photo album. He was generous in offering me many of the pictures that I featured; some of them I could remember when they were taken, but many were a surprise to me. He drove me back to my motel along the main east-west highway.

The American Far-West

"Curiosity is the one thing invincible in Nature". Freya Stark

May 4, 1973, I joined the bus to San Francisco where I met an elderly woman named Juliet who works as a library assistant at Berkley, University of California's main campus. I told her my stories and was fascinated, to know more of Africa that she offered me one room accommodation at her apartment. When we reached the union station, she waited for me to collect my backpack luggage, and we walked to a city bus stop to catch a bus to Berkeley.

San Francisco is an exciting city, where many points of interest are close to each other, while the streets run steeply up and down, and around a cluster of hills. A delightful way to travel over them is by cable or trum cars. From the time I met Juliet in the bus, her generosity amazes me as she did not only offer me free meal and accommodation, but also took me on tour around the city's most popular attractions namely the Ocean Beach, Golden Gate Park and Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, and China Town. My most memorable day was a visit to San Francisco

Aquatic Park Historic National landmark and building complex located on the waterfront in the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. In the Steamship Room was a display of maritime evolution technology from wind to steam. There were also display of lithographic stones, scrimshaw, and whaling guns. It also housed a gallery of shipboard radio, radiotelephone and radio teletype equipment of early modern shipping.

At Berkley, she took me around the UCLA campus which was built 54 years after my University is a public research institution which is among the top-rated academic Universities internationally. It gained a worldwide reputation for student activism in the 60s with the Free Speech Movement of 1964 and opposition to the Vietnam War. After sunset, we drove to a nearby hill that gives a panoramic view of the greater San Francisco Bay area which covers a substantial part of the city. From an advantaged position, the view was an implausible stream of lights several miles across cities, towns, and airports. I felt like flying in the cockpit of an aircraft.

The following morning on 8 May 1973, I headed for Los Angles a journey I made mostly in the night, reaching Los Angles union station in the early hours of the morning. For more than eighty miles to our destination, the bus operator told us in the public address system that we were within the LA greater metropolis; yet we kept to our seats for more than one hour as he drives us through a vast confusing network of streets to the downtown area. I knew from the variety of tourist attraction pamphlets I pick from the bus station; that I needed more than one week, to explore the most famous tourist attraction within the greater LA. However, since I was running out of time, I decided to see as much as possible, and leave the rest for possible future visits.

I spent the four days visiting the Old Spanish Plaza, the Civic Center, and Exposition Park on the first day. On the second day, I took a guided tour of Hollywood Bowl, motion picture and television studios. On the third day, I spent at Walt Disneyland a most exhilarating experience for me on the entire trip. On the fourth day, I spend half of the day at the Los Angeles Zoo which was commissioned only a few years was located about two miles north of the old Griffith Park Zoo. I spent the remaining evening at Long Beach a coastal city and port on the Pacific Sea half an hour away by bus. There I walk through the 1930s Queen Mary ship turned into a floating hotel and dining. In a waterfront space was the Aquarium of the Pacific which displays sea life and aquatic attractions of Ocean dwellers in large aquarium touch tanks.

Los Angles was the nation's second largest city after New York, and marvelous place with a Mediterranean type climate, lined with palms. From a distance, the cluster of skyscrapers in the downtown area looks like a bunch of anthills dominating the skyline. Of greater interest, and fantasy was the attractive affluent Beverly Hills and Brentwood mansions with their manicured lawns which are the home of Hollywood celebrities and well to do Americans. It was one of the many all-white planned

communities started in the Los Angeles area in the early 20th century. Restrictive covenants before the civil right laws prohibited non-whites from owning or renting a property unless they were employed as servants by white residents. It was also forbidden to sell or rent property to Jews in Beverley Hills.

On 13 May 1973, I left Los Angeles for Las Vegas Nevada the world's gambling capital. A great city that remains alive every minute of day and night throughout the year. There were varieties of entertainments in the luxury hotels from live shows, to gambling halls in the casinos, and outside on the Las Vegas Boulevard. The neon lights displayed as an advertisement to catch the attention of fortune seekers illuminates the city with bright colors, turning the nights into day. Las Vegas is a city like no other, offering a variety of outdoor recreations due to its dry open environment. The luxury hotels located on "The Strip" compete in giving the best services to their tenants.

On 15 May 1973, I left Las Vegas for Flagstaff Arizona through the great engineering feat of its time "The Hoover Dam" built on the Colorado River. It is a gigantic structure plugging Black Canyon standing over seven hundred feet above the river. Our bus driver parked on a strategic location overlooking both sides of the canyon, affording us good dam views. After two-hour stopover, we headed for Flagstaff, the best base for sightseeing northern Arizona. It is one of the region's largest cities, offering a variety of vacation tours in what is predominantly Indian Territory.

My greatest desire was to visit the greatest natural wonders that I read in my high school geography, "The Grand Canyon." I took a whole day tour from my motel in the early morning along with other tourists through the towering ponderosa pines of Coconino National Forest to Grand Canyon. Our tour guide was a Hopi Indian who took a special interest in talking to me as an oppressed black person. She kept referring to the encroachment of western cultures and ideas into their way of life; horrible conditions in the reservations; and the domineering attitudes of the white man. I could understand her frustrations as shared by many black Americans I met on campus or elsewhere. I walked my way down to the bottom of the canyon along with some younger tourists. It took us more than one hour to get to the one-mile deep gorge to the river, and more than two hours to walk back; it was really an outstanding scenic beauty, unmatched by any natural wonders of the world.

The American South-West

"By nature, all men are equal in liberty, but not in other endowments". Thomas Aquinas

On 17 May 1973, Phoenix the capital city of Arizona was my next destination. It was built around the sites of ancient Pueblo Indian kingdom that vanishes. Traces of the ruins are found everywhere particularly in the Pueblo Grande Valley. After a day's visit to the important places in and around the city, I headed for Tucson the

second largest city in Arizona. I spent a day visiting the University Campus where I met some Nigerian students.

On 19 May 1973, I left for Albuquerque New Mexico. The most striking thing for me was the similarity in architecture between my state Kano in Nigeria and that of New Mexico in the United States. Until then I will never believe that some people in America still build adobe houses. Where ever we stopped along the road looks and feels like an environment I grew up in, except that these have better facilities such as air-conditioning and potable water. Albuquerque old town built in 1706, whose adobe structures reflect the atmosphere of that period. Even the University of New Mexico has several adobes, pueblo style buildings.

On 21 May 1973, I left Albuquerque for El Paso Texas on the Rio Grande is the largest American city on the Mexican border and one of the most historic in Texas. I took the time to visit the International Museum that deals with essentially early Indian artifacts, pioneer relics of the Spanish Mexican period.

On 22 May 1973, I headed for Dallas purposely to see the spot where President Kennedy was assassinated. We were at Dallas in the early hours of the morning of 23rd of May 1973. The one-day trip enables me to visit the book depository and view from the window where allegedly Lee Oswald made the fatal shot at President Kennedy. I bought some souvenirs and headed to the union bus terminal later in the day for Austin the capital city of Texas. A unique city by any definition, Austin's "artificial moonlight" was erected in 1895, a bluish glow of lights beamed from 27 towers that rise high above the downtown area.

On May 25, 1973, I left Austin for Houston the largest city in Texas where I spent a night. In the early hours of the next day, I took a tour of the city including the famous Texas Medical Centre, Houston Zoological Garden. I took a special interest in the Museum of Natural Sciences which offers wide-ranging education programs. Its new buildings were opened just three years before my visit which allows visitors to explore the seven biomes of the African Continent. It displays taxidermies animals and over 120 specimens, including many species of birds and some species of Mammals.

The American South

"We must let go of the life we have planned, so as to accept the one that is waiting for us". Joseph-Campbell

Later in the evening of May 25, 1973, left for New Orleans Louisiana after a fulfilling day sightseeing in Houston. Louisiana is strategically located as one of the most important shipping states. It is where the Mississippi River spills into the Gulf of Mexico, allowing tugs and ocean-going ships ply the hinterland. You could see some of the historic paddlewheel steamers carrying tourist along the river as a reminder of what used to be the only means of transport along the Mississippi. New

Orleans, of course, is the most important and unique city that has preserved its traditional culture, cuisine, and architecture. I was fascinated by the French nests of the city of New Orleans and particularly the New International Trade Mart located on the bank of the Mississippi River, at the foot of Canal Street. Products from all over the United States and many foreign countries; ranging from household gadgets and furniture to fabrics, toys, wristwatches, and a wide variety of food products set out for customers in a modern air-conditioned showroom.

The French Market again on the bank of the river is a great place for all sorts of vegetables and fruits, seafood and in addition it is surrounded by fine restaurants and cafes. It was my first time of eating the "Po" Boy Sandwich, a length of toasted French bread, stuffed with roast beef, lettuce, tomatoes, coleslaw, and other ingredients. This sandwich is to the New Orleans, what Hamburger is to the rest of America.

I took a sightseeing steamer on a 30-mile trip along the harbor from Eads Plaza not far from the International Trade Mart. Our boat called the S/S President, afforded us a close view of the varied river traffic, the beautiful communities on the west bank of the river, the oil, salt and sulfur docks, sugar refineries, cottonseed oil mills, the US Naval repair base, Army Storehouses, and the US Immigration Station.

On May 28, 1973, I took a bus to Jackson Mississippi through Baton Rouge. Jackson is the capital city of Mississippi, and possibly the largest. It is situated in along the river where serious oil development is evident everywhere. I took time to visit Monkey Island at the municipal zoo where different species of primates kept in near-natural environments.

The next day I took a bus to Mobile Alabama through the cotton fields; reminiscence of the old south with its architecture, gardens, as well as many antebellum customs. The most spectacular of the gardens I visited in Alabama was Bellingrath gardens, an incredibly beautiful of unsurpassed natural beauty. It was the beginning of summer, and the rains are quite regular limiting my movements to other places in the state.

I left Mobile Alabama on 1 June 1973, to Montgomery just to see the city famous in the history of American Negro struggle for equality. The atmosphere in Montgomery the state capital and one time the capital of the Confederacy was full shreds of evidence of the past. The original White House of the Confederates where Jefferson Davis and his family lived during their brief stay in the city still stands not far away from where the first congress of the Confederacy enacted its articles of secession.

On 3 June 1973, I left Montgomery for Miami Florida with a stopover at Tallahassee Florida's capital city and Tampa, another important city in Florida. Tallahassee is a picturesque city full of antebellum air, with massive live oaks and magnolias draped with Spanish moss, shading its quiet streets.

Tampa city, on the other hand, was probably the most cosmopolitan city in Florida, where Latin culture blends equitably with the Anglo Saxon, African with the Caribbean. I took time off to walk around the downtown area, and sample some Spanish fast foods, before proceeding to Miami on May 5, 1973. While in Miami, I was able to visit many important tourist areas and resorts including the island of Key Biscayne, Virginia Key, and Miami Beach the world famous. On 7 May 1973, I left Miami for Orlando Walt Disney World, where I spent two days experiencing the different rides and shows.

On June 9, 1973, I took a bus to Atlanta Georgia via Jacksonville Florida. I was mainly interested in visiting this city Atlanta because of its historical significance in the struggle for the emancipation of Negro America. It was the home of Martin Luther King and his associates. It was there I first met Andrew Young who engaged me in a five minutes conversation about my country and his interest in visiting the West African region.

I was able to visit the Ebenezer Baptist Church where King and his father led their congregations. I have also visited his birthplace 501 Auburn and More house College, where the king had his university degree. Atlanta being the unofficial business capital of the entire southeastern United States was among the biggest in business representation. I took time off to visit the Stone Mountains, one of the natural wonders of the world. It is North America's largest exposed granite formation, where an imposing memorial to the confederacy curved on the rock by the famous sculptor Gutzon Borglum.

I left Atlanta on 12 June 1973 for Columbia South Carolina through tobacco and cotton fields, reminiscence of the slave plantations. Here my attention was beginning to wear out and tired of bus rides and tours, yet I found time to visit a friend at the University of South Carolina. We had dinner and drove around the campus before I retired to my hotel room. I slept throughout the next day, before deciding where to go next. It was June 14, 1973, and my ninety-day pass expires on July 2, 1973, giving me eighteen days of free travel on the Greyhound buses. I decided to take time to visit North Carolina, from where I will head back to Ohio and discard the remaining days. I was physically and mentally unable to continue with the journey.

I headed for Raleigh North Carolina, only to spend a few hours in the city visiting Museum of History which was an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. My journey back to Ohio was late at night, but through familiar terrain of West Virginia to Columbus Ohio.

The Middle Atlantic States

"Put your heart, mind, and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success". Swami-Sivananda

One of my most frequent visits during my stay in the US was in this region of Mid-Atlantic, which lies between the South and New England along the Atlantic coast. In actual size, it occupies only one-thirtieth of the landmass but contains one-fifth of the population. The four States on New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware are solid metropolitan areas that are highly industrialized. The area is equally rich in its heritage as part of the original thirteen states, and of many religions from New York's cosmopolitan millions to Pennsylvania's Quakers and the picturesque Mennonites, Amish, and Dunkers.

New York

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart" Helen Keller

I have always been fascinated by New York City, and always wanting to explore this famous urban city in the world. Although I have been to the city many times in the past, this is the longest time I will be there alone. My host family Janet Zobel owns a small flat at number 11 Charlton Street in the Soho; luckily, for me, she was visiting Europe on holidays and offered me to stay and take care of the apartment before she returns. It was a convenient location off Avenue of the Americas, which is a walking distance to Wall Street downtown and Times Square uptown.

One may call New York City dangerous, crowded, noisy, friendly, but never dull. Everywhere, any time of the day or night there is something going on in New York City from construction workers building new skyscrapers, two giant ships steaming in and out of the harbor. From Open air and indoor concerts; To Broadway shows and busy restaurants; From Fashionable shoppers along Fifth Avenue; To Artists' studios and galleries in Soho area; From Leisure seekers in the central park; To Museums of almost every conceivable thing; New York is indeed the world capital. To any stranger in New York City, one street looks very much like the other, but a New Yorker knows where his neighborhood starts and ends. In Manhattan alone, there were as many as sixty or more neighborhoods each different from its neighbor in character, ethnic formation, and property value. For example, I live in Greenwich Village, which is adjacent to Chelsea and Soho on the other end. These three neighborhoods are entirely different even in the kinds of foods served in their restaurants. One day while conversing with a friend that lived all his life in New York said to me "Have you been long enough to navigate your neighborhood?" Later when I set out to navigate the neighborhood, I found the dissimilarities even between the Soho and Greenwich Village.

Without exaggeration, New York is a mega city unrivaled anywhere on earth. Because of its layout, and uniqueness, an average person can master the geography of the city within days and be able to find his way with ease but will take him years to understand the uniqueness of this great city. New York, New York is a city that is more fun to walk and window shop than to drive even at night. It is a city of immigrants from all parts of the globe tagged the most heterogeneous center of the planet earth.

Pennsylvania

*"I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination".
Jimmy Dean*

It is an industrial State located on the confluence of Monongahela and Allegheny rivers that transform into Ohio River. Each time I travel by road to Washington DC or New England, the fastest route from Athens was through Pennsylvania Turnpike. I have over the years come to know the state so well that I could travel throughout the state without a map guide. Pittsburg is only a few hours' drives from my favorite city Harrisburg the majestic state capital Susquehanna's eastern bank, with the Blue Mountains to its west and south which I frequented on weekends during my student days in Athens.

My landlord used to take me hunting wild turkeys in the forested Northern Tier Country during the summer months. He tried to introduce me to skiing at the eastern Pennsylvania Elk Mountains, but I had a natural fear of avalanche and falling from heights.

New Jersey

"Nothing is impossible; the word itself says 'I'm possible'" Audrey Hepburn

Each time I travel to New York from Athens, New Jersey represents my concept of industrial development, even though its pollution level makes me resent such kind of development. Among its big cities, only Atlantic City remained my favorite because of its relative cleaner air and its resorts. Several of my friends that work in New York reside in New Jersey, therefore, I had a reasonable idea of its parks and recreational areas. The garden state as it is popularly known as one of the great coastal playgrounds of the United State. Every year thousands of vacationer's flocks on its fine beaches and resorts.

My friend Mr. Al-Johnson's father was a fisherman in New Jersey who spends most of his carrier life at sea with his fishing trolley. I had the privilege of yachting with him on a weekend to catch game fish in the Atlantic Ocean. It was a great experience of a frightening journey into the deep seas. When we returned to his beach house with exotic catches for barbecue everyone in the neighborhood was invited to taste the great game fish. Here I met several people whose occupations are directly related

to fishing in high seas. I was tempted by some of the stories of success to engage in the business when I returned home but, for the horrible stories, I heard later forced me to change my line of thinking.

Chapter Eleven

Mission Accomplished

"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence". Vince Lombardi.

On returning from this tiring but fulfilling journey, I now had to settle down, register for the fall quarter, and select a topic for my thesis. With the great experience of seeing America first hand and learning about the wonderful achievements of the American people from the temperate regions, to the semi-tropical and desert regions; I sat out to take a course in developmental economics with the hope that I will benefit my people in Kano State. My supervisor professor Edwin Charlie gave me several topics to choose from all demanding both desk studies to actual field research. One of the topics that attracted my mind based on my educational trip around the United States was Poverty eradication through Agricultural development in third world countries but later changed my topic to the financial analysis of Petro-dollars.

In the fall of 1973, I was on short holiday to Nigeria and took the opportunity to assess the extent of migration and to interview several young men from many communities in Kano on the economic benefits of seasonal migrations. When I presented the information to my supervisor, was insufficient material to work on a Ph.D. project. I contemplated returning home to collect more information but have neither the resources nor the time to do so. Moreover, my scholarship only covers a specific time period and seeking extension may prove difficult even if I have my way in reaching to Governor Abdu Bako.

On March 16, 1974, I received my master's degree certificate with an open chance to get into the doctoral program. However, my mind was set to return to my family and assist in building our new state of Kano as suggested by my father during my last visit. I spent a few weeks in Athens, packing my books and shipping them on a piecemeal through the post office which is much cheaper than through shipping companies. Many friends in Athens helped greatly in sorting out my bills and outstanding issues with the University. I sat out for Washington DC on April 6, 1974, to collect my return ticket from the Nigerian Embassy, a usual practice at that time. The Nigerian ambassador to USA late John Garba a Kano man was quite helpful to me in not only securing my return flight ticket in time; but also gave me an introduction letter to the various embassies of western Europe for my visa.

Getting Homesick

"There are two things to aim at in life: first, to get what you want, and after that to enjoy it". L.P. Smith.

On April 10, 1974, I left DC for New York City to begin the visa process in the consular offices of European Countries. I was eager to travel through Western

Europe with my small savings and limited time the ticket offers. I was also hoping to get home to push forward radical ideas for seasonal employment projects. The additional pressure from my father to return home counted a great deal in my desire to be of service to the community that had given me so much in life.

Education in the United States in many respects has changed my perspective about life in general and has opened my mental horizon in the understanding of science, politics, religion, and society through constant interaction with various cultures and the academic environment. Campus life has been my turning point in the understanding that access to sound education is the key to the ultimate future of any nation.

My greatest concern about American value systems, however, is rooted in the moral upbringing of their youth. Morality could not be divorced from beliefs or democracy from human rights, but belief as largely a product of the environment could be altered or improved if society makes conscious choices through a sound educational system.

I have benefited immensely from the American educational system that allows every individual to progress in life at his own phase and the emphasis in understanding the principles and adapting them to real life experiences. I have through conscious efforts mirrored myself, my religion, and my culture as others see me and have adjusted my life without giving my values away to become a world citizen.

American education prepared me to evaluate my weaknesses, understand my capabilities, shed my prejudices, open my heart other peoples' views and ideas, at the same time form my opinion negatively or positively. It broadens my horizon and understanding of my environment through reading contemporary political, economic, social and religious works of literature. I have learned to compare the differences between our relatively static cultures with the western educational values that are continually changing. American educational system emphasizes the change in the individual perspective and improving social status by ensuring discontinuity of old value systems for new and improved ways of achieving the same goal. Education is the power to create something new rather than perpetuate old values.

This is more evident in the economic, financial, and business enterprises where continued improvement and development is pre-requisite to success. "Under New Management" is a constant reminder of change which American business culture adopted to attract new customers. The American political culture has caught up with the trend when liberal politicians overran the political system and voted for African Americans as Mayors, Representatives, and Senators. The recent election of Barack Obama as the first African American President proved to the world that the American dream is a reality. If you have asked me or anybody else as late as the seventies that liberal politicians in the United States would change the tide within

the next one hundred years, many will say is a dream. I was determined to pass on the benefits to my people at home.

Western Europe by Rail

"If you don't change you don't grow. If we don't grow aren't really living". Gail Sheehy

Time is the subtle thief of youthful exuberance and is the most beautiful compensation of life. I had a good education, enough money to pay for travel expenses; and above all self-confidence. I was determined to explore the European frontier as I did in the United States. It was my greatest hope and desire to see and explore European culture before I return to Nigeria. I took advantage of Europe's cheap bed and breakfast accommodations and offers by European rail network to American college students. I used my identity card to purchase a 120days Euro-pass ticket while in New York. This ticket enables me to travel on any railway line to all the fourteen countries in the then Western Europe.

Even though Ohio University was one of the pioneers in offering courses under the Overseas Study Program (OSP), as a foreign student, I was not strictly entitled for the study abroad program, but my interest in expanding my horizon beyond my culture encourages me to choose International Business as a carrier. Part of the course requirements was the ability to learn a few foreign languages. I chose French and Spanish, because of their similarities and more importantly to enable me to travel through Europe and possibly the rest of the world later in life.

I used the little vocabulary in the two languages plus English to get around most of Europe. Understanding the basics of Latin language has greatly enhanced my ability to enjoy the trip and assisted me in communicating crudely with Latin cultures.

Cultured Great Britain

"You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. What you will discover will be wonderful. What you will discover is yourself." Alan Alda

I left New York after obtaining all my visas on 15th of May 1974. The night flight to London my first stop on the journey was quite smooth. After spending one week in London, visiting places of interest The Stock Exchange, "The old Lady of Thread-needle Street" more formally called Bank of England; and some important commodities markets in the City occupied my stay. Nevertheless, I enjoyed a visit to London's most famous building the House of Parliament with its lofty clock tower, soaring 316 feet above the Thames Embankment. On the opposite side is the stately Westminster Abbey, the traditional place for coronations, royal weddings, and funeral of England's Kings and Queens.

I left by train through Dover into France, on 22 May 1974. That was the second time I had the opportunity to travel by ferry in the Sea, the first been my journey to Brussels to meet late Ambassador Mamman Daura who was posted a year earlier as

the counselor in the Nigerian Embassy. While other passengers were busy drinking, the ferry hit turbulent weather, which caused many of us to develop nausea and abdominal discomfort. Many of us threw out our breakfast causing other passengers to do the same. I was most uncomfortable and emaciated when we landed at Calais and had to see a doctor before proceeding to Paris. The doctor gave me some concoctions and kept me under observation for a while to enable reasonable recovery of body fluid.

Stunning France

"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago" Warren-Buffett.

Paris was the most beautiful city I have ever been at that time, so despite my language difficulties, I thoroughly enjoyed every minute spent in the city. Its significance as the cultural, administrative, commercial and industrial nerve of France, gives it the striking importance as the economic nerve of Latin Europe. It is crowded with important relics of long and vigorous past, ranging from ancient Roman catacombs to the soaring steel shaft of the Eiffel Tower, the city's most visible landmark. I stayed in a bed and breakfast along Boulevard De Magenta a walking distance from the Seine River. What makes Paris beautiful city is the network of historic buildings and scenic streets and boulevards. I walked through the celebrated streets north of the river, through the business and shopping areas towards the highest hill in the city into a picturesque quarter (Mont meter) where several artists display their art

I took time off to visit many places of interest while on this trip including a climb on the towering steel spire of the Eiffel Tower soaring 984 feet to the observation platform where one gets a panoramic view of the city of Paris. The Tower named after its designer Eiffel, who also designed the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor. A miniature model of the statue is in the middle of Seine River near the Eiffel Tower. Other places that caught my attention and need special mention are the Notre Dame Cathedral, Luxemburg Gardens, and Palace Sacr'e Coeur. I took the time to visit the Cluny Museum "Mus'ee de Cluny". It is a museum of the middle ages whose architecture reflects medieval Paris combining Gothic and Renaissance elements. It holds relics of France's past preserved in its two buildings acquired from a private collector in 1843. It is best known for its tapestry collections of the 15th Century, early medieval sculptures of the 7th century, antique furnishings, stained glass, illuminated manuscripts, works of gold and ivory.

One evening I decided to eat out in a typical French restaurant along the river bank. The French artistry in its cuisine has always fascinated me and had met and interacted with famous French chefs in New York during my brief stay. My most favorite French specialty is the (Chateaubriand) steak fillet and (crepes Suzette)

salmon. I went into a crowded restaurant to have my dinner one evening and was properly seated by the usher. After reading the menu, and deciding on my choice, the waiters keep passing me even after I signaled to some of them that I am ready to order. I sat patiently for several minutes without been attended by anyone, I became impatient and grabbed one of the waiters as he passes across my table and complained that nobody has attended to me. He said in derogatory French language "Vous êtes trop somber pour être remarqué ". Which translates you are too dark to be noticed.

When I lodged the complaint to his boss, he only said sorry what can we do for you? Give us your order. In annoyance, I left the restaurant and went to a roadside café and ordered some fish stew and omelet. When I told my story to a friend who lived for several years in Paris some years later, he said the French are not as racist as I thought, possibly he said it must have been a communication error. Whatever is the reason for treating me in a racist tone was unbecoming of any civilized society like Paris. I found out during my subsequent visits to France that the reason for such treatment was I spoke to them in English, not in French and therefore feel offended. The French people are very proud of their language and culture and therefore look down upon people who do not speak their language.

Splendid Spain

"What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you". Ralph-Waldo-Emerson

On 28 May 1974 after spending one week in Paris, my next travel destination by train was Madrid Spain, through Mendayo on the Atlantic Ocean. When we arrive at the French-Spanish border, at Hendaye in France and Irun on the Spanish side, I was astonished to find out that Spain under the military dictatorship of General Francisco Franco, was far more repressive than the military dictatorship I left at home in Nigeria at that time. There was a heavy presence of military men at every railway station that I traveled through.

What was evident in my mind as I walk the streets of Spanish cities, were the violent periods that peppered its colonial history. This country had been the major colonizing power of the 15th and 16th centuries. Statues of men like Cortez and Pizarro who spread Spanish influence on the West Indies and South America were visible in most public places.

Although I was not intimidated by anyone, I was nevertheless nervous as the only black man on the train attracting a crowd of children shouting Negro- Negro at almost every village train station. The children in Madrid were an exception to this, as possibly have more opportunities to see black people. The atmosphere and the children of this city seem to be more at ease with the presence of a Blackman; very

few people in buses or trains took notice of me. Even curious people in the street do not look at me more than once, let alone draw my attention.

While walking along Puerta Del Sol, I met an interesting person named Antonio Albormos, who took me to his residence along Conjunto Aveminda road, a working-class neighborhood, to meet his family. I could only communicate in single Spanish syllables from my 101-language class, limited our conversation to general greetings and simple descriptions. I had difficulty pronouncing some words with glottal emphasis like a Spanish speaking person, yet we found common ground in the basics of human communication. He took pride in driving me around the city for site seeing and introducing me to his friends.

He served me special Spanish pasta at his home and took me around Madrid and special places of interest including the famous Bullfight at the Plaza De Toros. it was my first time to witness such horrific event in which world-famous Bull fighters deliberately antagonize vicious bulls with a red flag, and systematically flick its jugular veins with spears until the bull bleeds to a point of losing consciousness; the fighter draws a sword and finally puts it to sleep. The memory of this terrible sport lingers in my mind throughout the night and many days later. The popularity of Bullfighting sport in Spain and Portugal was quite amazing. Our tickets were purchased at a premium in front of the theater from touts.

A more relaxing tour to Aquarium de Madrid, Segovia Cathedral, Avila, El-Escorial, and Toledo provides me great insight into Spanish architecture, history, and culture. Toledo is a historic, religious, and artistic city, which is on a hilltop surrounded by river Tagus. The entire city has several Gothic and Islamic architectures declared as National Monuments. The church of Cristo de La Luz was a tiny mosque in the tenth century, and still shows its Moorish birth despite more than 900 years of additions and alterations. Many other churches were originally mosques converted to churches after the crusade. Avila, on the other hand, is a medieval city on a hilltop surrounded by a wall, housing several convents and churches. He took the time to take me to Segovia Cathedral, which is one of the three most historic buildings in Spain.

I left Madrid on 4 June 1974, and headed south to Granada and Seville, after spending five days at the Hostel del Gamo. Granada's greatest monument is the Alhambra, a splendid court of Moorish kings; renovated by Washington Irving after a devastating attack by the French troops during the Napoleonic wars. Another place of tremendous interest I visited in Granada was the Generalife, the summer retreat of the Arabian Nights, beautifully laid out with gardens, terraces, grottoes, fountains, and pools. I spent only one day in Granada and headed west to Seville the heartland of Andalusia. It is a city of romance and gaiety, ruled by the Moorish for five hundred years. Its architecture reflects the various stages of its history. Founded by the Romans, then became a Visigoth capital, later a Moorish stronghold, and finally Spanish court. Many people regard the Seville Cathedral as the most beautiful

architecture in Spain. It was at that time the third largest religious structure in the world. The Alcazar is second only to Alhambra of Granada in historical interest and architectural beauty.

From Seville, I headed east to Cordoba on June 9, 1974, another Typical Andalusian town with its Moorish lanes and Islamic atmosphere once called the Athens of the west. The famous Cordoba mosque considered the greatest surviving example of Moorish architecture. Its building completed in AD 796, constructed as a Christian Cathedral by a Saint King Fernando after the city's liberation in the 19th century. I took a train to Almorchon and head towards Portugal via Merida and Bodajaz on the Spanish border.

Marvelous Portugal

"How wonderful it is that nobody needs to wait a single moment before starting to improve the world". Anne Anne-Frank. Frank.

I entered Portugal through Elvos on 13 June 1974. Even though Lisbon was the only place I spent any time in Portugal; I have, nevertheless, been able to see from the train most of the southern part of the country. I went on a day's sightseeing to important landmarks such as the Tower of Belem a fortress marking the site of Vasco da Gama's first sailing for India, Estufa Fria gardens, and Estril seaside beaches. I rounded up my day's trip after a tour of Palacio da Pena the summer home of Portuguese kings with decently Portuguese meal at the city center. Like their Spanish neighbors, Portuguese are fond of bullfighting, which begins on Easter Sunday and continues through October. I was lucky to be there in early June when their festival in honor of St. Anthony, St. John, and St. Peter takes place. Unlike the Spanish bullfighting, the Portuguese bullfighting is done on horseback, and the bull is not killed.

I left Lisbon on 21 June 1974 and headed towards Vila Real de S. Antonia its southern border with Spain, changing train at Tunes. From the Spanish border at Ayamonte, I took trains mainly nearest the southern coastline to Valencia where I spent a day visiting places of interest including the National Museum of Ceramics and Museum of Fine Arts. The National Museum of Ceramics was commissioned only eight years before my visit. Its collections featured decorated ceramic tiles, porcelain, and faience from the mid-fifteen century.

The following day I took a train to Barcelona following the coastline through Tortosa and St. Visente. I was in Barcelona in the early hours of Saturday 26 June 1974, where I found accommodation Hostall Freixes by Antonio Lopez on Paseo de Colon, for four nights giving me time to take the most needed rest. I slept most of the time that morning, and in the evening, I walked the Mediterranean Sea-shore for a seafood treat, and the abundant Museums, which stays open even during weekends. I took a

cable car ride to the top of Tibidabo Mountain just outside the city to have a fine view of the Barcelona, the Sea, and the surrounding villages.

Spectacular Southern France

"Memories of our lives, of our works and our deeds will continue in others". Rosa Parks

On my fifth day the 30th day of June, I left Barcelona, by train to Port-Bou Spanish-French border along the Mediterranean Sea Shores. From there I crossed through Southern France to Carbere, Port Vandres, and Sete. I followed the Mediterranean French coastline to Marseille where I spent two nights exploring the great city. I took a bus ride the next day through one of the most scenic picturesque highways in the world to Nice the most important city on the French Riviera. The coastline is full of casinos, and beautiful beaches, a popular summer destination for thousands of tourists from Europe. I went through Manton Monaco- Monte Carlo to Ventimiglia in Italy towards Rome my next destination via Livorno on the Mediterranean Sea.

Elegant Italy

"It is in your moments of decision that your destiny is shaped". Tony Robbins

My first impression of Italy had been a brief glimpse from the air and a stopover at the airport terminal on route London. The Euro-Pass offered me more than a cursory look at the Italian culture and cuisine. I found Italians more family oriented than the Americans and the French, and certainly more than the English. Their traffic culture could have been imported from Lagos with a dash of Italian manners thrown in.

I was in Rome by train through Grosseto following the coastline after making several stops at small-town stations, on 4 July 1974. I spent four days experiencing the great Italian city by taking day trips on an excursion to various religious and cultural sites within and outside the city. Architecturally, Rome has significant ancient buildings such as the Coliseum, the Pantheon, the Spanish steps, the Palazzo Venezia and St. Peters Basilica at the Vatican City. I was particularly amazed by what I saw at the Vatican's St. Peters Basilica the holiest shrine of the Catholic religion hosting not only shrines and artifacts but thousands of pilgrims and tourists from the world over. The Vatican Museums has a world-class collection of artworks that span more than two millennia including Egyptian, Greek, Roman as well as Renaissance masterpieces by famous artists like Raphael, and Michelangelo.

On the 8th of July 1974, I took a train to Milan on my way to Switzerland, where I will meet with an acquaintance working with the United Nations to collect some documents of interest. On the train, I sat opposite two young Italian girls who obviously were amused by my presence and shortly started giggling wanting to open discussions with me. I pretended not noticing their excitements by opening my bag to bring out my itinerary map and glancing at it at the same time looking at them through the semi-translucent paper. Within the first half hour, one of them looked at

me and asked in Italian who am I, but I told her that I do not speak Italian, and then she said, "Are you Americano?" I said no African, and then she said in simple English where are you going on this train? I said Milan and then to Switzerland. Are you a footballer? I said I do not know how to play. Then what are you? I said a student from America. Do you know anybody in Italy? I said no but have acquaintances during this trip. Our conversation in short sentences went on for about an hour asking the usual questions about jungle life in Africa, and polygamy in Islam.

On arriving in Milan in the evening, the most striking landmark from the train window was the Gothic Cathedral one of the largest in Europe built in white marble. I spent only about seven hours to catch my next train to Bern in Switzerland. My immediate impression of the city is it's enterprising and accommodating people ready to assist tourist to find their way to sites of interest. The cuisine mainly pasta, spaghetti, pizza, and lasagna were readily available in every street with cappuccino coffee stands to attract pedestrians every few meters.

Switzerland earthly Paradise

"All you need is the plan, the road map, and the courage to press on to your destination". Earl Nightingale.

Our train left Milan terminal the same day at around 11 pm and arrived in the city of Bern early in the morning of 9 July 1974, through the rugged and beautiful Alps terrain. I spent the night watching through the window the mountainous landscape littered with a variety of electric lights. Bern is the political capital of the confederation located on a peninsula formed by the Aare river. The city has a medieval atmosphere, with arcades over the sidewalks, and ornate fountains. The bear heraldic symbol of the city is represented everywhere, especially the famous Bear Pit, where living specimens attract many visitors. I took a day tour to important places including the Cathedral, which has a lofty spire and beautiful stained-glass windows; the Clock Tower, which has an hourly display of moving mechanical figures; the Federal Palaces; and the twelve museums devoted to everything from the Renaissance art to Alpine crafts. On the following day, I took a train on 11 July 1974 to Luzerne; it was a commuter train full of businesspersons and other people working in the neighboring cities. Lucerne is the capital of its canton, situated at the foot of Lake Lucerne, was worth the visit. Besides its scenic attractions, there are many historic treasures within its medieval walls. The Chapel and Mill Bridges offered me an existing view of Swiss history. It was a long covered wooden bridge originally built in 1333 considered to be the oldest covered bridge in Europe. Inside the covered area was a series of paintings from the 17th century depicting events from Lucerne's history. The bridge tower is the city's most famous landmark as it raises high above the skyline.

In the late evening, I proceeded with my journey in the evening to Zurich capital of the canton and the largest city in Switzerland, situated on the western bank of Lake Zurich. It was a city without smoke or slums. It is a harmonious blend of old and new with several historical sites including the Swiss National Museum. I was able to visit the famous University of Zurich and the Jung Institute, where I met several international students at the cafeteria. Two nights in this most beautiful city, I took a train to Wien the cultural capital of Europe and the capital city of Austria on the 14th of July. The journey through the breathtaking terrain was one of the most exhilarating experiences of my life. The train cuts through the rocky valleys full of commuters with their briefcases dressed in formal business suits speaking in multi-lingual tones.

Austria Inordinately Delightful Scenery

"The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have". Vince Lombardi

I deliberately took a morning train to enable me to see the beautiful scenery of the Alps. It was an express electric train with limited stops at important city stations such as Innsbruck the Tyrolean capital, and Salzburg capital of the province and gateway to the Salzkammergut region within Austria. Salzburg has always been one of my must-see cities because of the sceneries in the famous film (Sound of Music). Vienna has long been the artistic center of Europe and its museums are veritable treasure houses of the arts. I visited the famous Kunsthistorisches Museum of Fine Arts, rebuilt after the World War II contains one of the most important Egyptian collections in existence; an array of Greek and Roman antiquities; the priceless Cellini saltcellar; the most important works of Pieter Brueghel and many notable artists. I was able to visit the home of many famous people including the home of Sigmund Freud, and Beethoven. I spent four days exploring Vienna's rich cultural sites around the Old University and the narrow old side streets on foot.

I spent the whole day exploring the Schonbrunn Palace, a great site full of wonders, with its 1,400 rooms lavishly furnished in the rococo style. I went through the Imperial Apartments once occupied by Napoleon and Maria Theresa, which was open to the public. Its grandeur and lavish style furniture were a reminder to its past exuberant glory.

Decorous Germany

"Don't limit yourself. Many people limit themselves to what they think they can do. You can go as far as your mind lets you. What you believe, remember, you can achieve". Mary Kay Ash

I left Vienna on July 19, 1974, for Munchen in West Germany, once again through the beautiful scenery of Salzburg. Munich offered yet another chance to visit an Olympic city site. I was able to see the site preparation for 1976 at Montreal Canada; I visited the Olympic Museum at Lausanne Switzerland, and now a just-concluded

site at this city that is often referred to as the Rome of Germany because of its many churches. I took time to visit some of the Museums including the Deutsches Museum then the largest museum of technology in the world. There were several collections of Bavarian Royal collections in almost every museum in Munich. The Hellabrunn Zoological Gardens, with its extensive collection a variety of animal species, was then the largest in West Germany. I was able to climb to the head of the Statue of Bavaria, the symbol of the land and the people, for a spectacular view of the city. I proceeded to Stuttgart an industrial center, which later became one of my regular German destinations in the 1980s when I was establishing a soft drink factory in Kano. From Stuttgart, I proceeded to Frankfurt on 21 July 1974 and spent two nights visiting some of the places of interest including the Central Market Hall and a few museums. Frankfurt is a commercial city and the hub of communications and air transport of mainland Europe.

On 23 July 1974, I left for the then capital city of West Germany Bonn. I took only a day to visit important sites of the city including the Houses of Parliament, the Bonn Zoological Museum, and Popplesdorf Castle. I spent a few hours exploring the city before I left for Köln where I met a group of children on an excursion at the famous Cologne Cathedral, who mistook me for famous Brazilian football legend Pele.

The children asked me some questions in German, but since I did not understand what they are asking, I continued to nod my head as a courtesy. It took more than an hour for me to descend from the 515-foot tower as more and more children frantically amused; seek my individual attention by giving me their notebooks, postcards etc., for my autograph. I spent the evening enjoying a piece of cultural music at the Old Town Hall.

On the morning of 26 July 1974, I took the first train to Hamburg, where I was scheduled to meet with an old friend Peter Brandies a German student in my University married to a black American woman who teaches English at University of Hamburg. He was at the train station "Hauptbahnhof" on the appointed time to pick me to his house in the suburbs. His widowed mother lost her husband in the series allied air raids on Hamburg during the World War II. She was so enthusiastic to meet with me for the first time even though we were in communication long before my visit. Peter helped her in preparing a wonderful German barbeque lunch to welcome me to Germany. Hamburg will later become one of my most favorite cities in Europe because of my friendship with several people including Peter and his family.

Hospitable Denmark

"Two roads diverged in a wood and me, I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference". Robert Frost.

I left Hamburg after spending three nights with Peter's family to the city of Copenhagen in Denmark. The train journey was most inspiring as we pass small farmhouses with several Friesian cattle grazing in the open fields. I was at Copenhagen main station, in the late afternoon on 29 July 1974, and had time to visit some few places before retiring to my bed and breakfast hotel. The following day I took a tour of the famous Amalienborg Palace Square, the Royal Palace of Glucksborg, where I watched the Royal Guard parade. In the afternoon, I went on another tour of Denmark's Aquarium one of the largest in Europe. In the evening, I went to Tivoli, a fairytale garden at the heart of Copenhagen, offering a variety of entertainments, including the Trivoli Guards Match and fireworks.

The Danish People are quite friendly, cautious, highly educated and trusting. They are considered the happiest people on earth in studies from 1973. My most memorable experience in Denmark was a lunch dinner invitation I received from a family I met at the Aquarium that had worked as Christian Missionaries in Central Africa. We discussed issues of leadership and corruption, environmental degradation, cultural cohesion and education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Accommodating Sweden

"Change your thoughts and you change your world". Norman Vincent Peale

On 1 August 1974, I took the morning train to Stockholm the capital city of Sweden. Against the background of rich cultural traditions and modernity, Stockholm lies on a cluster green-clad rocky islands that mark the entrance of Lake Malar into the Baltic. One of the first buildings that caught my eyes in the city was the rose-colored City Hall; built on an Island, with a wide quay bordered by tall poplars. The building is a combination of classical and modern styles. I also took a tour of the famous house of Prince Eugene, Sweden's painter prince, whose artwork was displayed in the art gallery adjacent to the mansion. From there we were driven to the Royal Palace, another impressive structure erected between 1697 and the end of the 18th century; and then to Nordic Museum and Royal Armory. Before leaving Stockholm, I visited the Rosendal Palace on Djurgaden Island in central Stockholm and the Maritime Museum for naval history, merchant shipping, and shipbuilding.

My general assessment of the Swedish people was that they are generally shy and do not want to talk even among themselves. They, however, are great nature lovers who put into beautiful landscapes in their homes and public places. They love Fika a coffee with icing on top and kakor cake midday break. It is about the only time other than at beer pubs when they open to talking to friends and associates.

On 4 August, I left Stockholm and headed to Ostersud to see Northern Sweden. It was still summer where the sun hardly set for six months. Our Train arrives Ostersud via Sundsvall on the Gulf of Bothnia in the midnight, but it was like four in the evening in Nigeria. I was very amazed by this phenomenon, which I learned in my secondary school geography lessons as "The land of the midnight sun". My inner consciousness kept thinking that it was daytime. I spent the rest of the night watching the movement of the sun in a circular manner from my hotel room.

From Ostersud I traveled west to Storlein on the Norwegian border to Trondheim on the Arctic Ocean. I earlier planned to travel further north to Norvic in the Arctic Circle, but the trains to Norvic were not so regular and had to change my plans to travel south to Oslo due to time constraint.

Placid Norway

"Whoever is happy will make others happy too". Anne Frank

The journey to Oslo was equally exciting; here I spent two nights exploring the city. One of the most striking features of Oslo is the waters of Oslo fjord, where modern ships and graceful sailing yachts fill the area. The elegant Royal Norwegian Yacht Club structure projects out into the water adorned by numerous modern pleasure craft.

Oslo has several museums and art galleries that it is almost impossible for me to see them all in the space of two days I spent in the city. I was, however, able to visit some fabulous ones such as the Theatrical Museum, Museum of Applied Arts, and National Gallery. I spent most of my days walking in The Royal Palace garden, which was surprisingly open to the public at the time. Before leaving the city, I had a quick tour of The Nobel Institute and later the Akershus Castle and Fortress, built on a cliff for more than 700 years.

My biggest problem in Oslo was directional re-orientation. On several occasions, I had to seek the assistance of others to locate my hostel accommodation because it was about the beginning of the winter season. The sun rotates in the horizons rather than move from east to west as I am used to. The receptionist in the hostel I stayed was an Indian immigrant who came to Norway many years ago told me that in a few weeks the sun will disappear as winter approaches. He told me that the nights will be much longer than in the UK and the days only a few hours long.

I learned from him that winter is a period of isolation and loneliness in that part of the world. It is the time of suicide, mental illness, and desperation among many people particularly the elderly. It was unbelievable irony for a people who were said to be among the happiest in the world could be lonely and desperate to take their lives. I personally experienced a few days of such lonesomeness in the winter months of 1972 when I rented a mobile home in the outskirts of Athens. I realized that winter

in the Arctic would, therefore, be more desolate and furnishing for people without families.

The ingenious Netherlands

"The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity". Ellen Parr

On 9 August 1974, I took a ferry to the Netherlands and landed in Amsterdam, where I spent another two nights exploring the City. Many canals and hundreds of bridges lace the city. I took a whole day tour of the ancient city, and everywhere along the way are 17th Century step-gabled houses, historic churches, and ancient towers. On the second day, I took another tour from the city to Brock; a charming village where the sidewalks are scrubbed every day, and glazed tiles gleam in the sun.

The Dutch society is egalitarian, individualistic and modern. They tend to view themselves as modest, independent and self-reliant; who value ability over dependency. They are proud of their cultural heritage, rich history in art. Dutch egalitarianism is the idea that people are equal, especially from a moral point of view, and accordingly, causes the somewhat ambiguous stance the Dutch have towards hierarchy and status.

While Dutch people have the reputation of being the leaders in environmental management; many of them are irreligious. Religion in the Netherlands is generally considered as a very personal matter which is not supposed to be propagated in public. Therefore, their laws permit all kinds of freedoms that are contrary to the ethical teachings of religions. Prostitution, alcoholism, and many other vices are allowed particularly in the cities red light districts.

Belgium the Spirit of Europe

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands but seeing with new eyes". Marcel Proust

I took a train to Brussels in Belgium on the early hours of 12 August 1974 on the final leg of my tour of Europe. I arrive in the city at noon and had plenty of energy to go sightseeing. The showcase of Bruxelles is the Flower Market at the Grand' Palace Town Hall Square, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts and of Natural History, and the King's Palace. Belgium is one of the most densely populated countries in the world and has been throughout history a recurrent battlefield.

Belgium is known for medieval towns, Renaissance architecture and as headquarters of the European Union and NATO. The country has distinctive regions including Dutch-speaking Flanders to the north, French-speaking Wallonia to the south and a German-speaking community to the east. In 1972, I visited this country for one week with Ambassador Mamam Daura then a consular officer in the Nigerian Embassy in Brussels. His wife Maryam had two adopted children of kindergarten age that speak neither French nor English. She registered them in a special boarding school an hour

drive from the city of Brussels. When we arrived at the school premises, the principal interviewed them in sign language and asked us to leave them with her. On our way back even as a trained teacher, I was full of sympathy for both the teachers and the children. A few months later, I was surprised to learn that they were fluent in the French language.

Luxembourg the home of Impartiality

"You can do anything, but not everything". David Allen

On 14 August 1974, I took a one-day trip to Luxembourg a small European country, surrounded by Belgium, France, and Germany. It's mostly rural, with dense Ardennes forest and nature parks in the north, rocky gorges of the Mullerthal region in the east and the Moselle river valley in the southeast. Its capital, Luxembourg City, is famed for its fortified medieval old town perched on sheer cliffs.

This is a unique independent country maintained their identity despite linguistic differences. Almost all Luxembourgers speak Letzburgesch, a form of German dialect. French and German are taught in schools, but most books and newspapers are printed in German. The courts use French, and the Parliament uses all the three languages. This is a city where the Community's Court of Justice has its Headquarters. I was amazed by the beauty and grandeur of the Grand Ducal Palace and its surroundings. Later in the evening, I took a train back to Brussels from where I was to catch my flight back to London the next day. Back in London, I took a few days to reflect on my European tour and to take some rest with friends before going home finally.

Concluding European Tour

"Everyone is a genius at least once a year. The real geniuses simply have their bright ideas closer together". Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

My general impression of Europe from Great Britain, to Northern, Southern, and Western Europe; was that its people and culture even though provincial in features, was characteristically universal. The services on trains from one country or region to another are quite similar. Europeans generally have an attachment to tradition and love for linguistic identity which was evident wherever I visited. However, historical ties keep this very fragmented society together. Throughout my three-month travel, my greatest interest was in identifying the provinciality and universality of customs, traditions, and legendary traits within the regions and within the countries.

I was particularly interested in understanding how culture, education, religion, and climatic environment, affect their successes and failures in the management of their societies. I was able to gather a substantial amount of works of literature pertaining to each country and region before I embark on my journey. I had, therefore, planned my trip with the aid of a student guide book (Europe Under One Dollar a day) which

I bought in a New York bookstore. I have carefully selected places to see, stay and how much time to spend in each country or region.

In Scandinavia, for example, Denmark was one of the oldest monarchies in history, with an unbroken line of kings over 1,000 years. Yet at the same time, it was one of the most progressive, democratic nations on earth, as are the other Nordic countries. In the Western European group of countries, at least three Germany, France, and Austria have long and been the rulers of empires that at one time or the other covered most of Europe. In the 20th century alone Germany has seen the rise of power twice, followed by an evitable downfall after long and bloody wars. Switzerland remained neutral during World War II, but the Germans occupied France, Austria, The Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg; while France has its heyday after the French Revolution, when Napoleon, for a brief period in history, rock the continent and created its vast empire. Austria, on the other hand, had under its heel in the days of Hapsburgs, an area fifty times its size.

The history of Southern Europe is one of invasions, wars, and brilliant periods of conquest and colonization that shone with some of the finest minds the world has known. The development of western culture and civilization started more than 2,500 years ago in Greece, where the Greek Civilization flourished for a brief period in history. Today you can see the ruins as evidence of that era from Greece, to Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

The Romans conquered the ancient world, by taking over most of its territories. They extended their influence as far north as the British Isles, but the country suffered countless invasions, bloody wars, and constant pillage, resulting in a chaos of warring often-antagonistic independent states.

The Spanish people were subjected to violent periods in history, once the head of the great empire where according to historians; "the sun never set" Spain was the major colonizing power in the 15th and 16th centuries. Men like Cortez and Pizarro settled the West Indies and South America; these conquests gradually filled the Spanish treasuries with a vast amount of gold and silver. By the start of the 20th century, Spain had lost all its possessions in the New World except the language and culture.

Portugal too had its peak as a colonial power of the 16th century, and its people conserve many of the traditions and customs of the old. It is a land of castles and quiet fishing villages.

Great Britain is one of the most familiar of all in geographical terms, but few people know what it includes. The official definition of "the British nation" means, "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island." Great Britain, therefore, embraces England, Scotland, and Wales, all on one island. Not officially, a part of Great Britain, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man are geographically included in this region. Often referred to as a "right little, tight little isle." Britain is one of the

largest and most densely populated islands in the world, and the seat of British Commonwealth which joins in common bond nearly one-fourth of the earth's inhabitants. Britain has retained a vast multitude of interesting customs, traditions, and legends, many of which are very familiar to the rest of the world.

Chapter Twelve

Stepladder

"Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away". Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

On August 21, 1974, I took my flight back to Kano from London Heathrow Airport on board Boeing 707 Nigeria Airways nine months after another Boeing 707 crash this time at Kano Airport, which took the life of 171 pilgrims plus crew members from Saudi Arabia. I met on the plane a childhood friend and a member of the supreme military council wing Commander Muhtar Mohammed returning from an overseas assignment with his air force colleagues.

He directed the airline ground staff to upgrade my ticket to first class so that we can talk. I was out of the country and had no real contact with him since they took over power from General Agui Ironsi in 1967. He introduced me to his colleagues, and we sat on the journey at 10 pm and arrives at Kano at about 4 am. Unknown to me my father has invited several family members and friends to welcome my arrival home who were at the airport many hours earlier.

The flight was to make a stopover in Kano for us to disembark on its way to Lagos its destination. He asked me if anyone is coming to meet me but deliberately told him no one is aware of my arrival to escape the harassment of airport officials. He directed the airport commander who was waiting on the tarmac to meet with him to ensure that he gives me a vehicle to take me home in the city.

It was my first-time enjoying VIP treatment at the airport. I was ushered out of the airport in an air force vehicle to my residence while my luggage and my passport were delivered to me later in the morning. My father and his entourage waited for hours at the airport until the last passenger was checked out. They left the airport disappointed and returned home but to their surprise met me there.

Difficult choices

"If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well" Martin Luther King Jr.

On return to Nigeria, I had several jobs offers mainly from multinational companies such as the Unilever group, UAC, and Tate & Lyle who are quite familiar with my potentials as an MBA from the United States. My father, on the other hand, was making separate arrangements for my absorption into the civil service in Kano State Government, who paid my scholarship. He said it is dishonorable not to contribute the family's quota to the development of the young state. He lectured for several days and even threatened not to bless any job offer except the state government. I took his views very seriously and went back to my teaching job at the Kano Staff

Development Center as a senior lecturer, but due to my exposure, I found the job not challenging enough and seek to find a more challenging teaching appointment with the Bayero University Kano.

I approached Professor John Paden then head of social studies with the idea, as an old friend was quite enthusiastic about me working under him. Within a week, he brought me an offer as a senior lecturer, but my father still wants me to serve the state government, as an administrator or any other remotely connected within the state civil service structure. I understand his reasoning been in the civil service all his life, therefore feels there is no job security outside the system.

Since I was already in the employment of the State even before I left for the United States; a childhood friend of mine Abubakar Rano through his contact in the ministry of works, secured accommodation for me at the newly constructed apartments at Suleiman Crescent. It was quite a decent three-bedroom apartment with plenty of garden space even though it was impossible to keep a garden in that area due to many grazing animals in the area. My salary as a lecturer at the Staff training Center was enough for me, to meet my family expenditures; but honestly the level of my students mainly clerical officers from different ministries made me discontent with the job. I kept on with this job despite my greater desire to find a challenging job just to please my father.

Finding Employment

"A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives". Jackie Robinson

While I was in the United States in 1972, my former lecturer and team leader of the US AID project in Kano professor Edward Baum invited me for a dinner with his family in Athens. During after-dinner discussions, I brought the topic of drought in Northern Nigeria and asked him his opinion and suggestions on how to engage our youth in meaningful employment as a solution to annual migration (chirani). He suggested the only solution against seasonal migration around Kano and northern states is the establishment of a body like the Tennessee Valley Authority. He gave me the historical background and its achievements over the years.

I avail myself with the TVA model and the various studies commissioned by Sir Ahmadu Bello Sardaunan Sokoto in the sixties, which have not been executed due to lack of funds but has assured me that the US AID was fully committed to getting the projects off the ground. I received a copy of the studies, which helped me in writing a lengthy letter in 1972, to my uncle Malam Inuwa Dutse the commissioner of Agriculture and Natural Resources in Kano State, asking him to revisit the idea, and to ensure Kano State Government's participation in the exercise. I sent him a copy of the report just in case he was not aware of its contents. Sometimes in 1973, when I traveled home to visit my family. I took time to visit him at his farmhouse in the outskirts of Kano city to find out what he made of the report. He was quite

pleased with it and assured me that Kano State Governor is seriously executing the report. He told me already some of the projects like Bagauda Dam are at completion, and Tiga Dam is in the pipeline. Other projects in the livestock sector are under study. He told me that a committee of professionals from his Ministry and Ministry of Economic planning is been supported by a team of experts from India and Pakistan to implement all the report. Luckily, all the members of the committee were enthusiastic about the proposal and took very little time to come up with a strong recommendation for the establishment of a separate agency like American TVA to support Ministry of Agriculture's efforts in promoting agricultural activities in rural areas during the dry seasons.

One month after my return from the United States, in 1974 I was invited to meet with Governor Abdu Bako in his office, to receive a letter of appointment to work with the new agency (ALDA) as its marketing manager. He introduced me to the new General Manager and some key staff who were there to receive their letters. I accepted the offer and sent my curriculum-data to the newly appointed General Manager [an Indian retired Army General Barma] who at one time was retired commandant of Defense Academy Kaduna.

The establishment of the Agency by Governor Abdu Bako as the commercial and developmental arm of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal husbandry was expected to work independently of ministerial controls for efficiency. The idea of independence did not go down well with the Ministry's conservative establishment. They viewed the creation as an effort to make the ministry's workers redundant as all the lucrative functions except fertilizer distribution were transferred to the Agency. Kadawa irrigation scheme, the dairy farms, cold stores, fattening ranches, were at that time receiving substantial grants from government budgets. On the personal side, no ministry official could transfer his services to the new Agency for fear of contaminating the agency with the same old ideas of doing things the same way. Many of us except clerical came from the private sector, with the majority of senior management staff recruited from India, Pakistan, and Ghana. Our composition further aggravated parted comments and unsavory remarks from government functionaries, particularly our salary structure which puts us ahead of our contemporaries in the government. We had encountered serious animosities, sabotages, and blackmails in the course of our work from the ministry staff, who saw us as imposters and incapable of running the agency.

It was my first real Job, after graduation, which I tried to do my best and prove to our detractors that we can make the difference. My office was the hub of activities in the Agency where all contracts were initiated assessed and awarded to deserving contractors. I insisted and trained my staff on the principle of fairness, and accountability. Our daily 10 am y-briefing with my senior staff was to remind them of our commitment to serve our state and our people. The regimentation made my

staff conscious and thorough in ensuring proper documentation in their daily routine. The procedure was our saving grace, particularly when facing (Al-Hakim) inquiry tribunal instituted after the counter-coup in 1975.

Despite all the setbacks from hostilities we encountered from the Ministry of Agriculture, we were able to make substantial contributions to the development of agriculture and livestock production in Kano state. We were able to establish and sustain the Kadawa irrigation scheme the first of its kind in the federation, Bagauda cattle Dairy, Rano fattening project, Tiga cattle ranch, Sabon Gari cold meat market, Kano modern abattoir and a host of other projects.

Mother's Death

"Grief and Pain is inevitable but suffering or wailing is optional". Proverb

She was sick for about two weeks before coming to Kano for medical treatment. As a senior civil servant, my family members were entitled to use the facilities of Nasarawa Hospital the best of its time. I took the opportunity to admit her in the early hours of April 10, 1975. After several tests, confirmed that she was suffering from cancer of the liver, thus limiting her chance of survival to a few days or weeks. She died on April 16, 1975, at 8.35 pm, and had to wait the following morning of April 17, for the funeral rites. Her remains buried at Gyadi-Gyadi graveyard.

Her death was the most painful loss that I ever experienced, and it took me several weeks to come to terms with the reality of her death. An old friend (Dan Maraya) orphaned from childhood came to commiserate with me and said to me, I have no reason to grief for at least I have known my parents. Indeed, one of the greatest lessons I learned after my mother's death was to face the future with determination and courage. I have come to realize that pondering on sad events is fruitless and damaging to my mental health. Yet from time to time, I kept missing her kindness, love, and invaluable advice in making strategic decisions.

Third Military Coup de tar

"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That is why it is called the present". Proverb

The 30th July 1975 military coup led by General Murtala Ramat Mohammed brought in a hostile regime that sees nothing good in the previous administration. Our Agency was the first victim of the new administration. A Commission of inquiry established under the Chairmanship of a respected economist Ali Al-Hakim to investigate our operation and to make recommendations to the government. The committee exonerated us from corruption but recommended the scraping of the agency. Nobody amongst us was surprised, as even before the Commission commenced proceedings, we wrote hand over notes as requested by the government. There was euphoria in Kano as well as many parts of Nigeria when the new

administration started sacking top civil servants in the Federal and State Services to curb nepotism and corruption in government.

After been exonerated from all financial impropriety by the committee, I was offered to go back to my teaching job at the Staff Training Center. Considering the humiliation, we received from the new government, and lack of appreciation of our contributions to the development of agriculture in the state, I declined any overtures from the government. I had several opportunities lined up for me in the private sector, therefore felt queasy about working with any government establishment. I had also a great opportunity to return to the United States for a Ph.D. program, but my mother's death has unsettled my father and made him more dependent on me and my brother. He needed more time and someone close to pacify and counsel him. I remained in Kano for five months pondering on the different opportunities around and their prospects.

A Sick Child in the family

"Happiness is a choice; you can choose to be happy. There's going to be stress in life, but it's your choice whether you let it affect you or not." Valerie Bertinelli

My wife was pregnant and delivered her second child on December 13, 1975. The baby girl was named after my late mother Fatima Binta nicknamed Jamilah. She was quite an adorable baby but later turned out to be afflicted with sickle-cell mania disease. Her mother and I had sleepless nights not knowing exactly what was wrong with her until much later when we discovered why she was constantly sick. An air force medical doctor who married my personal secretary paid us a visit in April 1977 and found the baby in critical condition. He suggested a blood test to ascertain the causes as he suspects the child might be suffering from either malaria or other diseases he did not elaborate.

The following morning my wife took the baby to the hospital where her blood samples were taken for laboratory tests. The following week the result came out as sickle-cell positive. It was devastating news for us and particularly her young mother who spent sleepless nights taking care of the sick baby from a disease that has no known cure. She endured the psychological trauma with grace and determination to raise her child in the best possible manner. She made several inquiries about the disease from the few medical experts at the time.

New Nigeria Development Company

"The purpose of human life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others". Albert Schweitzer

While searching for a challenging job, on the first week of March 1976, I received a phone call from a friend late Abdulkadir Ahmed, to come to Kaduna for an interview with the NNDC management soon. Unknown to me the recommendation to employ

me was from my close friend Isma'ila Usman who was leaving the company to go back to the UK for more advanced studies.

Malam Abidu Yazid head of investment and my new boss Mr. Peter Stone conducted the interview. Immediately after the interview, I was asked to wait and receive my offer of appointment from the office of the Managing Director Malam Hamza Zayyad, who was also taking over from Malam Musa Bello. On my resumption date April 1, 1976, I was introduced to the Group Chairman Malam Ahmad Talib for a briefing. He congratulated me for passing the interview to join the prestigious northern development outfit; and warned me of the task ahead. He said to me "You must be prepared to be part of the NNDC group culture start early and close very late." I found within the first few weeks what the group Chairman told me to be true. It was almost impossible to finish a day's work within the eight-hour day. Morning meetings and briefings take about one hour or two, and then office work and assignments take the rest of our day. Weekends were hardly free except when I travel out of Kaduna. The most striking thing about the NNDC group was its amazing esprit de corps among staff.

NNDC leadership recognizes the importance of individual contribution to corporate existence. There was a total link between task needs, team maintenance needs, and individual needs. We work as a group and take group responsibilities for success and or failures. Our families enjoy the same spirit of cooperation regardless of ethnic or religious background. What bounded us was the spirit of Northernism the foundation of which the late premier of the northern region set as its objective and development of the northern economy as its goal. Even the expatriate staff and their families share with us this spirit of Northernism at work and at our leisure activities.

My boss at the Agricultural Investment desk was an Englishman named Peter Stone. While my work colleagues were Mr. Bitrus Datiri a soil scientist from Jos Plateau, our accountant another Englishman Mr. Paul Montello, our agronomist an Australian Mr. Noel Hug, and our finance manager Malam Shehu Mohammed, [now Falakin Kano], while our company legal secretary from Kwara Alhaji R. O. Sanni.

NNDC offered me a great opportunity to broaden my education in project planning and analysis at Bradford University in the United Kingdom. Immediately after my return from the UK, I was given the responsibility of coordinating various agricultural projects under our company's management. I left the investment desk and took charge of the Tea and Coffee plantations on the Mambilla Plateau, Rice and Kenaf projects at Sabon Gida in Kaduna State, and more importantly working with international consultants for the various River Basin Development Authorities.

Mambilla– Coffee and Tea Plantations

"Education must not simply teach work - it must teach Life". W. E. B. Du Bois.

One of our associate companies was the Nigerian Beverages Production Company, which has its office in Yola then the capital of Gongola State. One of my primary assignments was to oversee the technical administration of the Company and to advise on policy decisions to the parent Company. Our Company was a shareholder and manager in the (NBPC) project that was owned by the Federal and Gongola State Governments. Historically, the Northern Nigeria Government initiated and established the farm in the early '60s as a trial coffee agricultural estate on the Mambilla Plateau to prop up the traditional small coffee farmers. In 1976 the new General Manager of Nigerian Agricultural Promotions Company Ltd Mr. Peter Stone, convince the Federal Government to abandon the idea and invest in tea plantation instead. He supported his argument with full soil analysis which was carried out by our team that found the high acidity content of the soil on the plateau; is not suitable for commercial coffee production. After several meetings with experts from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture under its Permanent Secretary Mr. Akpata the decision to establish Tea, plantation nurseries was agreed upon.

We engaged the services of world-renowned Tea experts such as Duncan Mr. Scobey, Noel Hag and two Italians. They tutored me over the period the rudiments of Tea and Coffee plantation management. Our first experimental plantation was in Ngouruje a small village on the peak of the Mambilla plateau. The farmers on the plateau have been growing Robusta coffee since the early fifties when the Northern Nigerian government introduced coffee as a cash crop in both Ilorin and Adamawa provinces. The technical partners chose the 7,000ft Mambilla plateau for high land tea production because of its sub-tropical climate, with frequent rain and high humidity makes it ideal for the crop. They also found Ba-Isa a heavily forested area below the plateau suitable for low land species.

We imported thousands of different seedling species from Kenya and India and nurtured them at our nurseries. When we were ready for full commercial production the highland teas at Ngouruje, and the lowland teas at Ba-Isa have an exquisite and delicate flavor that London Tea Testers compared favorably with the world's best. The Tea was graded into three distinct flush harvests of light aromatic, strong taste, and (CTC) a lesser quality for general consumption.

University of Bradford

"Victory belongs to the most persevering" Napoleon Bonaparte

While serving the second year in line with NNDC policy, Mr. Peter Stone recommended that I should participate in a nine-month postgraduate study in project planning and analysis at Bradford University. Life at Bradford was quite fascinating but lonely because I chose to stay with a family in the suburban area of Shipley. The

head of the family professor Austin a management and marketing consultant was a very interesting person who finds my stay in the cottage a great source of cultural interaction. He likes to engage me in cross-cultural discussions as both of us were interested in international marketing. Morehead lane was a quiet winding road in Shipley a suburban area of Bradford city.

I was commuting every day from Shipley bus stop, which was a short distance from oak cottage to the campus by bus through the beautiful scenery of Yorkshire. The younger members of the family were also nice to me and often serve me afternoon teas and occasionally invite me for dinner. My biggest problem was the lack of fiber in the typical English diet, which does not suit my system and often causes digestion problem. I developed serious constipation within the first month in the house, which developed into serious hemorrhoids.

My Doctor advises me to abandon my diet and change my eating habits to more fiber foods like what I eat at home. It was my first experience of hemorrhoids and was terrified by the bleeding in my stool and general discomfort in my bowel movements. I suffered continuous affliction until the late 90's when I finally changed my eating habits entirely to fruits and vegetables.

Yorkshire and indeed Bradford city and its neighboring towns were industrial giants of industrial England. The area was famous for textiles, steel, and related industries, thereby attracting many immigrants from Pakistan and India. The Asian communities have their mosques and Halal restaurants where the food is not only tolerable to my system but also to my faith.

It was an intensive course covering all aspects of project planning and analysis in rural and agricultural projects worldwide. Hardly do we have time within the nine-month period to travel outside the city except on educational visits, scheduled only on weekends. Our classes start at 8.30am and close at 5.00pm with tea breaks and lunch in between. This was in great contrast to what I am familiar with in the American education system.

Booker Agriculture International

"In school, you're taught a lesson and then given a test. In life, you're given a test that teaches you a lesson", Tom Bodett.

Immediately after completing the Bradford program, I was attached to Booker Agriculture International London office for three months. At the Bloomsbury House, I worked with a team of agricultural scientists, who were partners to chart out logistics for a new contract awarded by the Nigerian Government for a detailed land use study of the Niger, Chad, and Hadejia-Jama'are River Basins. Our team leader Dr. Neville Mutter was an experienced agricultural scientist who commands great respect internationally. Appointed by Booker Agriculture International Limited, Dr.

Mutter led the study, after assembling young and dynamic scientists in the various fields of agriculture from the UK and Nigeria to carry out the study.

I arrived back in Kaduna with the team and immediately commenced work on both fronts for a period of six months charting the valleys of the affected river basins in detail using the latest satellite technologies of the time. My main responsibility was to organize our schedules and to administer our camps with the support of a few assistants. Procurements of essentials, including fuel, erecting tents vested on one of my assistants. It was a difficult period even though relatively comfortable in terms of sleeping facilities and food. In a period of emergency, our medical team has secured a small fix-wing aircraft belonging to Lema Jibrin (Dan Iyan Katsina) that lands and takes off even on dirt roads. One day, we were flying back to Kaduna from Ilorin run into a storm, forcing the pilot to land on a small dirt road near what is now Shiroro Dam. We quickly pushed the aircraft behind a borrow pit to shield it from the wind and anchored it to a tree. The villagers were terrified thinking that it was a crash. They came out to give us all the necessary support. When they discovered that we were safe, their attention and curiosity turned to the aircraft, as that was the first time many of them have seen an aircraft on the ground. After the storm was over and we were about to take off, many of them offered yam tubers as gifts to the pilot, but to their disappointment, our small aircraft could not carry any extra weight. On April 17, 1978, we submitted the final report to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture through the Niger River Basin Development Authority. Unfortunately, however, one of our vehicles was involved in a ghastly accident on our way to Ilorin to present the report. Our top Soil Scientist Mr. Bitrus Datiri lost his life along with other supporting staff. His funeral at his home town of Sho in Plateau State took several hours of mourning as the entire village stood still commiserating with the family.

Isyaku Rabi'u Group of Companies

"The difference between a successful person and others is not in the lack of strength, not lack of knowledge, but rather lack of will". Vince Lombardi

In December of 1978, the NNDC board came up with a new policy of assisting indigenous entrepreneurs to develop their businesses by setting up local manufacturing industries, to take advantage of the soft money offered by banks in line with government indigenization policy. Engineer Mansur Ahmed and I were seconded to work with Isyaku Rabi'u Group of Companies in Kano our home State. (IRS) Group of Companies was an indigenous conglomerate of manufacturing, shipping, and a trading outfit that has over seven companies within Kano metropolis. Its Chairman was a very successful Islamic scholar who through sheer determination built the empire from a small trading office in post-colonial Kano to a multi-million-dollar organization in the 1980s. The company had offices in Lagos, Port Harcourt, London, Bangkok, and Hamburg, that coordinates its imports of essential

commodities. It also maintained two business jets for long range and local travels for its executives.

I was engaged as General Manager on 23 January 1979, with the responsibility of establishing a sugar cubing plant on an annual salary of thirteen thousand Naira plus free company car and medical allowances. With my background in the project, planning it was quite easy for me to conduct all necessary studies and negotiate the construction of physical structures and plant with little or no support from the Board of Management.

I thoroughly enjoyed the experience the job offered particularly in negotiating the entire project from building construction to plant and equipment. The opportunity this job provides helped me greatly in my future carrier, particularly the exposure to international business negotiations.

We purchased the plant from a French Manufacturer Chambon through its English subsidiary that produces part of the plant in Germany and part in Switzerland. Their marketing manager was a Polish immigrant to Britain Mike Radwanski while the technical manager was French Jacque Premier.

Encouraged by the success of the Sugar Company the Chairman re-assigned me to undertake yet another negotiation and establishment of another project, multiple units of Can manufacturing and soft drink plants. Armed with substantial experience, the starting up of yet other new factories was no longer as challenging as they were when I established the Sugar Company. I have mastered what is required locally as regards to obtaining relevant approvals from the various government functionaries and ministries, and type of skill-men required to undertake important tasks prior to installation. I was also armed with negotiating skills even under difficult conditions. I forced myself to learn how to read and interpret technical, architectural and electrical- electronic drawings.

The competing suppliers were both Europeans, therefore had little difficulty selecting three German manufacturers for ease and system compatibility, we selected Klockner Ina and Sinalco to supply the soft drink plant and soft drink franchise, while Krupp was to supply the metal can production plant. Firstly, my task was to negotiate with them individually, which took me to Germany several times during the period. Secondly was to coordinate the various technical details of each plant and to translate them into the English language for the pre-installation engineers and technicians on site.

For over a one-year period, I was accorded through this project the opportunity to visit several German cities, and more importantly understand the culture and appreciate the determination and dedication to excellence of the German people. Their love for meticulous details in project planning surpasses that of the British and French whom I had the opportunity to work with earlier on other projects.

Rabi'u Group's chairperson was not only an astute trader businessperson but also deeply religious and politically active individual. Our office many a time was the center of political activities of the Shagari era. He was also considered the biggest financier of the Tijjaniyya sect in Nigeria and West African sub-region; qualifying him to become the Halifah in 1996, after the death of Sheik Ibrahim Niyas of Kawlah. His position as the patron of the ruling party (NPN) in the second republic gave him direct and unlimited access to president Shagari and many influential persons in the administration. He used this connection to his greatest economic advantage, in obtaining import licenses for our raw materials and commodity trading outfits. Within four years, his investments grew more than tenfold, while the Group's turnover was over (\$500 million) Naira equivalent. His increased wealth brought him fame locally and connections with influential persons in Europe and the Middle East. With two brand new business jets, international travels were quite easy for him and senior members of staff.

On the religious front, he was able to win the hearts of many enemies and opponents through the distribution of handsome Zakkat each year. He was able to unite not only the different Tijjaniyya sub-units but also able to win the hearts of Qadiriyya sect under Sheik Nasiru Kabara. The only failed attempt was to win the Izala group under Sheik Abubakar Gumi. I witnessed one of the attempts during the Ramadan of 1981, when Sheik Isyaku Rabi'u sent us with [N2, 000,000] two million Naira, (\$3million) in those days as Zakkat to Sheik Abubakar Gumi in Kaduna. When we arrived at his residence and presented the cash to him, he quickly declines to accept and quoted a verse in the Qur'an and suggested that the money should have been distributed in Kano and particularly in his neighborhood. After long persuasions, he called on his disciples to receive the money and gave it to the Sultan Bello Zakkat committee for distribution to the needy according to Islamic injunctions. The committee of six people including Sheik Lawal Abubakar took the money away and distributed it in our presence to various groups we met waiting in the compound for such opportunity. He urged us to wait and witness the disbursement while he went back to his study taking nothing out of the money.

When we narrated this incidence to Sheik Rabi'u, his religious advisers who thought of the idea of bribing Sheik Abubakar Gumi became more enraged that their plan to get him to stop attacking the Sufis failed. Sheik Rabi'u was not discouraged from making more efforts to mediate with the Izala group as he attempted to meet him personally in Saudi Arabia during Hajj of 1982. Their relationship at personal level improved during that time when he accepted Sheik Abubakar Gumi to lead us into prayer during our camping at Mina and Arafat.

Chapter Thirteen

Latin America

"What you can do, or dream you can, begin it; boldness has genius power and magic in it". J.W. von Goethe.

In the summer of 1982, a good friend Alhaji Salihu Abdullahi invited me to go on holidays in the United States and Latin American Countries. He lived in London in the early '70s but has always wanted to visit the United States, and I have never been to Latin America despite my stay in the United States. We worked out with our travel agent our itinerary before we set on the journey for forty-five days. Our first stop was London, then to New York, California then to Latin America.

In most ways, Latin America resembles Africa in terms of physical character, culture, and climatic conditions. Traveling through Latin Countries of Latin America I saw a remarkable beauty of the deserts and jungles of Mexico, the rugged mountains of Central America, and the incredible scenery and picturesque villages of South America. The breath-taking panoramas of beautiful countryside's, seaside resorts and mountain spars, and more important the friendly atmosphere in a variety of cultures and tribes.

Latin America is a land of opportunity, a land of promise for the future. It has vast natural resources hidden in the vast but disappearing jungles and tropical low lands. Most of the continent's population clustered around the megacities and large towns falling into several distinct racial groups.

Predominantly European extractions, of Spanish and Portuguese ancestry, are largely concentrated in the southern countries of Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile. The American indigenous races found largely in Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia; while the Blacks inhabited Brazil, Venezuela, and Columbia. Most of Latin America speaks either Spanish or Portuguese with only slight dialectical variations, but other languages, such as Quechua in Peru, Aymara in Bolivia, Guarani in Paraguay, Guajiras in Columbia and other native languages are in use in local communication in most rural areas.

Indeed, it is a continent of ancient civilizations, which have achieved the highest degree of development in arts. Their impressive ruins work of art and colorful artifacts today constitute some of the continent's outstanding tourist attractions. Its impressive architecture from ancient to present times presents an interesting blend of the ancient Gothic, Moorish, Baroque, neo-classic and modern styles and designs not found anywhere else.

Mexico the Ancient Civilization

"Do not mind anything that anyone tells you about anyone else. Judge everyone and everything for yourself" Henry James

We flew from Los Angeles to Mexico City on September 3, 1980, considered the largest and most populated city in the western hemisphere at that time. It was a megalopolis that holds the best and the worst of urban life. We flew over the city for several minutes, which looks quite extensive from my window seat and occasionally the window opposite gives me a glance when the planes altered its position to take its bearing. I watched with amazement the amount of air pollution hanging over the crowded suburbs climbing into the mountain slopes, and busy streets from my window seat. It was in my mind twice the size of Los Angeles even though Los Angeles was more than 60 miles long and possibly twenty miles wide.

What is even unique about Mexico City was its altitude of over 7,000 feet above the sea level, the highest great city in the world and the oldest large city in the western world. The city has hundreds of miles of old, narrow streets, flanked with Colonial buildings and many miles of wide, beautiful new boulevards and avenues. Part of the charm and contrast of Mexico City is that ancient buildings stand side by side with modern hotels, office buildings of gleaming glass and shining metal.

The city that spreads for over 1,000 square kilometers its sidewalks are crowded and noisy with vendors selling tacos, cigars, lottery tickets, and art objects at the traffic jam, nursemaids and loiters discussing in groups, fire eaters entertaining passersby and pickpockets busy watching for the next prey; yet Mexico City was relatively safer than most American cities.

Though the City spreads over a great area, most places of interest to visitors are relatively close together and easily accessible. Our hotel accommodation was in Central Plaza called the (Zocalo Plaza). Within a walking distance is the National Palace an elegant building which serves as the seat of the federal executive of Mexico, is located on Mexico City's main square the Plaza de Constitution. It was the Palace of the ruling class of Mexico since the Aztec empire, and much of its buildings were of the pre-colonial era. The National Museum of Anthropology located within the area was considered "a national treasure" and symbol of identity by the Mexicans. It contains significant archeological and anthropological artifacts from Mexico's pre-Columbian heritage such as the stone of the Sun, giant stone heads of the Olmec civilization and the Aztec Xochipilli statue and several hundred of other ancient statues.

Venezuela the great topography

"Learning never exhausts the mind." Leonard da Vinci.

Our flight from Mexico City to Caracas Venezuela on September 11, 1980, was approximately three hours over the rugged terrains of Central American countries.

On the plane, we sat adjacent to a Venezuelan cabinet minister traveling from Los-Angeles with the remains of his murdered son for burial at home. He was interested in our dress and was curious to know our background information and our mission to Venezuela. After commiserating with him over the loss of his dear son; and told him we are on vacation in Latin America. We talked at length with him and even suggested that we should get in touch with him after the funeral ceremonies in four days' time. We realized that his invitation could be because of his obviously distressed condition, which leads him to excessive drinking of hard liqueur throughout the flight.

We landed at Caracas Maiqueit'ia International Airport that was less than 30kilometers from the city, but it took us more than two hours under humid conditions and Lagos like traffic congestion to reach our destination at the Hilton Hotel in the city center.

As we approached the capital on the gently graded, multi-lane Autopista, I got the feeling of entering a futuristic not historic city dating back from 1561. The leaders of this wonderful country have put the oil wealth in the transformation of the city's architecture. In the center of the city is the famous Avenida Bolivar, 110 feet wide, extending to the great traffic roundabout at the foot of the Calvary Hill. Traffic flows on two levels, and underground parking facilities with a variety of stores and a giant bus terminal.

From the city center, one could see the high-density areas in the hills overlooking the great city. We ventured to explore the shantytown on the hills overlooking the city on the evening of September 12 with a local guide from our hotel. Ascending the very difficult terrain of narrow short and steep stairs was breathtaking, except for the residents. We found the atmosphere on these hills quite friendly and culturally exhilarating. Latin music playing in almost every street and almost every other house has a bright color look, which is typical of Latin villages and inner cities. Hawkers were busy trying to sell from wristwatches to textile materials, to shoes and daily household needs.

In the morning of September 13, we headed to the famous Maiqueit'ia beach resort, a one-day tour organized by the Hilton Hotel for a reasonable amount of money charged to our rooms. It was a fantastic beach with clear blue sea and plenty of excitements along the long beach area. Fresh and chilled coconut water, soft drinks of all varieties, fresh fish, and seafood were available at cheap prices everywhere on the beach. Both my companion Salihu Abdullahi and I were exhausted by the evening to even think of anything else but sleep.

One day in the afternoon my travel companion Salihu Abdullahi suggested that we take our lunch outside the hotel, which I gladly accepted. We walked a few blocks to a Chinese Restaurant where the menu was in Chinese and Spanish. We tried to make sense of the menu without success and had to call on the waiter to assist us in

reading the menu. He obviously could not speak English and therefore of no assistance to our predicament. Salihu suggested a sign language, but the waiter could not understand what we are saying, and we could not understand his response. An idea came to me to draw a picture of what we wanted a fish, and chicken meals with some fried rice.

I drew on the white tissue paper placed on the table a picture of a fish, a chicken, and a bowl of rice. He picked the piece of paper, went into the kitchen for more than twenty minutes, and brought with him in two bowls steamy white rice. He disappeared again into the kitchen while we waited for more than ten minutes without any more food served; we called his attention to bring the rest of the order. He went upstairs and brought with him our bill of three Bolivar.

We left the rice on the table in protest of his lack of basic intelligence but had to wait by the door due to torrential rain and flash flood on the street after a heavy downfall. It was quite frightening as the water rushed from the nearby hills down to the city center at great speed. We immediately forgot our ordeal and must think of how to get out of this dangerous situation. It took us more than one hour of waiting by the restaurant door before the flash subsides and vehicles were able to move on the streets.

In the evening we took a tour of the National Art Gallery located in the Plaza Morelos. It features works of art by Venezuelan artists spanning five centuries from the colonial days and over four thousand pieces arranged in a circular layout. The works include pre-Hispanic pieces, colonial-era paintings, Sculptures, and Venezuelan arts.

The Isolated Columbia

"No bird soars too high if he soars with his own wings". William Blake

We flew from Caracas in the early morning of September 18, to Bogotá the capital city of Columbia. Flying over the difficult terrain, I could understand why Columbia was considered the most isolated country in South America. The cause of isolation that has had such a profound effect on the country is that the four mountain ranges, the Eastern, Central, and Western Cordilleras, and the Baud'o rise precipitously to averages of 10,000 to 14,000 feet. Several peaks are much higher, the Nevado Del Huila being 18,865 feet, the Pico Cristobal Col'on 19,029 feet. Between these ranges, the valleys are covered with dense jungle growth.

The City of Bogotá has a wonderful history dating back to pre-colonial conquests. It was the center of a great Chibcha civilization before Gonzalo Jimenez took over in 1538. The search for gold drove fortune seekers further inland from Ecuador to Bogota seeking El Dorado led by Sebastian de Alcazar with more than 100 Spaniards.

We landed at Bogotá's international airport in the midday and were able to see most of the six-mile-long cluster of buildings sheltered by ridges of mountains towering precipitous 2,000 feet above. After a brief rest in our Hotel, we set out to tour the city starting from the capital in the central area on the Plaza Bolivar. There was a mural of the freeing of slaves in 1851, which the Columbians are proud of having put an early end to slavery. We walked to an architecturally interesting glass-domed Elliptical Hall [El Salon Eliptico], a place for holding state banquets.

The capitol itself occupies the site of the first house built by Quesada's men more than four centuries ago. Quesada buried in the cathedral on the northeast of the Plaza Bolivar, the site of the chapel he and his men built on arrival. We took a tour around the cathedral to see the beautiful and historic treasures on display in the sacristy.

Around the Plaza were four fountains decorated in colored lights adorning the statue of Simon Bolivar the founder Sculptured by the famed Italian, Pietro Tenerani; and within a dozen, blocks are almost half of the city's Colonial Churches. On the following day, we visited the Plaza de Toros and the National Park adjacent to it. Nearby off Septima, is the treasure house El Pan'onotico a former penitentiary now housing three excellent museums, Historical, Ethical, and Archeological. We saw mummies thousands of years old, golden ornaments, woven textiles used by the Indian tribes and all kinds of primitive utensils some of the like our own.

Brazil the Land of the Carnival

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream". Les Brown.

Our first entry point in Brazil on September 21, 1980, was the famous Carnival city of Rio de Janeiro. We landed at around 8.30pm, went through immigration and customs formalities within minutes, and headed to our Hotel on Copacabana Beach. It was a Colonial Hotel with spacious rooms and personal service from the elevator to your room someone is always available to serve. The front desk in the hotel has given us quick lessons about the dangers out in the beach and warned us to be careful with young children pretending to be shoe shiners. Despite all the warnings Salihu my companion was attacked one early morning by a gang of young shoeshine boys in front of our hotel and was only saved by the hotel security.

The hotel administration warned us against exchanging our currencies anywhere except in Banks or with the hotel cash office. We did not heed to their warning because we thought they were trying to benefit from their lower and unfavorable rate. One day, we met a middle-aged man in the beach area who was quite friendly towards us. In our discussions with him, he offered to take us to a bureau de change in the city that will give us an extremely attractive rate. On the appointed hour he was at our hotel lobby waiting to take us to the bank, which he says only changes currency in multiples of (\$1000) United States Dollars.

We decided with my companion that we should start with one thousand dollars and if need be, we could go back for more. In his efforts to reassure us that he was a genuine travel agent, he gave us a fictitious business card bearing the name Mr. Guffor. We walked two blocks to a shopping complex, where he asked us to walk around, while he walks straight to the shop cashier's desk with our one thousand dollars in his hand. He returned to us after talking to the cashier and said to bear with him as his boss will be with us within a few minutes to give us the money. He took our mind away from the cashier and led us to another section of the shop where local art materials are on display to see if we need some gifts to take home from Brazil. Like magic, he disappeared into the crowd and slips out of the shopping complex. We tried to locate him within the first few minutes but had to give up and went to the cashier to ask him if he knows his where about. The cashier was nice to us, but apparently did not even remember that he spoke to someone with such an identity. He suggested that we report the matter to the police station around the corner. The police gave us a form to fill and ask for his description, which matches exactly with one of the pictures of wanted persons in their file. We reported to the police station every day until our departure without his capture.

Rio de Janeiro was the most fascinating city we have been on this trip and had a little resemblance to New York, in some cases more like New Mexico and Caracas in character. It was indeed a city of happy people full of adventures where even the old enjoy the pleasures of life. Rio de Janeiro is a city of great moral contradiction. It has one of the largest Catholic populations of any city in the world, which even displays a giant statue of Jesus overlooking the entire city from a high up mountain; yet it is the most unreligious place on earth where homosexuals, prostitutes, transvestites, and thieves parade themselves in gangs freely along the beach area.

Our second trip was in February 1982, purposely to see the annual carnival event that takes place in the middle of the Brazilian summer when the temperatures of the early mornings are quite pleasant. The Brazilian annual Carnival is the wildest, gayest festival that I have ever watched. For three days and three nights preceding Ash Wednesday, there is singing and dancing and parading everywhere in the city. Every group is in competition with each other in new dances and songs, well-rehearsed for many months before its formal introduction. The whole city becomes festive hall, and the entire population consumed for the thirty-six hours in masquerading, dancing, singing, or excessive drinking.

By noon on a Saturday before Ash Wednesday, most offices and shops close in preparation for the big event. More and more people flock the Avenida Rio Branco, Rio's main street. Wild-feathered Indians, colorful Bahians dressed in shiny beads, men dressed as women and women dressed as men, join the milling crowds singing and dancing down the avenue under brilliant decorations did weeks before. The

samba beat, tom-toms, tambourines, and the weird Cuica beats grow stronger as nightfall.

Several other activities form part of the great event, such as the special carnival costume ball at the Teatro Municipal under the auspices of the city officials; and the election of the carnival queen where nearly two million people try to force their way in. After the three days and nights, several merrymakers disperse in the city streets drumming and dancing to mark the end of the carnival.

Even those who have never been to this city of Rio de Janeiro are familiar with its postcard scenery of a crescent of land gently nestling in blue Guanabara Bay. On top of this crescent, 365 of the sheerest and rugged peaks, some of which zoom right up from the sea were visible from my hotel room. The names of the peaks, Hunchback, Two Brothers, Parrot's Beak, and Sugar Loaf- aptly named as the atmosphere they create. The most popular Sugar Loaf shoots out of the water to a point over 1,200 feet above the sea level, a short distance from the city center.

We took a cable car ride to the top, offering us a sight never to forget. The sixty square miles of land at the base of the peaks make up Rio de Janeiro, literally River of January. Portuguese explorers discovered it on the New Year's Day erroneously as the mouth of the river. From the viewing point, we can see the entire city of mountains and beaches particularly the Copacabana that stretches miles along the block-wide street of named Avenida Getulio Vargas.

On September 25, we took time off from the city to visit Petropolis one of the favorite mountain resorts for the elites of Rio and Sao Paulo. It was Dom Pedro II most frequently visited a town as a hot weather retreat, 45 serpentine road miles from Rio de Janeiro. He built his Palace which now serves as the Museum of the Empire, housing the Brazilian crown jewels, empire furniture, paintings, and objects d' art. We drove through an extremely scenic route, providing an over the shoulder view of Rio that is spectacular as well as a unique engineering achievement. Hammered out of solid rock, but on a grade providing easy climbing by car, we could see Rio and semitropical fields behind us. We passed through a tunnel and a chasm-spanning bridge. The road encircles the mountain peak, allowing us to experience the changes in the climatic conditions.

At a breath-taking spot around a sharp bend at 3,500 feet, my companion and I were wondering how this engineering feat was achieved, our taxi driver told us a joke. That the Brazilian President decreed local Engineers to build the road, they first approached American Engineers for support and assistance in the design they refused to give a free consultation. They then approach several of their colleagues in other Latin American Countries without success. They decided to apply their common sense by assigning laborers with axes and diggers on both sides of the mountain to dig a tunnel. One of the engineers observed, "What of if they don't

meet?" The chief engineer said, "we then shall have two tunnels and two roads for the price of one which the President will be more than happy".

Petropolis is a city of over 200,000, which more than doubles in the summer. It has beautiful offices and apartment blocks yet retain the feeling of a holiday resort where the pink and white palace served as the summer retreat for Brazilian Emperors. The officials demand all visitors remove their shoes before entering the main building, covered by marble floors and inlaid wood in order to preserve its natural look. There were several rooms of regal grace of gold and silver tableware's, crystal, porcelain, silk tapestry, and gilded furniture.

The throne preserved in all its elegance, an adjoining alcove rests the solid gold crown, weighing over four pounds encrusted with 639 diamonds, 170 pearls, and a famed 18-carat imperial diamond. The carriage house contains the sedan chairs and litters, which were borne by slaves over the mountain roads. Back in Rio, we were stuck in a traffic jam reminiscent of Lagos; however, our chauffeur was able to get us through by changing lanes and finally through complicated side streets.

The old Rio streets are tangled lacework of narrow and crowded depicting the old Brazil and a touch of old Portugal. It was indeed one of the city's greatest attractions; packed with men, women, and children. The lively shops display precious and semi-precious pieces of jewelry, local craft, art objects, and textiles. Here one could buy every conceivable item of gifts from reptile skins to rare woods, and from a handkerchief to omnipresent novelties decorated with butterflies. There is an emphasis on basic trades and an absence of mass production. Even the houses in this area are old, and the streets go recklessly in illogical directions. Some end at a huge rock or, just as possibly lead onto one of the super modern Avenida.

In my subsequent travels over the years to this great city, I have learned not only a few words in the Portuguese language to get by, but also learned to avoid dangerous places. Watching young and not so young play soccer on the beaches, in the alleys, and the famous Maracana Stadium, Brazilians are the greatest soccer players. A great number of slum dwellers or the shantytown in this city are in some way like what we saw in Caracas. They live on the surrounding hills clearly visible from the Copacabana beach area; the only recreational area for them. Its proximity to the beach only a few minutes' walks from their residences on the hills attract a huge influx of people from sunrise to sunset. Unlike the slum in Caracas, this has neither electricity nor running water and is quite dangerous for a visitor.

City of Sao Paulo – Our next destination was September 30, 1980, from Rio we boarded a Brazilian manufactured propelled turbo engine aircraft to Sao Paulo the largest city in Brazil. We landed in the early hours of the morning and drove through the slums known as [Paellas] and the fashionable suburbs adorned with mansions of architectural wonders. It was a long drive to our hotel in the city center. In the afternoon, we took a tour of the Ipiranga Independence Memorial built on the same

site where Dom Pedro uttered his famous independence speech titled "Liberty or death". The memorial consists of 130 different pieces of stone and bronze standing over the remains of Dom Pedro, below the monument, which is on guard by soldiers' day and night.

We walked to the Paulista Museum in the same park, housing relics of Brazilian history particularly of imperial Brazil. By far the most interesting place we visited on that day was the Parque do Estado which contains more than 30,000 different species of orchids, the Parque da Contareira containing a tree nursery and a museum of wood.

In the following day, we took a tour of the famous Butantan Institute, commonly called the Snake Farm. It is a world-famous research center specializing in serums and antitoxins with more than 10,000 snakes, scorpions, and spiders. It was a frightening and exhausting day that leads us to another interesting park Agua Branca Parque with its uncountable collection of birds and fish. It was my first time of seen an Otter swimming back and forth in shallow water.

In my subsequent visit in October 1999, I had the opportunity to see more of the great city of Sao Paulo, and its neighboring towns such as Santos and Urubupunga. It was in Sao that I first experienced the real Brazilian barbecue [churrasco]. It is the most popular Brazilian treat of different kinds of meats served in special restaurants in Rio and Sao Paulo. It is served on long skewers directly from the pit; a customer will slice his cuts directly from the skewer for as much as he could possibly eat for a uniform price. The tables had in addition to cutlery, a cubical wood painted in two color code red and green. The waiters will continuously serve you the different varieties of meat on their giant trays if you keep the green side of the wooden block on top. The only time the waiters will seize to serve is when you turn the wooden block upside-down to red color. It is unbelievable how many people pluck to these restaurants at nights, and how much beef consumed in just a few hours we were at the restaurant. The waiters were competing among themselves to serve customers different meats carried on long skewers. The second time I experienced this type of Brazilian style restaurant was in Salvador Bahia another great place to be in Brazil.

Brasilia City - On October 7, 1980, from Sao Paulo, we headed for the new and elegant capital city of Brazil located in the interior of the country. It is a planned city, which started in April 1960 [the 460th anniversary of the discovery of Brazil] in 1500. Our hotel accommodation was facing the famous Plaza of the Three, giving a parabolic view from my hotel room of the three slim skyscrapers one each for the Congress, Supreme Court of Brazil, and Executive Department Office Building. The city has a 19-mile long artificial lake, giving it an additional serene atmosphere. With not much to see in terms of historical nature except the architectural wonders, we took a tour of the residence of the president Palacio da Alvarado.

In my subsequent visits to this city in 1999, I ventured out to neighboring cities on an invitation by a Brazilian Agricultural Research organization (Embrapa) in December of 1999 to see the phenomenal overwhelming advancement of its Agricultural development, conservation, and sustainability in the Cerrado and Amazon regions.

On December 20, 1999, we left Salvador by road to Cruz das Almas, Bahia, Embrapa's research center to see scientific developments in tissue culture agronomy for commercial use in cassava, tropical fruits such as banana, pineapple, mango, papaya etcetera. The center established in 1973 has developed technologies and agricultural products, which produces millions of seedlings from tissue culture, thus improving quality and standardizing export crops in size, look, and taste.

Salvador Bahia Province - From Brasilia, we took a captivating bus journey Northeast through a deforested jungle on October 14, 1980, to the one-time national Capital City of Brazil. Its original name was Sao Salvador da Bahia de Todos Santos. The slave port in Bahia was where thousands of slaves entered Brazil mainly from West Africa to work on sugar plantations and commercial farms of old Brazil. We toured the underground slave dungeon bunker at the slave market, where slaves spent their waiting time until purchased by plantation owners. It was a terrible experience walking through the tunnel leading into the dungeon that emits horrible smells of human body odor that humbles any tourist. It was dark and dumpy as we walk in the frightening tunnel like a bunker that makes you feel lonely and helpless. Because the sizable number of slave families in the city was from the west coast of Africa, the tradition and culture of Bahia are similar in all respect with Yoruba folklore, as evidenced in the music, food, dances, and voodoo rituals and superstitions. Their women wear distinctive clothing in traditional West African styles.

The city from the waterfront rises over a sheer cliff, dividing it into two distinct levels connected by cable cars, elevators, and a network of roads. The docks and commercial buildings are on the lower level, while the residential section, hotels, and main shopping district overlook the bay from the higher level.

The main food of this city is Feijoada consisting of black beans and meat (pork, smoked bacon, sausage, ham, or beef- in any of the combinations), mixed in a source flavored herbs and onions. There are also many varieties of spicy dishes called picadinhos famed for its piquancy of accompanying sources.

My favorite food in this dominant Christian and animist society was Vatapa consisting of fish or chicken and shrimps, prepared in manioc or rice flour. These meats marinated in seasonings of coconut milk, pepper, and groundnut oil or palm oil; roasted on giant skewers, are served to customers directly from fire.

Walking through the old city shopping area, I was astonished to find a shop specializing in selling black-magic charms, armlets, herbal concoctions for all kinds

of ailments, and all kinds of skins and bones, from reptiles to wild animals all for medicinal purposes as if it is part of West Africa. In some shops, I found varieties of leather goods, dolls, and hand embroidered blouses, tablecloth, beads, head ties, and wood carving, mainly produced by women artists.

In my subsequent visit in December 1999, was in Governor's entourage with Emir of Kazaure, the Secretary to the State Government Malam Ibrahim Hassan and two others. We flew to this great city from the semi-arid city of Petrolina where we spent a few days on the invitation of Embrapa the Brazilian agricultural development and Research Center. From our hotel rooms at Bahia Othon Palace located on the Avenue Oceania in the Ondina suburb, we could see miles of blue turquoise bay area.

In one afternoon, we crossed by ferry with hundreds of passengers returning to the neighboring Island from the mainland. The passengers mainly blue-collar workers usually commute daily to find work in the city early in the morning and return late in the evening. They ferry their vehicles, animals, food, and vegetables across and return with electronics, clothes, and processed goods to their homes on the Island. The journey across takes about half an hour on the diesel operated ferry, which has three levels and a deck. The Island also provides the city dwellers enough recreation areas from jungle to fine sandy beaches and from biking trails to fishing.

Petrolina City - In December 1999, we flew from Salvador to this semi-arid city, which is over 300 miles north of Salvador Bahia on the Sao Francisco River. It is one of the most irrigated areas of Brazil producing export quality silver banana, grapes, and oranges under the supervision of the Brazilian Agric Research Center Embrapa. We saw firsthand serious agricultural developments in this most arid region in Brazil which has the least rainfall.

We were conducted round several farms that developed special grass species with enough nutrients to support commercial cattle ranching. Most of the grass (alfalfa) and thorny weeds were imported from West Africa and nurtured to suit the terrain, which before the time was barren land.

On our return flight, which was during the Ramadan period, we packaged our breakfast in case of flight delays common in the region. The airport passenger terminal is relatively small and had no enough open space to accommodate us in congregational prayers. After breaking fast, we decided to pray on the tarmac, which drew the attention of most passengers, as many of them have never witnessed such an event. They stood around us watching us prostrate to their amusement. If this had happened after Sept 11, the passengers may protest counting us in the manifest or possibly boycott the flight.

Uruguay the Ranching Land

"The person that follows the crowd will usually go no further than the crowd. The person that walks alone is likely to find himself in places no one has been before." Albert Einstein.

Uruguay is the smallest country in South America co-founded by Portuguese and Spanish explorers in 1516 and 1777. Its main population lives in the Capital City Montevideo while a small percentage lives in small farms and ranches across the country. On February 2, the year 1990, I was on holiday through Brazil and traveled by road to Melo on the Brazilian border with Uruguay. The journey took me through Montevideo, Florida, and Canetoves just in time to witness the colorful annual festival. Although the official festival days are limited to three days before lent, festivities and carnivals continue throughout the entire month of February.

The most fascinating thing about this carnival was its costumes and colors remarkably different from Brazilian Carnival. In the evening, I treated myself to an Uruguayan beef broth topped with poached egg, like most of Latin America beef forms greater part of the average diet. My guide took me around the city of Montevideo including the Plaza Independencia, dominated by the beautiful and lavish Presidential Palace, guarded by only two soldiers.

Three days in the capital city enables me to visit many tourist sites and preceded by ferry to Buenos Aires the capital of Argentina on February 6, 1990.

Argentina the Home of Polo

"You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water". Rabindranath Tagore

This is a country that I always in my college years wanted to visit for many reasons; its spectacular natural beauty, astonishing contrast, and myriad attractions and topography from slides given to me by a friend at Ohio University who served in that country as a priest for many years before he retires and return to college. I wanted to visit in 1982 but, because the country was fighting a war in the Falkland, I deferred my visit until after the war on February 6, 1990, and again in on a three-day tour in December 1999 in the company of Jigawa State Governor Ibrahim Saminu Turaki.

My first visit was through Brazil by road from Porto Alegre through Uruguay Capital Montevideo and by ferry ship to Buenos Aires. This journey gave me additional insight into the clash of civilization and how colonialism shaped the lives and thinking of the Latin American indigenous people. The rural societies are very much the same from Venezuela to the southern tip of the continent, and yet dissimilar depending on their colonial heritage.

Argentina is a country of vast attractions and scenic wonders and varied climatic conditions. From the dense forests to swampy areas of the Gran Chaco in the north, to the frozen fiords of sub-Antarctic Tierra del Fuego where I visited one of the world largest Sheep Ranches in the extreme south of the country. The pampas' is the

main agricultural lifeline producing substantial wheat, corn, flax, and livestock. North of the Pampas, in the Chaco region, produces cotton, and sugarcane; while to the west, the Mendoza region produces fruits and vineyards.

The socio-cultural, commercial, and political center of this country is Buenos Aires, considered as one of the largest cities in the world. It is also the most cosmopolitan and westernized city in South America. A modern, bustling and progressive city sprawls in the flat, fertile southern bank of Rio de la Plata, bringing in ships from more than 100 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. During my two trips to this great city, I have not only visited its historic sites but also thoroughly enjoyed watching its polo games, played with the thorough breed Argentinean horses.

The Plaza de Mayo in the heart of the city is the principal monument and within walking distance from the shopping, business and financial districts. Several sidewalk cafés and tree line the Avenida de Mayo as it runs from the Plaza joining Plaza del Congreso, where the nation's capital and congressional buildings are located. It cuts across the broad Avenida Nuevo de Julio considered to be the widest avenue in the world. Its big circular Plaza is not only impressive but also practical. A towering obelisk commemorates the city's founding and beneath it large municipal parking for more than 2,000 cars.

It is a multicultural city, being home to multiple ethnic and religious groups from Asia and to the Americas. Walking through its streets, you will hear several languages besides Spanish.

One of my favorite places in the city was the National Museum of Decorative Arts, which has its origin in a marriage between two prominent members of Argentine high society. Its collection includes paintings, sculptures and Asian and Islamic art.

Prejudice

"Find a place inside where there's joy, and the joy will burn out the pain". Joseph Campbell

In 1979, the military administration handed over the government to an elected civilian administration after a difficult constitutional vote of two-thirds of the nineteen states. The Supreme Court rules in favor of the National Party of Nigeria candidate Alhaji Shehu Shagari to become the president of the second republic. The situation in Kano State, however, was quite different; Alhaji Abubakar Rimi of Peoples Redemption party won the state with an overwhelming majority defeating the National Party of Nigeria candidate.

This situation created a serious rift between the traditionalists and the radical young who saw an opportunity to remodel the state and to redeem and liberate the so-called common people Talakawa from the oppression of the ruling class (Sarakuna). It has always been a NEPU struggle against colonialism, which metamorphosed to the new party except that the chiefs (Sarakuna) no longer play an important role in public administration. The Governor of Kano and the party decided that in order to redeem the oppressed some Districts within the State must revert to their pre-colonial status; namely Rano, Dutse, Gaya, and Auyo, but for some reasons omitted Karaye in the exercise.

The upgrading of Dutse to the first-class emirate status rekindles old rivalries within the ruling class. My father became one of the victims of mass retirements and dismissals from service. A ridiculous charge of selling public farmland for [N2, 000] was the initial reason for his dismissal. However, the court reversed his dismissal to retirement with full benefits after defeating the local government in court.

While he was on forced retirement, which was unheard of in the traditional institution before then, he kept his allegiance to the old emirate of Kano by paying occasional homage to his father-in-law the Emir of Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero. This further infuriated the Emir of Dutse Alhaji Abdullahi Maikano and created more hostility between the newly liberated emirate of Dutse and the old Kano emirate. On one occasion, the Emir of Kano was touring his domain and had to go through Dutse emirate to reach Jahun District, stopped over at my father's residence on his way back to Kano for some hours to honor him. This was unprecedented in the history of Kano for a serving Emir to visit serving village head let alone a retired village head. Several people speculated that the visit was a re-affirmation of not only the Emir's respect and sympathy for my father but also an assurance of the Emir's resolve to show his solidarity with the victims through my father. Regardless of all speculations, my father's spirit was raised to the highest level, while those who thought by retiring him will end his grand ambition to become the District Head of Dutse were mad at this prospect.

General Election

"Good news doesn't necessarily have to be a positive thing. Bringing good news is imparting hope to the one's fellow man". Patti-Smith.

On October 1, 1983, another election brought in a new governor Alhaji Sabo Bakin Zuwo under the same party after the former governor left the party and contested the governorship under Nigeria Peoples' Party and lost. The change in the administration brought about reversals of the many initiatives by the Alhaji Abubakar Rimi government. One of the first reversals was the removal of the additional emirs and downgrading their territories to district administrations, thereby returning the powers of the Emir of Kano to re-appoint or demote the incumbents to district head status.

In November 1983, the Emir of Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero recalled my father from retirement and appointed him the District Head of Dutse. Many observers saw the appointment as not only a reward to him for his loyalty but also an act of revenge on the Emir of Dutse who broke up all relations with the Kano emirate after his elevation to First Class Emir. His appointment generated mixed feelings within Dutse town, even though some people are happy with the turn of events; they were unhappy to lose the emirate status. He encountered stiff resistance from the former Emir's loyalists, who saw the change as temporary due to either his advanced age or the shaky operational manner of Alhaji Sabo Bakin Zuwo's government.

My father was an experienced administrator, who served under colonial and post-colonial governments. He fully understood human nature and particularly his own people. Despite all the animosities and jealousies, he was able not only to administer the district successfully but was able to build bridges between the rival ruling houses and earn their respect. For the eight years, he served as the district head, Garu residents who for many years assumed superiority over their neighbors were able to rediscover themselves and adjust to the business as usual attitude. He was tolerant yet blunt, he was nice yet turf in dealing with his subjects, he was harsh at times yet a defender of the weak in society, he was generous, yet very prudent with public property, he was obedient to his superiors yet fearless in dealing with them. He was nicknamed by one town crier [Lage-lage Gam-Gam] meaning looking weak in the outside, but firm in the inside. One day a journalist asked him after a long interview, what is the secret of your successes in life? He replied, "Da Ladabi ba Tsoro" meaning respect all but fear no one.

Political Precinct

"I am a great believer of luck and I found that the harder I work the more I have of it." Thomas Jefferson

On December 31 of 1983, while returning from a European and Middle East meetings with our Chairman sheik Isyaku Rabi'u attending important meetings in

London, Geneva, and Riyadh with potential partners to establish Islamic Banking in Nigeria, we received a message of a coup de tat against Shehu Shagari's democratically elected government. Our pilot came out of the cockpit, to narrate the news of the coup to Sheik Isyaku Rabi'u. He further informed him that the new military junta has ordered the closure of Nigeria's air space to all air traffic. We thought of landing in N'Djamena but settled to land at Niamey instead for obvious reasons. After spending a night in Niamey, we were able to establish contact with some people in Nigeria. The leaders of the coup gave us special permission to land at Kano airport. On arrival at the airport in Kano, we met some of them waiting for takeoff at the VIP reception area and exchange pleasantries before they took off for Lagos.

Three days after our return, our Chairman Sheik Rabi'u was invited by the National Security Organization to attend a short meeting in Lagos to clear himself from some allegations in relation to missing funds of the National Party of Nigeria. Since the new decree banned all private planes from flying, we went by commercial aircraft to Lagos in the early hours of a Monday morning. We phoned the officer who sent the invitation that we landed in Lagos and wish to request for change of time to enable us briefly to visit our Apapa office before coming to see him. The meeting with the National Security Organization was scheduled to take place at 10 am was rescheduled for 12noon to allow us time to finish with the Lagos office issues.

We left Apapa an hour to the time to be sure we were at the [NSO] office before the time. On our arrival at the office, we were stopped at the gate for not been invited except our Chairman who has an invitation. He went in for about three hours while we were anxiously waiting for me to be released; we saw a police van popularly known as Black Maria going into the compound to pick suspects to prison. He emerges from the detention room arguing with the officials when he attempted to carry a copy of Qur'an in his hand into the vehicle. He managed to convince them that it was his right to take it with him. The vehicle drove away to Kiri-Kiri prison while we followed at a safe distance. We watch them disembark from the truck and lead into the prison gate by heavily armed soldiers in battle dress.

We returned to Kano in great sorrow and broke the news to the family. Two days after the arrest of our Chairman, I received an invitation from the NSO office in Kano to explain some issues relating to our import licenses. I was detained for one day along with others mainly politicians at Kundila Housing Estate. My interrogator was brought from Nguru and we went through all our important documents from 1979-1983. Luckily, for me, all the duty papers were in order and no import was made without a license. Contrary to their belief that our group was engaged in illegal imports and have always evaded customs duties. They permitted me to go home after signing an undertaking that I will not travel out of the country without their permission.

While our chairperson was in detention, I made several attempts through my contacts within the military circles to understand why he was detained, and if there is anything, we could do to get his freedom. Three months into detention, the authorities told us that he was in detention because of tax default. I negotiated with the tax authorities a three-year tax of seven million Naira equivalent of \$10million at that time. We paid in the money by raising a bank draft in favor of the Federal Government of Nigeria and paid in within one week. My understanding was that there would be no more charges against him or his companies; I was wrong. Two weeks after settling the tax bills, I went to Lagos to find out why he was still in detention. I was shocked to find out the issue was more than tax evasion, it has political overtones, as he was one of the financiers of the National party.

Realizing the enormity of the situation, I approached a friend a retired Army General Muhammad Shuwa to assist me in getting an appointment to meet with the minister of Commerce and Industry to sort out our companies unexpired import licenses, which were stopped pending full payment of taxes. It was a wise decision to involve such a caliber as Muhammad Shuwa who was not only one-time minister of Commerce but also a senior officer to even the military Head of State. My short discussions with the minister were centered on the difference between Sheik Isyaku Rabi'u as an individual and Isyaku Rabi'u Group as a corporate entity. Convinced by my argument that by refusing to allow the Group to import essential raw materials, he is technically putting more than two thousand people out of job, which is contrary to his government policy. He directed the ministry officials to allow our companies to not only use the unexpired licenses but also issue new licenses to our industries. After I left his office, he contacted the office of General Tunde Edition the number two man in the administration for clearance, as according to him was a government policy not to honor or re-issue licenses awarded by the previous administration.

I left my contact address with his secretary who phoned me the following day to come and collect our revalidated import licenses. Our revalidation paved the way for many other genuine importers to seek revalidation of their licenses.

After the detention of our Chairperson in 1984, a power struggle for the control of the group between the members of his family became evident. The managing Director suffered some serious health problems, which confined him to bed most of the time, allowing some lesser members of the family to meddle into the management of surviving subsidiaries.

I made several efforts to ensure the continuity of the group, by encouraging other management staff to remain despite the intimidation and greed exhibited by some members of his family. However, my efforts were swatted, forcing me to resign my appointment on 2 June 1984, in protest of a diversion of imported granulated sugar that was imported to augment raw material shortfall for the sugar cubing plant.

Life on the Ranch

"You are never given a wish without also being given the power to make it true. You may have to work for it, however". Richard Bach

In 1974, the then military government of General Yakubu Gowon set up a committee to pass on to the public the returns of the new economic prosperity. Every public employee graded according to his or her level and given a retrospective pay rise of several months. I earned arrears of six months' salary amounting to [N4300]. I used the entire sum in purchasing some adjacent farmlands at Dorayi Karama along Challawa Road in the outskirts of Kano city. Over the years 1974-1995, the land was fully developed as Sahelian Ranch. The recreational facilities in the Ranch which includes horse riding, swimming, lawn tennis, badminton, gardens, and many more attracted many people looking for recreation.

The family's most precious possession was our three-bedroom house built to accommodate a modest size family and give maximum comfort to everyone in the house. Its design centered on a corridor system providing relative security. It has a working kitchen that my wife always dreamt of having, a swimming pool, exotic flowers, and lush green lawn. It resembles partly to a mansion and partly a Mediterranean villa.

Elsewhere in the twenty-hectare ranch was a ten thousand chicken poultry sheds, a twenty-five-horse stable, ten-ton capacity milling machine, and grain silos.

Everyone in the family including staff was quite busy throughout the day and had little time for other things. The revenue from its livestock was quite substantial, but one day, disaster struck the poultry business while I was on a business trip to Germany a disease wiped out the entire stock within three days. The banks were pushing for repayments while the staff salaries were in arrears for several months. It was a critical moment that I would like to ignore, but as God ordained, I decided to diversify the business from high-risk high profit to low-risk low-profit ventures. I introduced cattle and sheep ranching to supplement our incomes and established myself in other non-agricultural ventures.

I invested reasonable money and time into joint ventures in Lagos and Kano and established an office in the business district of Kano to coordinate my activities. Gradually, my investments paid off my liabilities in the agricultural sector giving me a breather for more aggressive ventures in capital-intensive road construction and electrical engineering business.

Within a few years of establishing the road construction business, we won a World Bank dollar-denominated contract for Fadama development in Kaduna, Sokoto, Zamfara and Katsina, States. It was the springboard of my financial independence and the development of my other businesses as well.

Nigeria Airways

"The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences, and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon." Christopher McCandless.

On 11 October 1984, I was appointed by the military government of General Muhammad Buhari to serve on the Board of Nigeria Airways. Our Chairperson retired Major General Muhammad Shuwa was my wartime hero whom I had great respect for his courage during the civil war. Our task was to re-organize the failing organization and to make it commercially viable. It was not an easy task, like the Nigeria Railways, a clique of people that administer the organization as a personal bounty in which their families and cronies issue travel documents on their letter headings of business cards.

Our first re-organization program started with the pilots, where there was a serious rift between the young pilots and older established colleagues. The company has 27 serviceable aircraft and five times as many pilots, struggling to meet their flying hours, a condition for promotion. On our first Board meeting, we received several petitions mainly from young pilots criticizing the older ones of manipulating the international route, where we had less than five aircraft.

There was intense lobby by both sides when I decided as chairperson establishment to get the opposing sides to sit together and present a common memo on how to resolve the endless disagreements. The young pilots see the seniors as selfish who manipulate all training in newer aircraft. The older pilots, on the other hand, argued that they have set a safety record for the airline due to their experience, therefore stand a better chance to promote the company's image internationally.

On the ground staffing position, we found more serious problems than with the pilots. There were several cases of gross indiscipline, fraud, nepotism, and indolence among the middle management and junior staff. A great majority of the administrative and marketing staff lack the requisite qualification to perform their duties effectively. Almost every senior member of staff has a close relation, or an immediate member of his family employed in the company. There was in real fact over employment, in all departments including engineering and catering services. The company was indebted to various overseas suppliers and airports, while small local suppliers were often paid with cash collections at ticketing office. I was saddled with the responsibility of rationalizing the staffing position in line with the internationally accepted standard.

I ordered the personnel department to produce staff audit reports, which after several demonstrations and petition the personnel office produced a flimsy report, which hardly satisfied our requirements. We found in almost all departments, a highly inflated number of employees to the extent that there were over two hundred personnel per seat in our planes. The Board ordered the immediate reduction of this unwholesome ratio to a more acceptable one. This has not been easy because of

substantial political pressure. A strong lobby and direct intervention from the ministry of aviation not to retire some people considered untouchable because of their relationships and or the purpose of their deployment to specific departments marred the exercise. The number of redundant staffs was overbearing that their negative contribution to the development of the company has been detrimental to its progress.

Barely one year into this job another military coup removed General Muhammadu Buhari from office and install General Ibrahim Babangida as the new Head of State created a new Board for Nigeria Airways.

Private Business

"Natural ability is important, but you can go far without it if you have the focus, drive, desire and positive attitude". Kirsten Sweetland

After resigning from Isyaku Rabi'u Group, and subsequent exclusion from Nigeria Airways; my wife and I decided that it was time for me to go into private business despite our obvious handicap. However, equipped with substantial experience and education, I had no difficulty overcoming such inadequacies. My primary interest was in livestock but has a strong inclination towards consultancy services and or other intelligence services. For many weeks, we shall sit down and discuss ideas from outright fantasies to real situations. Finally, one weekend I was visiting a friend Abdullahi Maikano Umar [Turakin Gumel] I learned that an old colleague of mine Mr. Ambrose Feese was appointed a new general manager of the Bank of the North and was asking of my where about.

The news of his appointment as the general manager of the bank was an exciting development. I drove immediately to his residence behind Magwam Water Restaurant where I met him in the process of moving into the house with his family as we sat amidst unpacked boxes and discussed past events in Kaduna and current affairs. He was equally delighted to meet me and promised to assist me in my effort to establish a poultry business. That meeting was the turning point in my private business life. I used the opportunity to prepare a detailed feasibility study on poultry project, which was then very underdeveloped in Kano and indeed Northern Nigeria. The return on investment was extremely attractive that no banker would dispute its viability particularly with my kind of exposure in agriculture and livestock development in Nigeria. The bank was quite comfortable to lend my business up to [N250, 000] within one week of submission and with a promise to upgrade the facility within the second financial year. I discussed with my wife plans to build our residence within the ranch, and she will take charge of the day-to-day administration of the poultry project while I will explore other business opportunities. This worked out very well and I sat out to establish some other business in printing, vehicle

maintenance, and consultancies. The income from these businesses was enough to maintain the family while that of the poultry to service our debts.

My ventures were quite successful that within the first year, I was able to invest in other viable projects such as road construction and pharmaceuticals. I made reasonable incomes from the two ventures, which gave me added confidence in perusing with vigor the consolidation of my companies and appoint qualified expatriate personnel to manage them. An old friend from Ohio University who first gave me a ride to New England professor Louise Bourgault managed the printing and advertising company. She resigned her teaching job with Bayero University to join me. An Indian friend Mr. Narag Singh who was also, a communication specialist from Ohio University assisted her.

An accomplished Armenian engineer Vaskan Fakrajian managed the vehicle sale and maintenance workshop, while the steel construction was managed by a British–Lebanese friend of mine Francois Chaanine. I concentrated on the road construction and occasionally get involved with the policies of the other companies on a month-by-month basis. Our fourth year of business brings substantial improvement in our equity position. Total initial capital has more than quadruple while our turnover was in millions of naira. We were able to service all our debts and were quite comfortable financially to engage in leisure activities at home and holidays with my family overseas.

Wrong Business decision

"Dream small, if you make them too big, you get overwhelmed and you don't do anything. If you make small goals and accomplish them, it gives you the confidence to go on to higher goals". John H. Johnson

Unfortunately, it has not always been a success in my business undertaking. I have made several bad decisions to widen my business interests. I was on a business trip to Germany immediately after the unification to explore investment opportunities that arose from united Germany. I was encouraged by my experience in agriculture to buy three helicopters for the sole purpose of providing Arial crop spray services to commercial farmers and fighting locus and quailer birds in the Sahel region.

It became the most losing venture I have ever undertaken due to lack of proper planning and impulsive decisions. With the help of a German friend, I negotiated the purchase of three KA-56 helicopters from East Berlin from government undertakers. The helicopters landed at Lagos port in December of 1993 a very wrong time to get things through the port. A crane operator trying to move a container through a narrow passage in the congested port smashed one of the helicopters. I fell back on the insurance company for claims to damages, but my claim was turned down. I realized later that the cover certificate issued to me by the insurance broker was fake and of

no consequence. I was angry and took him to court, but just before the conclusion of the case in court; he fled and left his known address.

The remaining helicopters brought to Kaduna Airport in a terrible shape that makes obtaining necessary papers very difficult. I had to replace several parts including the blades, which costs a substantial amount of money. Even after investing so much in unforeseen expenditures, such as parking fees, servicing and staff, I was unable to secure any contract from any source to reduce my losses. I was constantly been harassed by the caretaker company that was also facing financial difficulties for more money to pay one bill or another.

The other equally bad business decisions I made was to invest in a pharmaceutical company belonging to a friend [Mr. Shegun Abiodun] in Lagos. We lost our investments as the company collapsed a few years in business. Its entire assets were taken over by the banks.

Chapter Fifteen

The Middle East Countries

For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone. Audrey Hepburn

The great misconception of the Middle East by many people is its single Arab identity. Even though Arabs constitute the largest ethnic group in the Middle East, there are several other ethnic groups which include Turks, Armenians, Assyrians, Bloch, Berbers, Copts, Druze, Jews, Kurds, Lurks, Mandaeans, Persians, Samaritans, Shagbarks, Tats, and Zazas.

Holly land of Saudi Arabia

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream; not only plan but also believe".
Anatole France.

My first trip to any Middle Eastern country was in 1982 when my boss invited me to perform that year's Hajj with him in Saudi Arabia. The four-hour flight to Jeddah from Kano with other pilgrims was a great spiritual experience for me, as well as many first-timers in our team. Our plane landed in Jeddah King Abdul-Aziz Airport in the early hours of the morning, but before we could finish the immigration and customs formalities, it was late in the afternoon. Every passenger in the plane was individually searched and subjected to all forms of indignation by the Saudi authorities.

This procedure was part of the methods used to ensure that no one smuggles any hard drug or narcotics into the Saudi Kingdom. The Hajj terminal was at the old airport now a residential area in the city, with little facilities. We took a minibus from the airport and headed the city of Medina just in time before the closure of the road, a usual practice to deter pilgrims from missing the Arafat. The city of Medina was a relatively small town with its narrow streets and mud houses except around the Prophet Mosque where small retail shops surrounded the area. We found accommodation at an old hotel near the Harem where the late premier Sir Ahmadu Bello used to lodge. It was one of the most expensive hotels of its time in Medina, but certainly less than a one-star hotel of today. We were housed four in a room of about three-meter square, an arrangement that reminds me of our days in the boarding primary school.

Performing Hajj rites was a great spiritual activity that I found as a first timer very difficult and restrictive. I had to rely most of the time on experienced guides to perform the basic rituals. It was only after my first Hajj that I was able to comprehend and perform the rites independently without any assistance. Despite the efforts of the Saudi authorities in simplifying the rituals, many pilgrims, particularly from some [Sufi] sects, are always gullible to the idea that Hajj rituals must be difficult to

be acceptable by Allah SWT. The greatest euphoric episode in life was the first sight of the Holly Ka'aba a gigantic structure that has spiritual significance to every Muslim. My heart was filled with fear and hope for salvation as I circumvent with an endless horde, the four corners cubical building draped in black.

Lebanon the Land of contradictions

"You can't go around building a better world for people. Only people can build a better world for people. Otherwise, it's just a cage." Terry Pratchett,

Lebanon popularly referred to as "The Land of friendliness, The Switzerland of the Middle East, and The Land of the Cedars." My first trip to Lebanon was in 1985, after turning down several invitations by Lebanese friends in Kano in 1976. This was the time the Arab League negotiated with the various groups the cessation of hostilities. Even though temporary peace returned to the most part of the country, sporadic hostilities between the rival groups persist in some areas because of mutual suspicion. The country was in the process of healing and rebuilding the structural damages.

My personal security and family considerations were the reasons why I refused the invitation as I listened to sad stories of indiscriminate bombings, interreligious and intrareligious conflicts that spare no one. I was seriously contemplating to accept the offer because of my passionate desire to visit Lebanon; my family was putting considerable pressure on me to turn down the invitation. They reasoned that my survival means much to them more than my instinctive desire to visit the country.

My curiosity to visit Lebanon did not mature until July 1985 when I was persuaded by a great number of Lebanese friends that it was relatively safer than what we hear and see in the media. Even then, I was not fully at ease when finally decided on a date to link up with my friends in the month of June of that year. While I was booking my ticket, the news from Lebanon was not encouraging. I decided to postpone the trip for a future date, but the media kept reporting sporadic clashes between the major actors mainly in southern Lebanon for territorial control.

In September of that year, while visiting the Lebanese Consul General in his home in Kano, he gave me all the assurances that the northern part of the country where I intend to visit was relatively safe, and therefore should not fear. He asked me to send my passport any day for a visa. His Excellency Muhammad Ali Fadlallah is a respected friend of mine, and his position as the Consul General further encourages me to have my faith in God and make the journey.

I flew from Cairo in the early hours of the morning to Beirut on a middle-east airline. Few minutes before landing the pilot reported that the airport was temporarily closed because of Israeli shelling in the vicinity of the airport but said he will Hover around for some minutes to see if he could obtain permission to land. From my window seat, I could see the airport area and a chain of fire from the sea into the residential area

by the mountains. After about twenty minutes the captain came again on the public address system to announce that he has permission to land within ten minutes, and he asked the passengers to remain calm and in their seat until the aircraft finally stopped.

We landed safely and taxied towards the airport terminal, but to my surprise, there was no ground staff to usher us into immigration. Every passenger was struggling to pick his luggage and leave the airport as soon as possible. Within twenty minutes, everyone is gone, and I was left alone with my luggage at the baggage claim area unsure of what will happen to me next. I went around the building to see if any of the offices were open but could not find any immigration or customs official to attend to me let alone a taxi to take me to my destination. Nearly half an hour after landing, the guns resumed shelling and I can see from a small glass window the chain of fire hitting the residential buildings around the airport creating huge smoke of dust. I kept praying and yet blaming myself for taking such a risk even though it was considered safe to visit Lebanon at that time.

As soon as the guns stopped, people started trickling into the airport and within one hour, the airport was alive and bustling with passengers and taxi drivers. I realized that I have not gone through immigration and customs formalities, which may lend me into trouble. I walked through the lobby and luckily saw someone in uniform that took me to his small office and stamped my passport and checked my luggage. The officer was kind enough to let me use his phone to call my friends who were to meet me at the airport.

Luckily, for me a woman that answers the call told me they have left for the airport two hours earlier and therefore should be in the terminal. I went to the information desk and got them paged through the public address system. Within five minutes, we identified ourselves, but the trouble remains on how we could go through the road checkpoints on our way to another city Tripoli in the north most part of the country. The two people who came for me were Maronite Christians and I am an African Muslim; while the checkpoints were manned along the way depending on the location in the city and along the country road by either Palestinian militia, a Christian militia, or Syrian Forces.

The early '70s was the period of economic downturn in the western advanced countries because of OPEC decision to hike oil prices. The '70s was also a period of restructuring of the world monetary system. Special Drawing Rights was replacing the Gold reserve in most countries except France and Arab Oil-rich countries that see the future more in the Gold reserve. The windfall of the oil revenue from Arab Countries initially was kept in gold bullions rather than investing in stocks and bonds of western countries. More importantly, the Arab nationalism was beginning to recuperate after the humiliating defeat of Jamal Abdul-Nasser war of the fifties. OPEC led by Zaki Yemeni became the instrument to which the Arab countries agree

to have a common voice over their destiny. Beirut as the most neutral and cosmopolitan city was becoming the new financial center of the Arab world. The threat to old financial centers in London, New York, Frankfurt, Paris, and many others were becoming a reality. The destruction of Beirut, therefore, was to enable the flow of funds to the traditional financial centers of Europe and America.

The main commercial hub of Lebanon, the city of Beirut devastated by the eleven-year civil war that lasted another five years until 1990 created harsh economic hardship to the entire population of the country. The Lebanese pound which was at par with the US dollar lost its value to several thousand to a dollar.

The war was initially between Muslims and Maronite Christians promoted by the regional powers Israel and Syria has the full backing of the western financial interests. It started as a political power struggle between the Muslim majority, and the government dominated by Maronite Christians. It escalated to a sectarian militia war between the different interest groups—Christians lead by the Phalanges or Kataeb whose main military support came from Romania, Bulgaria, Belgium, and West Germany. The Druze had the backing of the Old Soviet Union, the Shi'a-Hezbollah was backed by Iran, the Sunni Almurabitun backed by PLO, and the non-religious militias backed by communist Moscow. The prolonged hardship in the war period caused several re-alliances between Christians and Muslims generating a Sunni-Shi'a conflict, and a Maronite - Greek orthodox conflict.

With much of Beirut in ruins, the economy destroyed by inflation, the central government was the greatest casualty. Several leaders that assumed power died in an assassination, leaving the population even more divided. We drove through the city ruins, where even the green zone was not safe from destruction. We went through numerous military checkpoints that I lost count, but also met other checkpoints manned by non-religious groups and local vigilantes extorting so-called "custom" money as we pass through their area.

My guides knew the terrain very well and decided rather than to avoid the checkpoints, we should go through the city center to where at that hour will have less traffic and possibly give some idea of the extent of the devastation. This goes very well with my curiosity of experiencing firsthand what I use to see on television and have something to narrate to the family. To my great surprise, even though I went through tedious checks for identity and weapons, in all but a few points, my luggage and my passports were subject to intensive search. From the airport in Beirut to Migilayyah a small marionette Christian village in the outskirts of the city of Tripoli, a predominantly Sunni Muslim enclave is a journey of not more than two hours under normal conditions, but it took us approximately four hours to reach.

On this first trip, I heeded to the advice given to me by the Consul General to confine myself to the north. This is exactly what I did, by confining my trips to the northern towns and villages the risk of been caught up in the conflict was minimized. Even

then, I have twice encountered real life-threatening experiences. One night I woke up by the sound of missiles hit a target less than half a kilometer away from my apartment. A stream of fireballs emanating from an Israeli warship in constant high speed was visible to me from the balcony of my apartment as it hits its target. The other one was on our way to Eden mountain resort; apparently, Lebanese army searching the area for suspected militias that were operating in the area blocked all traffic going or coming from the direction. Suddenly there was an exchange of gunfire for about one hour before they finally overcome the militias and opened the road.

One could blame the Lebanese with anything but laziness, they are highly industrious, adventurous and generous people whose population could be found everywhere across the globe in pursuit of their livelihood. It is very common to see a Lebanese family split into several countries around the globe. The Chaanine family members live in six countries and yet are in close contact with each other through armature radio now cellular phone. Every family I visited in Lebanon has one or two members of the family overseas. Because of their exposure, they are quite warm and respectable to strangers. Every house I visited in this country the reception is the same. As soon as you enter their houses, the first thing will be the offering of drinks mainly gah-wa [thick black coffee] with sweets and cigarettes before engaging in any conversation. Their meals are quite rich and in variety and value. I found that even the poorest in this country could afford a decent meal through an extended family relationship.

Despite the terrible social and economic destructions of the war, I was astonished to see how much reconstruction was done to the city of Beirut within the shortest period when I visited the country again in early 1991. The airport I knew was totally rebuilt to an ultra-modern style, and the narrow roads from the airport to the city have given way to superhighways, while the seashore was reclaimed for new structures and recreational facilities. It was an unprecedented development, which left me in deep thoughts and admiration of the quality of their leadership. This is a small country with no known natural resource, unlike its Arab neighbors; the Lebanese economy is dependent on commercial acumen of its people.

The Lebanese most striking monument is the ruins of the Temple of Heliopolitant Jupiter at Ba'albeck. This Phoenician city, where a triad of deities was worshipped, was known as Heliopolis during the Hellenistic period. It retained its religious function during Roman times when the sanctuary of the Heliopolitan Jupiter attracted thousands of pilgrims. Baalbek, with its colossal structures, is one of the finest examples of Imperial Roman architecture at its apogee.

My first visit to this magnificent landmark was at the invitation of a good friend who was the head of the Lebanese Army General Hani Abbas. He supplied us with a military escort to visit many places of interest including the Grotto a natural cave

used by humans in both modern and prehistoric times. We drove for about two hours from his residence in Beirut through the resort mountain villages of Aley, Bhamdun, and Sofar, descending into the Bekaa valley a fertile green belt area, where Lebanese great vines, fruits, and vegetables are grown. It was also the famous battleground during its war with Israel.

UAE the Land of Opportunities

"Plant your garden and decorate your own soul, instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers." Jose Luis Borges.

When I made my first stopover in the UAE in 1983, Abu-Dabi Airport was then a small hub for airlines on route to South East Asia and Eastern Pacific countries. We landed in the early morning from Paris on our way to Singapore. The duty-free shops were full of gold pieces of jewelry at reasonably cheap prices when one considers the prices in high streets of London and New York or Paris.

Within a decade, the economies of the seven emirates of Bedouin's anglers catapulted to an unprecedented scale, because of good leadership and careful planning and management of their oil resources. The first to take advantage among the Emirates was Dubai, by reinvesting their oil revenue in the diversification of the economy. Tourism, trade, and finance took center stage in their quest to modernize their country. In my subsequent visits into these Emirates, many of the old landmarks have disappeared and replaced by skyscrapers and glass buildings. They have managed to establish a strong financial trading center of stocks and bonds, at the international level.

Of recent, UAE has positioned itself as not only an oil-producing area but also an excellent tourist site where swimming, yachting, water surfing, and deep-sea fishing attracts tourist throughout the year. Its unique advantage is the abundance of Sun, Sand, Sea, and sports, which today's western tourist clamor to find in their holidays.

Turkey the Great Caliphate Empire

"The way I see it, every life is a pile of good things and bad things. The good things don't always soften the bad things, but vice versa, the bad things don't always spoil the good things and make them unimportant." —Doctor Who

A friend and Turkey's Consul General in Kano Mr. Cengiz encouraged me to visit this country is not for anything but to see some of the most treasures of Islamic history. I traveled to Istanbul on February 24, 2003, on a three-week tour in the company of (Makaman Kano) Sarki Ibrahim. We flew from Saudi Arabia to Lebanon and then to Turkey over the rugged mountain terrains of Arabian Desert, and over the blue Mediterranean Sea.

Istanbul is a city built on seven hills and stands astride two continents Europe and Asia separated by the Bosphorus' Golden Horn. We drove from the Airport to our

Hotel facing the Marmara Sea in the city center giving us a view of the most striking parts of the city. Our first tour the following day was to St. Sophia, once a Christian church built on a pagan ruin by the Romans, later converted to a mosque by the Turks and now a museum. We walked through the beautiful garden park to the Blue Mosque, built with six minarets by Sultan Ahmad to match the number gracing the Ka'aba in Mecca. All within a walking distance is the Suleimaniyya Mosque, built over four centuries ago by Sinan, Turkey's great architect in honor of Sultan Suleiman "the Magnificent." Adjacent to St. Sophia is the former Palace of the Sultans, now "Topkapi Museum" filled with exorbitant riches of the Ottoman Empire.

It took us a whole day to go around the museum from the eunuchs' quarters, to old Harem with its huge bronze gate, to the lavish quarters of the Sultans. It is a breathtaking experience reminiscent of that period. The Treasury of the Seraglio contains solid gold thrones buttoned in emeralds, diamond-encrusted sugar bowls, ruby-handled swords, boxes dumped full of diamonds as big as pigeon eggs, and back-scratchers of coral and jade. The carriage museum has Chinese Litters, curtained harem carriages, royal saddles, and harnesses.

What was of greatest interest to me is the Islamic and Turkish art museum where Islamic literature and historical relics; including oldest written Koran, swords of the Prophet Muhammad and his disciples, his hair, shoes, and seal were perfectly preserved. It contains also other relics of oriental antiquities, displaying excellent collections of Hittites, Assyrian, and Egyptian civilizations.

Among the other interesting places, we visited in Istanbul was the great Castle of Rumelihisari. It is a vast fortress built more than five centuries ago by Sultan Muhammad II, the Ottoman military genius, who captured Constantinople in 1453 by carrying his ships overland and dropping them behind the iron chain blocking the Golden Horn [the fabled arm of the Bosphorus that separate Europe and Asian continents].

We took time off to travel by Air to one of the best-known destinations of historical Turkey on the southeastern Mediterranean Sea. The city of Antalya is a fascinating city for history buffs and adventurers. Our tour took us around to explore the intricately decorated millennia-old mosques and buzzing covered markets and harbor side of the city.

(Shi'a) Islamic Republic of Iran

"Your outlook is more than just what you think of the world. It is what you make of the world, of your life, and you have every reason to make it the best you can imagine." Ralph Marston

I received an invitation from (Emir of Suleja) Malam Awwal Ibrahim in 2005 to travel to Asia during holidays and to visit his old friend from University of London, and a senior official in the Iranian government. We traveled separately to Singapore,

where we agreed to work our travel plans to Brunei, China, Malaysia, and Iran. Our journey to Iran began from Beijing China on board Iranian Airline to Teheran over most of the Gobi Desert and Himalayas Mountains.

We landed at Tehran Airport and headed straight to our hotel in the city, where we engaged the services of an executive car hire. In the evening of that day, we took a quick tour of the city to see places of interest before we meet our host. Our tour guide insisted the first point on the tour was a visit to the tomb of Ayatollah Khomeini in the outskirts of the city. We could not gain entrance to the main mosque housing his tomb due to congestion around the entrances. There were literally thousands of pilgrims mainly from rural Iran, camping in the over ten-thousand-hectare area. There were several structures around the mosque for a new University in his honor. Iranians are quite hospitable and curious people in the streets and in their houses; they are quite welcoming and friendly. When we paid a courtesy call on our host, he was unavoidably absent holding a meeting with the president. I had the impression that as a top man in government would live in a reserved area of the city. I was amazed when the taxi driver stopped in front of a rundown house and rang the bell; a young girl peeped through the door hole and asked who we were. The interior of the house had modest Iranian furniture with few Islamic art objects hanging on the walls. Despite his status in government, the family lives an ordinary life. His daughter went out of her way to get her father on the phone to speak with his colleague and course mate at University. She served us different varieties of Iranian dishes and sweets while we wait for her father to return home to meet with us. A few minutes later, he called to apologize that he was too busy to come but took our hotel address. He came to meet us in the evening that day and had long discussions on issues ranging from socio-cultural, to religious, and of course political. He was quite an intelligent man who is fully abreast with happenings around the world in amazing details.

Shah's Place was the most interesting places we visited. It was a great Palace housing the splendor and extravagance of the imperial Iranian period situated in an exclusive area of Tehran. Any visitor seen for the first time the throne room in the entrance of the Golestan Royal Palace will no doubt be captivated by its beauty and ambiance.

Chapter Sixteen

Southeast Asian Pacific Countries

"You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shores" proverb

Asia is a remarkable continent that resembles Africa in its rural life, and its cities compare favorably to any American city. This combination of rural-urban settlements makes the entire sub-region a unique place for any visitor from any part of the world.

The continent divided by geographers into four distinct regional groupings as the South, the East, the Southeast, and the Pacific. Except perhaps the Pacific, all the regions have spawned great civilizations and forms or worships dating millions of years.

Thailand -The Buddhism Heartland

"One reason that challenge brings happiness is that it allows you to expand your self-definition. You become larger." – Gretchen Rubin

One of the primary reasons I traveled to this wonderful country in 1980 and subsequently once every year for four years in succession was its rich cultural diversity and hospitality of its people. Back in my student years, I took an English course with a charming Burmese refugee Mrs. Raviwan whose family resettled in Bangkok during a crackdown by the Polpot repressive regime. She exposes my curiosity about life in Southeast Asia, particularly the ancient Siam kingdom. During my first trip to Thailand, I confined myself to Bangkok for fear of venturing into the inner country that was considered dangerous.

My subsequent trips took me from the hinterland swamps and famous tourist areas of Pattaya in southern Thailand to the hill tribes of the north. I had the opportunity to interact with peasants, and nobility, artist and businesspersons in this land of the Buddha (Dharma). Although the Thai people are cheerful and good-humored, their attitude to life is intensely pessimistic. The Buddhist belief that life on earth is evil, painful, transitory, full of sufferings and nothing lasts, nothing stays the same has greatly influenced their day to day life.

Our taxi driver to our greatest surprise embodied this spirit of patience, contentment, and goodness. He told us in conversation that one of the reasons why people suffer from hypertension and several stress-related ailments is because they are never satisfied with what they possess. I observed his character over the days we worked with him reflects his belief of patience and contentment, unlike other taxi drivers I worked with in other countries.

One of the most fascinating things about the Thai people is their tremendous respect for their king. He is revered as their god and nobody questions his judgment over issues. In one of my trips in 1984, I witnessed the celebration of his official birthday.

The whole country was in frenzy at around 8.00pm lightening candle lights in hotels, restaurants, homes and even on the street.

Despite their kind nature, Thailand is a country of drugs, gambling, prostitution, child labor, and many other evil vices. We saw firsthand the condition of some children sold to a jewelry manufacturing firm in the city of Bangkok. Many of them under the age of ten were crowded in a small basement producing necklaces', earrings, and other forms of jewelers with their beds next to where they work. Prostitution is one of the biggest industries in Thailand which attracts millions of tourists from mainly Europe and the Middle East. Walking in the streets in Bangkok at night sadly one is constantly approached by pimps with their albums of young underage girls.

Malaysia -Asia's Cultural Melting Pot

"We have always held to the hope, the belief, the conviction that there is a better life, a better world, beyond the horizon." – Franklin D. Roosevelt

This is a country that I have always wanted to visit for many reasons since I was a student in the United States. I became a friend of quite several highly disciplined students from this country in many social gatherings in the university campus and whose character and attitude like my own upbringing. One we share a common faith and common colonial history and educational training. Because of my admiration of Malaysians, I named my first daughter and first son after two of my role model Malaysian friends in the University. I also sent my son to this country to study for five years.

I have in my early secondary school years admired leaders like Tunku Abdurrahman Putra, Sukarno, Jomo Kenyatta, Patrice Lumumba, Jamal Abdul Nasser, Nkrumah, both of which were heroes of the cold war era. Although I have not visited the country before 1980, the consistent development I observed over my frequent visits was phenomenal during the reign of the visionary leader Mahathir Mohammed.

My greatest attraction to this Country was its harmony and religious tolerance between the major ethnic groups the Malay, Chinese, and Indians. The country operates Sharia while allowing the other religions reasonable freedom of worship and recognition of their distinct identities. Muslim women must by law wear Hijab in public, while the Hindus and the Buddhists women have no dress restrictions.

In 2006 I was fortunate to attend the Organization of Islamic Conference that was held in the new Capital City Putrajaya. The Capital was relocated from Kuala Lumpur in 1995 by Mahathir bin Muhammad's government to ease congestion and to allow Kuala Lumpur to develop as financial and business city in the fast-growing economy. The new capital named after Malaysia's first prime minister is a planned city south of Kuala Lumpur with substantial architecturally beautiful buildings and bridges.

Malaysia is a country of great modern mosques wherever you are from the cities to towns; the mosques form an essential architectural beauty derived from traditional to Moorish styles. In Kuala Lumpur, there are several magnificent mosques such as the Masjid Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah known as the Blue mosque, Masjid Jame the oldest mosque in Kuala Lumpur, Masjid Negara the National Mosque, Wilaya Persekutuan known as Federal Territory Mosque, Kuala Lumpur International Airport Mosque, and host of other smaller mosques.

The Putra Mosque where I prayed frequently during my trip was built in pink stone marble, surrounded by an artificial lake overlooking the National King's Palace. It has several facilities including schools and conference rooms underground and the prayer area carpeted in exclusive carpet design and colors matching the walls. Next to the Mosque is the Prime Minister's Office building at Perdana Putra is by any standard an impressive building that stands on a hill representing the executive arm of government.

In 2004, while visiting this country in the company of our governor and Emir of Zazzau Suleja for sightseeing to some places of interest we were hosted to a lavish dinner by a top government functionary. On the second day of our visit, he extended an invitation to attend an equestrian annual event at Selangor west of Kuala Lumpur where we had lunch with my hero the former Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad and several dignitaries. The events of that day include a horse show, several equestrian entertainments, and cultural displays of arts and crafts.

On the third day, we drove through the valleys to Genting Highlands a mountain resort developed by a private company in the Titiwangsa Mountains northeast of Kuala Lumpur. The site was developed in the 1960s as tourist site that comprises hotels, shopping mall, fine restaurants, amusement park, and other entertainments at an altitude of more than seven hundred feet above the sea level. The mountain resort with extreme weather was quite chilly in the evenings and mild temperatures in the day. These attractions bring about a substantial crowd of families from Kuala Lumpur and neighboring cities and towns to the resort to spend the evenings or weekends.

Even though a great majority of the people in Malaysia are Muslims and their constitution are governed by the Sharia, yet they accommodate other cultural and religious beliefs to flourish side by side with Islamic values. Moslems and other religious groups the Hindus and Buddhist live in harmony and respect each other's independence to practice their religion. This culture of religious tolerance is more evident at Batu caves a limestone hill that has a series of Hindu temples in Gombak, Selangor where a Hindu Marugan statue stood 43 meters high.

One of my greatest admirations of this was when I entered a restaurant in the city center of Kuala Lumpur to eat, the waiter politely walked towards me before I sat to

inform me that they do not sell Halal food. In amazement, I asked him how you knew I am a Muslim. His simple reply was "I saw it in your forehead"

Singapore -The isle of the Rich

"Optimism is a strategy for making a better future. Because unless you believe that the future can be better, you are unlikely to step up and take responsibility for making it so." – Noam Chomsky

My first visit to Singapore was in 1982 in the company of Salihu Abdullahi on a one-week stopover tour on our way to Australia. My first visit to Singapore was in 1982 along with my traveling companion Salihu Abdullahi on a one-week stopover tour on our way to Australia. This country was once part of Malaya [Malaysia]. Chinese fishing immigrants and indigenous Malay tribe inhabit it for centuries. The two tribes lived in great harmony as a fishing community that later became the hub of commercial shipping in the Asia Pacific. Singapore is quite a small country Island that we were able to travel around its entire island in one day.

In 2005, when I traveled to this country with my family, it was quite a different country that I was familiar with its terrain. The main shopping area the Arab street has shrunk to an unimportant commercial center in the city. New and modern shops and shopping complexes have taken over most of the commercial life of this city. We took time to tour Santosa Island resort off Singapore's southern coast. It was connected to the city by road, cable car, pedestrian boardwalk, and monorail. From Santosa tiger sky tower one can see a panoramic view of that stretches as far as Indonesia on clear weather.

One other notable place we visited in 2010 with the family in Singapore was the Universal Studios which is a theme park located within the resorts on Santosa Island. It features many rides for the children and several themed attractions such as show business, Universal pictures, and other forms of Entertainments.

Hong Kong -The Cosmopolitan City State

"Adventure is an attitude that we must apply to the day to day obstacles of life – facing new challenges, seizing new opportunities, testing our resources against the unknown and in the process, discovering our own unique potential." — John Amatt

When I first visited this Island in 1980, it was still a commonwealth country bustling with commercial activities. It was the commercial hub to which Western Europe and America transact business with communist China. My travel companion Salihu Abdullahi through our travel agent has booked our accommodation at the Hilton Hotel in the heart of the city overlooking the bay area and the neighboring hills from our forties floor rooms. Besides its designer shops and elegant shopping malls, Hong Kong is heavily populated and virtually overcrowded with vehicles, human traffic, and noise pollution. For the number of days, we spent in this city, we constantly confined to our hotel rooms and its shopping arcade.

On one occasion, we ventured out to eat at a local restaurant on a busy street. The Chinese are fast eaters and surprisingly almost everything inedible in Chinese cuisine. Snakes, toads, pork, insects, are delicacies in this restaurant. My travel companion insisted that we should eat what is allowable by our religion despite our cultural bias. We ordered for crabs, and octopus meat boiled in some special Chinese sources, as main entries with rice and corn soup. This was a blue-collar restaurant with several construction workers in their protective clothes struggling for a comfortable seat.

Taiwan -The Entrepreneurial Nation

"We Become More Than We Think We Can Be, By Looking Beyond All We Presently Believe." ~ Eleesha

Formosa its former name was an exciting Island that broke away from mainland China during the socialist revolutionary period and established a free enterprise economic system. The political division between the two Chinas remained and aggravated by United States support to the Taiwan government. We landed at Taipei airport in the early hours of the morning and had time to go around the landmarks of the city before retiring to our hotel.

Taiwanese are proud to be Chinese, but always prefer the Taiwanese label separating the Island from the Mainland as a result of the Chinese civil war. In all the places we visited during our short stay in Taipei, the National Palace Museum re-enforces my admiration of the great Chinese Civilization.

The Palace Museum in Beijing {Forbidden City} and the National Palace Museum in Taipei hold the greatest Chinese artifacts.

The word {National} added to the one in Taipei to differentiate it from the Forbidden City. Among the famous collections moved from the Forbidden City by Chiang Kai-Shek after his defeat in 1949, are kept in this Museum. The most famous collections are the Jade Cabbage, Meat shaped stone, a Boat curved from an Olive pit, and painting of One Hundred Horses.

Republic of China -The Giant in the Sun

"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose the sight of the shore"
Christopher Columbus

My first trip to this culturally rich country was in 1980 through Hong Kong airport flying with the only official carrier Air China to communist China. The flight to Beijing was smooth but the services provided by the airline reflected the communist ideology of serving only the basics. After going through stringent checks at the airport, we drove to the outskirts of Beijing to a designated hotel only permitted to foreigners. It was in a government-reserved area mainly for diplomatic missions in the city. Our tours were a government guided to the Forbidden City and the great

wall. Cameras only allowed in selected areas throughout our visit. It was a great city where almost everyone uses a bicycle as the main source of transport.

On my second visit in 2003, I witnessed remarkable transformation not only in the economic spares but also in people's attitude towards visitors. The period of transition from communism to partial free enterprise witnessed an unprecedented development in constructions and infrastructures that the world has never known. I traveled to Shanghai from Beijing by road and saw literally thousands of moveable cranes building modern skyscrapers for housing and commercial use for many miles as we travel through the city and as we approached Shanghai.

In all major commercial and industrial cities of China, cars and trucks have taken over the highways from bicyclists and age-old pushcarts. The most remarkable change I notice was in the Kiangsu province where the cities have not only changed but commercial activities have multiplied in more than four digits. The same applies to most part of the country except in the desert areas of Lanchow and Urumchi in the Northwestern provinces.

The Chinese were great technology imitators, building their economic powers through industrial espionage and imitations of western technology. In China, you could buy imitations from consumer goods such as wristwatches, cameras, apparels, shoes, designer fashion cloth, computers, and electronics, to industrial goods from local markets at unbelievably low prices.

Beijing the Capital City - Many large cities around the world were at one time small villages or towns that grew over the years and became large cosmopolitan areas. In Peking, there was the Outer, or Chinese city, which was surrounded by a low wall that has been removed except in a few places where the gates remain. There is also the Tartar City with its massive and forbidding walls towering skyward more than 50 feet representing the old China before the coming of foreigners. Within the Tartar City are the world-famous landmarks the Imperial City, the Legation Quarters, and the Forbidden City. Each of the cities is an entity and has its own walls and its unique features. The famous Forbidden City was the emperor's residence, while his retinue was housed in the imperial city, and the legation Quarters housed members of the diplomatic corps.

The Forbidden City a city within a city- My greatest pleasure in Peking was a visit to Forbidden City after three-day visit to the Great Wall of China. The two places are so captivating that I took the time to visit them each time I was visiting Beijing. The Forbidden City is one of the most intriguing and lavish Palaces ever built in the world. Its sheer size dwarfs even those largest palaces in Europe and the Middle East. When I read "The Last Manchu" a book written by the last Monarch King to occupy the Palace, I thought most of his description of the complex was exaggerated, but when I visited the Palace, I found his description as understatement and limited.

I started with my guide from the Meridian Gate opposite famous Chinamen Square, a large two-floor building with a large balcony facing a large open space meant for important dignitaries and royal household to view activities and ceremonies. The entrance doors are giant steel doors of about seven meters high which dwarfs anyone on a camel giving an impression of power and authority. Walking through the gate, one can see in the great distance a bridge over the Meridian Stream that cuts across from East to West Glorious Gates. Walking in a straight line from the Meridian gate the next important building after the bridge is the Gate of Great Harmony about four hundred meters away. In about equal distances, one passes through the following important buildings in a straight line from the main gate. The Hall of Great Harmony, then the Hall of Middle Harmony, then the Hall of Preserving Harmony, then the Gate of Heavenly Purity, leading to the Palace of Heavenly Purity, then to Hall of Union, leading to Palace of Earthly Tranquility, Into the giant Imperial Garden, then to Hall of Imperial Peace and finally to Gate of Martial Spirit.

On both sides of these Gates and Halls, there are several other important buildings like the Nine Dragon Walk east of the Gate of Great Harmony and Hall of Mental Cultivation and Hall of Worshipping Ancestors west and east of Gate of Heavenly Purity respectively. There are also hundreds of sections in the Palace housing from the Queens to Royals, from concubines to slaves, from soldiers to civil servants, thousands of people live and work in the Forbidden City. On each corner of the palace, there are great watchtowers for the security of the complex. In an artistic sense, the city is one of the wonders of the world, crowded with palaces, museums, and some of the examples of art and architecture to be found anywhere in Asia.

The Great Wall of China - The Great Wall of China is one of the Seven Wonders of the World visible from space is a solid stone mortar wall that runs over four thousand miles across the mountains and valleys of China. It started as a military fortification against hostile tribes during the Zhou Dynasty in around 770-476 BC. The separate walls remained fragmented and controlled by the various provinces or kingdoms until its unification by the Qin Dynasty in 214 BC. The Great Wall stretched from Lintao in the eastern part of Gansu province, to Liaodong in Jilin province in the west, which not only serve as a defense but also a symbol of power.

Our guide took us from Beijing about an hour drive in the cold mornings of November 2005, to see the remains from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) an area accessible to tourist. A ten-meter high and five-meter wide stone mortar wall rises and winds its way through endless rugged mountain peaks and valleys. On the first day, we ascended to the peak on foot, which took more than two hours resting intermittently depending on the steepness to gain breath and rest the feet. On the second day, she took us to another peak by cable car to the mountaintop where we saw an endless line of the Great Wall from the observation towers.

Like the Forbidden City, the Great Wall attracts millions of tourists every year from within and outside China. Our dress and skin color attract the attention of many of the tourist that probably have never seen physically a black person. Some take enough courage to request us to take photographs with them while many pretend, we did not exist even though you could see the curiosity as we walk through the crowd.

Lanchow in Kansu Province - Hajj Ma Chengxiang a Chinese Muslim engineer who was our guide to agricultural establishments in this desert province received us at Lanchow airport, which is a one-hour drive away from the city. On our way to the city, I noticed how the Chine government transformed one of the arid regions in the world into green vegetations from the valleys to the sandy mountains of Gobi Desert. The annual rainfall in the area is less than five inches in a year, yet the Chinese have ingeniously utilized the little rain to provide all year water needs for plants and animals including domestic uses through what they term rain harvest. The rain guided down from the hills through a narrow concrete channel to a concrete reservoir underground.

Every small farmer has a makeshift greenhouse where the older family members grow vegetables to supplement their income. The greenhouses built with plastic sheets on a twig stand about three feet from the ground for maximum retention of humidity. Inside the greenhouses, a small network of plastic pipes provides water to the plants through drip irrigation.

The peasant farmers organized under communes with the village head usually the communist party leader; direct the affairs of the village economy. We met one of the village heads at his house where his wife was busy raising few boars while the 80-year-old husband was busy in the field harvesting his winter wheat crop.

We had the privilege on gaining access into the compound and into his bedroom, which was modest socialist village standard, two beds, a black and white television set, and a lump of coal-fired cooking stove in the center of the bedroom. The water reservoir was directly in front of the bedroom. I saw in the more affluent communal houses separate toilets and kitchens in the compounds.

Every village settlement has a milling machine for grinding wheat flour and other grains, and a community center for holding meetings and ceremonies provided for by the state. Schools and other social facilities such as clinics and veterinary services were available in all the villages we visited.

Shanghai Kiangsu Province - The city of Shanghai the largest in China offers a great attraction to visitors. The ancient city situated on the mouth of Yangtze River, providing rich cultural and modern city infrastructures. We landed at Pudong International Airport on route Singapore in the early hours of the morning and had no difficulty passing through the airport security to our hotel Grand Hyatt at Jin Mao Tower.

Shanghai was one of the greatest beneficiaries of the 1978 China economic reforms. Skyscrapers have taken over the marshy plains on both sides of the Yangtze River giving the area a Manhattan look. The name of this city dates to about 1200 AD, but it was not until 1842, the city was open to foreigners and foreign trade.

Urumchi in Sinkiang Province - The city of Urumchi is by any definition reminds me of Kano, an old commercial city in the edge of the desert. Despite its strategic importance to China as the oil city, its infrastructure is far below what obtains in the southern provinces of the country. We traveled North West of the city to some important industrial towns of Karamai and Kuldja near the China- Kazakhstan border to see textile and tomato processing factories owned by the State mainly geared towards the export market. Although Chinese is the major and commercial language of China, the people of this area speak a non-Chinese language of Turkic and majority professes Muslim faith. In each village we passed on our way from and to Urumchi, there are community mosques and established Islamic schools. When we stopped to offer Zuhur prayers in one of such villages, the whole community came out with the Imam to greet us and help; unfortunately, our conversations were limited to our crude Arabic language as neither of us speaks each other's language.

Japan -The High-tech Nation

"You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough". Mae West

I was always afraid to visit two places in the world despite my passion for both, Japan happens to be one of them for fear of earthquake yet, I loved every hour during my stay in Japan. We landed at Narita Airport from Hong Kong in the late hours of December 12, 1981, along with my regular travel companion Malam Salihu Abdullahi, unfortunately for him, his luggage was missing and had to spend some extra time at the airport to sort out with the airline. We took the bullet train into the city of Tokyo where our accommodation was booked at the Imperial Hotel. It was a five-star hotel in the downtown area of the city a walking distance to the famous Ginza, Tokyo's main shopping business and financial district.

What endured me most to the Japanese is their great sense of responsibility and cutesy. The Japan Airline ground staff at the airport was courteous and helpful in assisting Salihu with three hundred Dollars initially to purchase essentials before his luggage arrives in the next plane, which they promised to deliver to our hotel the next morning. It was midnight yet the hotel reception manager ordered a tailor to come to Salihu's room to take his measurements for a new suit for delivery at nine o'clock in the morning. At the appointed time, a woman knocked at his door with tailor-made suits apologizing for the less than a one-minute delay in the lift. The woman keeps apologizing continuously until we asked her the reason for her remorseful admission of guilt. She looked at her wristwatch indicating the few seconds delay. We were shocked because this will never happen in many countries

and particularly ours. Malam Salihu in appreciation of the efficient services offered her a tip to which she vehemently refused to accept and momentarily turned back towards the elevator. This was the highlight of our trip to Japan as we kept narrating this episode to our friends for a long time.

From the airport, the ground staff of Japan Airline kept briefing us on the hourly basis their efforts to retrieve his luggage until it was delivered to his room later in the day. The Japanese are not only courteous people in the streets or in public places but extremely hospitable in their homes. Everyone treats his fellow by bending forward to greet and constantly been polite when they speak.

The first Japanese I met and interacted with was Dr. Shuji Matsuita way back in 1968 in Kano while he was compiling Japanese-Hausa dictionary under a special African Language program by the University of Japan. He lived for many years in our neighborhood collecting Hausa vocabularies from different trades and the public with the support of the African languages department at Bayero University Kano. During our many conversations, I formed a stereotype view of Japanese after reading a biography of one of Japans foremost pro-western revolutionaries Yoshida Shoin who attempted to leave Japan for America in 1854 an offense carrying death sentence under the Shoguns that kept Japan tightly closed for more than two centuries.

In 1859, he was executed at age 29 by the Shogun for his crime and he wrote, "If my companions and students take over my task the seed of the future will not die." I had the opportunity during my visit to Japan to visit the Hagi museum where I saw his wax figure behind prison bars denoting his ordeal under the Shoguns. He was remarkably like Malam Aminu Kano as a son of the privileged class and an advocate of social changes such as universal education, a reward for ability, and abolishing of privilege.

Despite all techno-industrial achievements putting Japan among the three most advanced nations, in the twentieth century, its people remain very traditional in all spares socio-cultural and religious beliefs. Rural Japan is not entirely different culturally from urban centers. For instance, I had the privilege of being invited to a wedding ceremony in Tokyo through Nigeria's Ambassador Tafawa Balewa, where I saw a rendezvous of traditional Japanese culture. The bride came into the shrine dressed in traditional Japanese attire with a big headgear that was supposed to conceal the horns of jealousy, and a tassel hanging on her neck with a small knife symbolizing ritual suicide should she dishonor her husband. The bridegroom wears a black silk coat and hangs on his shoulders a samurai sword.

Tokyo city is a mix of ultramodern and traditional, from neon-lit skyscrapers to historic temples. We visited the opulent Meiji Shinto Shrine known for its towering gate in surrounding woods. A walking distance is the Imperial Palace sitting in the middle of vast public gardens is the primary residence of the Emperor and imperial

household. It also houses other buildings such as the archive, museums, and administrative offices.

India -The Incredible Culture

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak, Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen" Sir Wilson Churchill

My first visit to India in December 1980 with Salihu Abdullahi was not entirely pleasant because of the difficulties we encountered right from the Delhi Airport. I misplaced my yellow card in the rowdy atmosphere at the luggage claim area making me pay extortion money to save myself from the hands of the health officials. Again, while trying to change my currency, which was then illegal outside the central bank authorized dealers, someone pretending to help duped me seven hundred dollars. Despite all the difficulties, I found India unique in all respects from the cultural settings, foods, and historical relics. Our first place of interest after exploring the city of Old and New Delhi was Agra the home of great historical monuments of the greatest notably the Taj Mahal built by Shahjahan in memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal and Agra Fort built by the three Mughal emperors.

Our road journey to Agra was most interesting and nostalgic as we pass the villages and markets places that are reminiscent of Kano landscape. The road until in the 21st century was narrow two-lane winding through several villages and markets that look very much like our villages and markets except the numerous Pedicabs, ox wagons, and camel wagons that dominates the landscape. In one of the markets, I observed tricksters, animal charmers, and clowns entertaining for a fee. On one side there is a livestock market selling water buffalos, camels, and goats. In another part of the market, I saw second-hand clothes been sold along with textile materials in all colors and shades. The villages along the flat land from Delhi to Agra grew maize, guinea corn, millet, and vegetables under irrigation. The farmers live in thatched huts like our own in Northern Nigeria.

Agra is known worldwide as the city of the Taj-Mahal, but this royal Mughal city has for two centuries the capital of India. Our guide told us that it was here the founder of the Mughal dynasty Babar, laid out the first Persian garden on the bank of the river Yamuna one of India's great rivers. Akbar, his grandson raised the towering ramparts of the great Red Fort. Jehangir added within its parameters rose-red palaces, courts, and gardens, while Shahjahan embellished it with marble mosques, palaces, and pavilions of gem-inlaid white marble. We spent two days exploring these great monuments of the 16th century with our guide taking pictures and wondering on these manmade wonders. Taj Mahal is quite a unique building that creates an indelible mark on every visitor's mind. It is not just a visual experience, but also an emotional one for many people in love. Its symmetry imparts

such a strong feeling that I had to take my family in subsequent trips just to see these man-made wonders.

During my first trip to Agra, we hired a taxi cab from the airport for one week at eighty dollars per day. Our taxi driver called Baboo was afraid of losing his business if he agrees to take us to a five-star hotel as many of his colleagues may offer us a better bargain. He did all he could to discourage us to bargain with other taxis at the airport which he said are not reliable and may cheat us at the end. Out of pity, we agreed to stay with him for the week on condition that the car will be available at any hour for our use and he agreed.

He took us to an obscure guesthouse called Hilton Guest House, in the residential area of Delhi and a three-star accommodation that has a black and white television and a small fridge in the corridors for the use of guest but with separate toilet facilities in each room. He did that to make sure we are not in contact with other taxi drivers or any tour guide. We later discovered his tricks after he collected fifty percent of the total money, which he said; he would use to buy fuel, pay his mate and service his vehicle. Even though we were not happy with the accommodation, it was too late to make any alternative arrangement for the week.

One day we traveled to Agra, we left our hotel very early in the cold morning, and only stopped halfway in the journey to take breakfast at a makeshift hut where they serve us with tea and rice for a few rupees. While we are drinking our tea to keep warm, a colonel in the Indian Army drove in a jeep and sat with us on the long bench table provided by the restaurant owner for people ordering full breakfast of fifty rupees about five dollars. This colonel was very curious to know who we were by engaging us into a conversation about our country and his duty as the head of a brigade guarding an oil refinery in the nearby town. He told us that he was awaiting his promotion to brigadier soon when he hopes to buy his first car.

In Delhi, we took a guided tour of the old Delhi, the onetime capital of Muslim India between the 12th and 19th centuries. Old forts, mosques, and monuments related to India's Muslim history are in the old part of the city, while, New Delhi symbolizes the imperial occupation by the British, lined with imposing boulevards. There is so much to see in Delhi that we were only able to visit Red Fort, Jama Masjid, Qutab Minar, India Gate, Parliament House, and National Museum within the seven days we were in the city.

On one occasion, I decided to travel by train to feel the real country from New Delhi to Agra, a journey of roughly six hours of adventures. From Delhi station where I purchased my first-class ticket, it was a struggle to get on the train even as the first-class passenger. The lanky porter that carried my suitcase on his head and briefcase in his left arm asked me to follow him through the crowd forcing his way to the first-class wagon. He asked me to be extra vigilant for pickpockets, follow his steps, and keep watching his red jacket symbolizing his authority to enter the train. There was

an unprecedented surge in the second-class wagons as women and children carrying their small luggage on their head scream for help as they bear the squeeze at the entrances.

During my subsequent visits to India after 1980, Mumbai (Bombay) was my gateway to this country because of its fascination and throbbing life of cultural and commercial activities, yet one must be careful with the people he deals with as a tourist. There are several scammers and dupes hanging out at airports, hotels, and tourist sites looking for an unsuspecting tourist to deceive. Twice in this country, scammers and airport officials connived and duped me while trying to purchase an onward journey air ticket.

One of the most popular promenades of Mumbai is the Marine Drive, which runs along the shoreline of Back Bay. Our Pedicab operator carried us from Nariman point around Chow patty beach up to Malabar hills for less than two hundred rupees. It was the easiest way to travel in Mumbai traffic but even that has its own perils. We kept warning the driver to be careful as wiggles through the traffic with his horn constantly on. Occasionally he will park in front of a shop and request us to check if we need anything. This is the usual practice by tour operators in alliance with the shop owners, which earns them a commission on every purchase.

In September 2003, I was invited along with my Emir colleagues by the Jigawa State government to attend a Stone exhibition in the Indian City of Jodhpur in the Great Indian Desert. The journey from New Delhi by taxi took us almost a whole day of nonstop travel on a relatively modern but crowded highway through towns and villages along the route. By the time we arrived, the exhibition was few hours to closure, and had to rush through the stands with little time to see the details; yet we were able to collect some useful information on and about the fair. We took along with us several kilograms of rock samples from Jigawa State for analysis and advice from the professional stone artisans who organized the exhibition.

The following day we visited Jaipur the capital city of India's Rajasthan state which evokes the royal splendor of the eighteen century India. Across from city's palace is Jantar Mantar open-air astronomical observatory from that period. Within a walking distance is the Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) a former cloister for royal women fronted by a rippling five-story screen of pink sandstone. On a shopping spree, we drove to three most notable (Tripolia, Kishanpole, and Bapu Bazaars) in the city which is within a walking distance of each other. There was an array of items in these Bazaars ranging from carpets to carved crafts of stone, ivory, bones, and horns. There are several festival crafts, baskets, mats, jewelry, metal ware, pottery, terracotta, and peppier Mache. The Indian textiles are particularly my favorite, with its varied designs, of different colors, made of silk or cotton with intricate geometric or appliqué works of embroidery. The Indian subcontinent is the home of cotton which precipitates the art of weaving for over 5000 years woven throughout India.

Unlike the Chinese, the Indians developed their economies through the adoption of technologies rather than imitation. They take pride in their adopted technologies from heavy-duty equipment, motor vehicles, generators, industrial equipment's, textiles, computers and software's labels are Indian.

Pakistan -The land of scholarship

"It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things". Leonardo da Vinci.

My first trip to Pakistan was a stopover at Karachi International Airport on my way back from Singapore to Paris in the summer of 1980. We landed around 10 pm for fueling and from the air; I watched the dark streets crowded with traffic reminding me of the chaotic streets of Lagos. The airport was one of the largest in Asia but subsequently taken over by emerging tigers. It is a sprawling city with spacious and carefully laid out thoroughfares connected to narrow crowded bazaars in the shadow of modern commercial and government buildings.

In subsequent visits to Pakistan, I was able to travel to Lahore to visit a good friend Mr. Saddiq Ahmad who lived and worked with me in Kano in the early seventies. It is the second largest city and lies in what was once Punjab a picturesque land of five rivers. It was the capital of the Mogul emperors' centuries ago, who left spectacular Shalimar gardens, the architectural beauty of (Shahi Quila) imperial Fort, and glittering Badshahi Mosque considered one of the largest in the world.

Pakistanis are quite hospitable and decent people who pride themselves in making their visitors feel very much at home. The first Arab colonizers arrived in Indian sub-continent about one hundred and thirty years after Hijra, but within 200 years hordes of Muslims from central Asia forced their way through the Khyber Pass into India. In 1524 AD a Muslim Chieftain (Babur) a descendant of the mighty Genghis Khan, established the Mogul Dynasty. The sway of its power spread all over the continent for 300 years and produced rulers like Akbar the Great. The Moguls were compulsive builders and left a legacy of tombs, mosques, notably Badshahi Mosque and forts throughout India and Pakistan.

My greatest fascination in Pakistan was the truck art which has become a tradition for trucks to be decorated in different style and colors. The artists' design not only the shape of the wooden body but add all forms of artistic designs to portray the talents of the designer. It is surely fantastic and truly a Pakistani heritage.

Brunei -Small but Beautiful

"Money won't create success, the freedom to make it will". Nelson Mandela

While visiting Singapore with the Emir of Zazzau Suleja in 2005, he invited me to go along with him to visit his nephew who teaches mathematics at a secondary school in the Capital City of Bandar Seri Begawan. We arrived in the early hours of

the morning of September 2, 2004, on board Royal Brunei Airways into the small but clean and functional Brunei International Airport.

Our host prepared Nigerian dishes as well as Malay cuisine of [Nasi Katok] simple combination of rice and curried beef and chicken served with fresh fruits. After the meal, we took a tour of the city's landmarks, passing by the 1,750 room [Istana Nurul Iman Palace] the largest residential palace in the world. This Palace was built by Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah on a 300-acre man-made hill overlooking Kampong Ayer the largest river village in Asia.

We drove to Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque in the city center along the banks of Bandar River. A magnificent structure stands impressively with its golden dome, English stained glass, and Italian marble and golden mosaic. Inside the building giant golden chandeliers adorned the interior and outside corridors.

The other equally majestic Mosque is the Jame Asar Hassanal Bolkiah in the Gadong area of the city. A Mosque of grandeur and beauty built by the 29th Sultan entirely of stone marble structures, Philippines wooden doors, enormous chandeliers of crystal glass, colored water fountains, exquisite ablution area, and multi-level prayer floors. The entire interior walls decorated with fine Islamic calligraphy gives the impression of absolute serenity. Our guide took time to explain in ostentatious details of each work of art and its monetary worth and origin.

The Philippines -The Land of Thousand Islands

"However difficult life may seem there is always something you can do and succeed at". Stephen Hawking.

In April 1982, Malam Salihu Abdullahi (Babatsu) and I landed at Manilla airport on transit to Paris that was, however, my second visit to this country. I had been invited by an old friend from Ohio in January 1980 to attend his wedding and to witness the great annual festival of Santo Nino at his Hometown Island of Cebu. It was always a great fiesta of traditional ritual dance accompanied by the sound of drums. The participants in procession move two steps forward and one step backward like the Caribbean carnival dances. In Manilla, I was privileged to witness yet another fiesta on the streets of Quiapo with several barefooted men carrying life-size black wooden statues symbolizing the crucifixion of (Jesus of Nazarene). A mammoth crowd walked through the streets of the city chanting and intermittently allowing on-lookers to touch the statue for a miraculous cure.

Manila the national capital was where I spent a reasonable time because Philippine is a conglomerate of over 7,000 Islands scattered over 1,000 miles stretch north to south. It is also a country that offers a traveler everything you can imagine in the way of things to see and do. Manila the capital city is a thriving, bustling port and the heart of all cultural, economic and political life of the Philippines.

Australia -The Down under

"The first step toward success is taken when you refuse to be a captive of the environment in which you first find yourself". Mark Caine.

On December 7, 1981, Salihu Abdullahi set out to visit this most isolated continent known as the down under via Singapore. We landed at Melbourne Victoria Airport early morning on a stopover to Sydney. As soon as our aircraft touched down, the cabin attendants fumigated the entire cabin a mandatory regulation for all incoming international flights. At the arrival hall, we lined up and subjected to most horrifying search with dogs snipping everyone that passes through a narrow corridor barefooted. Our hand luggage's placed on a conveyor belt under the watch of security personnel were subjected piece by piece to similar searches. Even the dirt on the sole of our shoes was subject to analysis to ensure it does not bring in contaminated soil from other countries.

When we finally finished with the airport formalities, we signed with tour guides for a one-day sightseeing tour of Melbourne. Our first stop was the Flinders Street Railway Station an attractive domed 1899 building where locals rendezvous in the evenings and socialize. We walked along the famous Collins Street where old and new architectural buildings dotted the landscape with several trendy designer shops for opulent shoppers.

Before the end of the day, we visited several other places of interest including the Museum and State Library of Victoria, and lunch at the Victorian Arts Center. At the Melbourne Aquarium, we walked through the inspiring depth of Oceanarium with a panoramic view as huge stingrays, massive sharks, and hundreds of multi-colored marine creatures swim by. It was surely an unforgettable experience and captivating feeling of underwater paradise at the Mermaid Garden.

Late in the evening, after having supper at the city center, we headed back to the airport to our desired destination Sydney. The flight was smooth except little turbulence as we approached the airport. Almost every passenger on the plane was coming back to Sydney after attending a rugby match; almost all were intoxicated and unruly chanting victory songs throughout the flight. As soon as we landed, they spontaneously left their seats and walked in the aisles despite the calls from the cabin crew to remain seated.

Sydney is certainly a beautiful city but arriving during the Christmas season added color to its natural environment. Our Hotel located along the harbor was advantageous as regards to spectacular sights and walks along the gardens and foreshores.

A penal colony of ex-convicts established by the British in 1788, under the command of Arthur Philip the Colony's first Governor. The 1980 Sydney was a modern city comparable to any American city with large shopping malls, huge parking spaces, and freeways.

In the early morning, we walked across the Sydney Harbor Bridge through the pedestrian walkway via the southeast pylon. The Bridge and the Opera House on Circular Quay are the most remarkable, most sought out sites of Sydney landscape. Other places I found unique in Sydney includes Chinatown with its traditional Chinese garden and King cross a multi-cultural street and the crucible of the good, the bad, and the ugly in the city's life. It is Sydney's equivalent of Soho in London, 42nd Street, in New York, or Reeperbahn in Hamburg.

We booked our return journey on December 27 but had to reschedule our booking to January 5, 1982, due to a general strike by ground staff handlers at Australian airports. We remained at our hotel rooms watching soap opera throughout the holiday as most streets were deserted.

Chapter Seventeen

African Adventures

"We live in a wonderful world that is full in beauty, charm, and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open" Jawaharlal Nehru.

I must admit that Africa remains the only continent that I have not yet conquered in my many years of travels. Except for our neighboring countries of Niger Republic, Cameroon, a brief stopover in Tunis, Benin Republic, South Africa, Ghana, Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco. I have been to a smaller number of countries in the Africa Continent compared to Europe, Asia or the Americas. This was partly due to the difficulties in traveling within the continent and lack of security in many countries. I hope in my lifetime to visit Eastern and southern African countries.

Niger Republic -The land of the Sahara

"Sustainability is the key to our survival on this planet and will also determine success on all levels". Shari Arison.

In December 1970, Prof. Philip Shea and I sat out on motorcycles, across the desert in Niger republic to Agadez. The road from Kano to the Nigerian border was a wartime dilapidated single lane full of potholes. We arrived at Damagaram [Zinder province] after six hours on a journey of two hours. We slept at a Peace Corps compound in the town center. Our motorcycle could not go further as the road to Agadez is only accessible by a four-wheel drive vehicle. We went to the motor park the following day and booked a seat on the only lorry that flays the road to Agadez from Zinder. Our travel agent told us that the truck leaves Zinder at 4 pm and usually expected to arrive at Agadez early in the morning the next day. We were at the lorry park an hour before the time to get the best seat available in the open truck. We were wrong in our estimation, as there is no seat available for passengers and livestock. Everyone will have to find any available space regardless of your status or health condition. We struggled to find a space at the tail end of the truck, which we regretted as the journey proceeds. We were not only disturbed by a passenger next to us who chanted all the way throughout the journey but also suffered greatly from the dust emanating from the rear as the sandy soil turns into thick dust that makes breathing difficult without a head scalp.

It was a Christmas Eve, and my companion a Christian was lamenting on the choice of that day for a journey in the Sahara Desert. Our bottle of water has since disappeared even before we reached a Tuareg town called Tanut. We survived the cold desert night by covering ourselves with a camel woolen blanket we bought at the motor park. We arrived at Agadez in the early hours, where the driver stopped at the outskirts of the town for the Muslim passengers to offer morning prayers, and to go through security checkpoint mounted by Gendarmerie. When we finally

disembarked at the lorry park in the middle of town, we headed for the only hotel and checked in for three days.

We spent the day visiting places of interest and at night, we receive an invitation to attend a Tuareg Wedding Party. It was a great experience in witnessing a maternal-based marriage, where the bridegroom dresses in the most attractive makeup to influence the choice of the brides to be. After an extensive competition, well-wishers and family members escorted the lucky bridegrooms to the bride's home where the bride's family provided a room for the bridegroom and the bride to spend their lives. In the Tuareg tradition, the married men wear the veil like a turban to protect their identity. In Hausa culture, it is completely the opposite.

On the fourth day, our host arranged a camel trip into the Sahara Desert to Bilma-Agadez in a caravan under the command of Mamoudou. An elderly person in his fifties claims to be in the caravan business for more than thirty-five years. Philip and I were allotted camel each, and two attendants to look after our welfare. Each camel and its attendant cost two hundred American dollars for a return journey to Agadez. We left Agadez town immediately after the Fajir prayers and traveled north to Timia a small town and commune in Northern Niger situated at an Oasis in the Air Mountains. Our Caravan winds through mountainous terrains in the inhospitable open desert. We covered several miles in three hours traveling at an average speed of about six miles per hour before the sun gets too hot and windy for a comfortable journey. At around nine o'clock, the caravan leader ordered for a brief rest and animals allowed to nibble for the scares forage around. He took us to a small shed under rock formation where we took shelter for six hours until the sun heat subsides at around 4 pm.

We brought with us a bag full of (Kilishi) dried meat, dozens of sardines, tuna, and tins of margarine from Nigeria in preparation for this difficult journey through the Sahara Desert. We had also a couple of bottled water, but we relied mostly on the water stock provided by the caravan in goatskin sulk. We had some stock of green tea we bought at Agadez market and hard sugar loaves which we frequently break and add to our teas. Philip brought some quantity of kola nuts that he frequently chews to reduce perspiration and keep his throat moist. On the second day, we arrived at Timia.

We headed east in a sandy desert from Timia to Bilma on route to Faci village on the third day of our journey. Halfway through, we caught up with a terrible sand storm with the unimaginable ferocity that reduced visibility to less than six inches. Mamoudou prepared us for this event even before we started the journey, but with all his assurances, Philip and I thought that was the end. Mamoudou quickly tied the caravan one by one and warned us to wear our turbans and remain tied to the procession. Within one hour, the storm subsides, and we could see ourselves again but with sore etching eyes. Our attendants who are used to this type of storm shouted

on top of the voices in amusement to create further fear in our minds for desert treachery.

We reached Bilma on the seventh day after traveling through the desert mostly in the nights and early mornings and sleeping in the afternoons and on the beasts. Bilma is an Oasis in the middle of the desert where spring water flows constantly watering the gardens and the salt mines. Our host a slave descendant Malam Ahmadou brought dried camel cheese, dates to our room, and narrated to Philip how his family found themselves in this wilderness.

Philip's interest in the journey was purely academic and therefore did not waste much time with pleasantries and went to interview some textile [turkudi] traders in the town and visited some old dye pits. The few days in this town provided me greater insight into the life of the desert inhabitants, lonely, poor, and yet friendly and generous. Malam Ahmadou spent his whole-time assisting Philip in translating interviewees' responses into Hausa.

We returned to Agadez the same route, but this time our attention was back home, and therefore had little time observing the events that accompany our journey. However, one event remains in my mind for several years was the crossing of another larger caravan heading to Bilma where almost all the thousands of camel's roars in excitement or anger I could not tell. For more than thirty minutes you could only hear the groaning echoed by the desert.

We spent two more days recovering from the exhaustion in Agadez, on the third day we left for Zinder through Tanut to pick our motorcycle from the Peace Corps house. We fueled our motorbikes and headed west to Maradi on a dirt road, which took us about six hours. Maradi, unlike Agadez, is a typical Hausa town, but for the differences in the colonial upbringing between Nigeria and Niger. We spent two nights in a motel before heading back to Kano via Katsina.

Cameroon -The land of ecotourism

"The will to persevere is often the difference between failure and success". David Sarnoff

At the invitation of late Ambassador Mamman (Sarkin Yakin Daura), we set out with Makaman Kano Malam Sarki Ibrahim for a one-week tour of this eastern neighbor from Lagos to onboard Nigeria Airways flight to Duala on December 15, 1984.

This was a period of mutual suspicions and relative tension between Nigeria and Cameroon as a result of more discoveries of oil in the Bakkasi Peninsula. Our host Ambassador Mamman Daura requested us to be wary of the situation when we landed at the airport. We carried our passports wherever we go to avoid harassment by the gendarmes.

An embassy vehicle made available to us to ease travel within and outside the city ideally should eliminate our fear of harassments, yet we encountered humiliations at checkpoints where the Gendarmes check our papers with disdain suspicion.

When we visited a friend Alhaji Garba at the Hausa settlement area in the city, we noticed the presence of an individual stocking us as we walk around to see the community. Alhaji Garba first alerted us of this person and warned us not to panic or recognize his presence, as that will further generate more suspicion and possible cause some arrests in the community. Our visit coincided with the government decision to demolish a mosque in the community to pave way for road expansion, the usual reason given to avoid political or religious unrest.

We traveled in the company of Ambassador Daura to Limbe Victoria a one-time trust territory of Nigeria that is potentially a tourist zone, but few people allowed visiting this politically charged English speaking area of Cameroon. An agitation for separation by the political class because of perceived marginalization of the English-speaking people was ripe and possibly supported by some political groups in Nigeria.

Benin Republic -formerly known as Dahomey

"One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation". Arthur Ashe.

The Kingdom of Dahomey was referred to by many different names and has been written in a variety of ways, including Danxome, Danhome, and Fon which relates to the dominant ethnic and linguistic group in the country.

My first trip to this neighboring country was on July 15, 1994, at the invitation of an old German friend Dr. Barbara Blankmeister, who was then co-coordinating the activities of Conrad Adenauer Foundation in the West African francophone sub-region. Lagos was on strike because of the arrest and imprisonment of Abiola the winner of 1993 national election, annulled by the Babangida military government.

The road to (Seme) border manned by several checkpoints took us quite some time going through tight security operations. We crossed the border to Cotonou (Porto-Novo) a relatively quiet city as compared with most Nigerian cities. Many residents of this city speak Yoruba and French and few speak Hausa and English. Everywhere along the road, since we crossed the Nigeria-Benin border there were several fuel hawkers selling petrol in one-liter bottles to the thousands of motorcycle taxis in the city. The filling stations could not compete with the smuggled fuel from Nigeria because of heavy fuel tax the [Yan Bunburutu] could sell at half the prices charged by the official outlets.

The country's socialist links are visible everywhere in the architectural as well as town planning. A relatively poor country, but evidently had invested reasonably in

education and health care. Benin and Niger are Nigeria's friendly neighbors whose economies are dependent on the goodwill and health of its economy.

There are quite a few places of interest in the city, except the sandy beaches, where pigs and humans compete for available spaces. There were an animal and human piece everywhere making the place a health hazard because of contamination. The seaport handles substantial imports into Nigeria partly because it is the easiest place to smuggle goods into Nigeria. However, for genuine importers, the Cotonou port has greater security than Lagos Apapa or any Nigeria's seaport.

Ghana -Leading the Liberation

"Success means having courage, the determination, and the will to become the person you believe you were meant to be". George A. Sheehan.

My visit to Ghana was quite accidental. Our flight to Kano in 2004 from Beirut to Kano could not land after several dangerous attempts by the pilot due to thick Hamatan dust, which reduces visibility to only a few hundred meters. The pilot suspended his maneuver and headed for Accra. We landed at Accra airport and moved to our hotel rooms in the city in the early hours of the morning.

My greatest surprise was finding Ghanaians even though relatively poorer, are happier, more civilized, and courteous as compared to Nigerians. Our enormous wealth has not translated into any meaningful development that will full our people from abject poverty, crime, and corruption. The Ghanaian national currency Cedi has suffered serious depreciation to the extent that you need more than a million Cedi to pay for a good meal or regular medication.

We went around the city in a taxi with my family to the Hausa quarters [Sabo] and had a conversation with some community members who were keen on taking us around the area. Despite the many years of separation between cultures, the Hausa community remains culturally like other Hausa settlements in non-Hausa speaking cities in Nigeria. Before leaving Ghana, we visited the slave port and other tourist sites including the arts and crafts market that sells all forms of Ghanaian crafts.

Egypt -The Land of the Pharaoh

"Find ecstasy in your life; the mere living is enough" Emily Dickson

On my first trip to Cairo, my friend Sarki Ibrahim [Makaman Kano] introduced me to his friend a military officer in the Presidency. We landed at Cairo Airport early in the morning and went straight to a hotel at Zamalek area on the bank of Nile River. I had a relatively friendly association with the hotel staff and taxi drivers in front of the hotel until the second week when this officer called on me to collect his messages. His visit changes their attitude towards me from friendliness to suspicion and fear of possibly been a security agent.

Cairo or Al-Qahirah is an ancient and yet modern city full of life and fascinations particularly to a Muslim or African. The taxi drivers are constantly honking their horns to get the attention of passengers and to warn pedestrians crossing the road from every direction. This city has changed remarkably from my first visit in 1984 to my last visit in 2007. It has grown to an unimaginable size extending several miles in the desert. Egypt is not only one of the world's largest urban centers, but also its best-known archeological sites.

The second day I took a guided tour of Giza for a whole day that ended in forced shopping when the guide took me to Pyrex and perfume shops as part of the package tour. Despite all that happened and disagreements with the guide, the Great Pyramids of Giza listed among the Seven Wonders of the World was worth the visit. The sheer size makes you wonder the purpose of such laborious architecture of almost five thousand years. The 140-meter-high pyramid structure built with an estimated 2.3million solid stone blocks each weighing average of 2.5 tons.

In front of the Pyramids is the Sphinx a majestic mystical creature with a lion's body and woman's head carved out of limestone that stood 22 meters high and 50 meters long. The Greeks named it the Sphinx because of its similarities to the mystical creature.

On the third day, I decided to see Cairo is great shopping from textile, to metals, and leisure centers. Most fascinating among the shopping areas that created an indelible memory in my mind is the Khan el-Khalili Souk and Camel market built in the 14th century. Wekala al-Balaq and other shopping areas also provided me a unique experience and reminded me of my early childhood experience in bazaars.

On the fourth Cairo Museum and some important Mosques including the Madrassa of Sultan Hassan adjacent to Al-Rifb'n mosque were my destinations. While my visit to the two mosques was for their architecture and historical Islamic past, the museum encompasses pre-Islamic as well as early Islamic relics. There were over 136, 000 artifacts which even if one takes one minute to each exhibition it will take more than 270 days to see everything on display. I decided to only to see part of the pre-historic era, the Greco-Roman era, and early Islamic era displays.

The pre-historic and Greco-Roman include artifacts of architecture, sculpture, furniture, decorative, literature, jewelry, receptacles, tomb equipment's, cosmetics, models, and other unclassified objects. The early Islamic objects include scripts of the Holy Qur'an and other Islamic scripts.

In the evening, I took a guided tour of the old city of Cairo to see its traditional settings including the famous city of the dead or "Qarafa" the real name of this area of the city. The most amazing thing about this area is to a passerby may not believe that it was indeed a graveyard. The walls, the decorations on the gates, the streets, and the roofs all look like any street in the city. The Qarafa cemetery is cohabitation between the dead and the living who share the same environment.

The downtown or the old city of Cairo considered one of the oldest civilizations in the world is full of surprises. Winding through the stone structures of thousands of years, are small animal carriage alleys of about six feet wide pitched in lump stones. Egyptian families sit to enjoy the outdoor cafes and typical meals of falafel, bread, and dips in the evenings. Wherever we go in this ancient city, tradesmen and merchants are at hand trying to sell one item of art or craft by engaging us into discussions.

New Cairo, on the other hand, is a modern city of wide streets, condominiums, streetlights, and traffic jams. Our young driver Mahmoud drove the vehicle through these streets cutting off other road users as if we were in car racing. When we almost drove through a fuel truck, I urged him to take it easy, as we are not in a hurry to die. His sarcastic reply was "welcome to Cairo." The following day we requested the taxi company to send us a more responsible driver.

The new driver Haled was quite responsible middle-aged person married to a Hungarian woman he met on the internet live in a working-class apartment not per from our villa at Rehab Estate. One day he invited me to visit his humble two-bedroom rented apartment where he and the family live. It was a red brick four-floor structure of four apartments per floor. We walked up the stairs to the upper floor, through narrow and irregular steps that make the task of ascending more difficult. The sitting room is about twelve by sixteen feet with a two by four feet kitchenette, while the master room is about twelve by twelve feet with two windows. His twelve-year stepdaughter lives in the smaller room of about eight by eight feet with her desktop computer and a small wardrobe by the bedside.

Algeria The Land of Resistance

"It is better to be a Lion for a day than to be a sheep for a lifetime".

My first trip to this historic Country on Africa's side of the Mediterranean Sea was at the invitation of our Ambassador. We flew from Istanbul to Algiers on a warm summer day of 2015 with the Emir of Biu to seek medical attention.

Algiers is built on the slopes of the Sahel Hills, which parallel the Mediterranean Sea coast, and it extends for some miles along the Bay of Algiers. The city faces east and north and forms a large amphitheater of dazzling white buildings that dominate the harbor and the bay. It was founded by the Phoenicians as one of their numerous North African colonies. It was known to the Carthaginians and the Romans as Icosium. The town was sacked by the Mauritanian chieftain in AD 373 was further damaged by the Vandals in the 5th century. It was revived as a center of commerce in the Mediterranean under a series of Berber (Amazigh) dynasties beginning in the 10th century. In the early 16th century, many of the Muslims and Jews expelled from Spain sought asylum in Algiers. Algiers was placed under the authority of the Ottoman sultan, although in practice it remained largely autonomous.

The French made Algiers a military and administrative headquarters for their colonial empire in North and West Africa during World War II (1939–45), it became the headquarters of Allied forces in North Africa and for a time the provisional capital of France. In the 1950s, when the Algerian uprising against France began, the capital city was a focal point in the struggle.

The old Turkish, or Muslim, a section of Algiers is built on the upper slopes of the hills and has preserved much of its architectural character of high blank-walled houses and narrow winding streets. The Muslim section is dominated by the fortress of the Kasbah (Qa bah), designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1992. A prominent building in the Muslim section is the Ketchaoua Mosque, which prior to 1962 was the Cathedral of St. Philip (constructed 1860).

As a special diplomatic privilege, Ambassador Ginsau our host took us to Memorial du Martyr on top of the hill overlooking the city and bay area of Algiers. Underneath the giant structure is the historical museum of the Algerian revolution and struggles. We took time to walk through the entire complex which depicts its 132 years of French colonialism and sad history of wars and assassinations.

From the top of the Memorial Martyr Hill, we walked down to is the (Jardin d'Essai du Hamma) or the Botanical Garden of El-Hamma. The stunning garden covers several hectares of hundreds of exotic plants species that are preserved in their natural environments. Within the garden are several decorated water fountains, a zoological garden, and an art museum.

My critical analysis of the Algerian people though very hospitable and accommodating, are nevertheless very French in all their attitudes and nature. The French assimilation policy has robbed the Algerians their rich culture and tradition. Even though my native attire was originally Barber, I found out even the Barbers themselves have abandoned their dress for French suits. Many young people in Algeria are ashamed to look or act differently from the French cultural norm.

Morocco -The Home of the first University

"All objects, all phases of culture are alive. They have voices. They speak of their history and interrelatedness. And they are all talking at once!" Camille Paglia

Morocco is beside Nigeria, my most favored country. Life in this small but beautiful country reflects the Berber and Arab influences on my culture. It is a great representation of its population identified as Berber African and Arab. Besides its culture, its architecture and food are very much like most Hausa societies. Marrakesh is by far my most favored city with its brown buildings and well-preserved city wall and exotic gardens. The desert towns and villages look very much like many villages in Northwestern Nigeria.

Morocco is a geographically diverse country with an extensive coastline, great mountain ranges, and rift valleys in which rivers flow through creating great Oasis

in the desert region. Its diversity extends to its people and their cultures, languages, and cuisines.

There are two major ethnic groups; the Arabs occupy most of the coastal regions and the Berbers living in the desert regions. Although North Africa is culturally Arabic, Berber culture remains very strong and perhaps in many ways has a major influence on Moroccan Culture. This is evident in most city and family names, styles of art, craft, music, and dress.

Morocco is a country of timeless tranquil that merges the past with the present. It has cute coastal villages, colorful-painted towns that cling to hillsides, and remote outposts defended by fairy-tale adobe forts. This fascinating country is a merging of the African and Arab worlds and is steeped in age-old customs. It's no wonder Morocco has been feted by artists and writers for decades and continues to enchant all who visit.

The bustling and vibrant buzz of Marrakesh medina sums up Morocco for many visitors and is a major tourist attraction. The old city is entered from the vast plaza of Djemma el-Fna Square where it seems, half the city converges throughout the day and into the evening to hang out with the stall vendors, traditional musicians, snake charmers, and random acrobats. Once inside the medina itself, you enter a world of maze-like alleyways and shopkeeper hustle. It's an experience full of colorful and noisy local life and not to be missed on your Moroccan sightseeing trails

Casablanca's major point of interest and landmark building, the Hassan II Mosque is a lavish symbol not only of the city but also of Morocco itself. This modern mosque (finished in 1993) doesn't do things by halves. The decoration detail covering every centimeter of the mammoth two-hectare site took 10,000 artisans to complete. Intricately carved marble pieces, vibrant mosaics, and zellige tile details all pay tribute to traditional Islamic architecture ideas and the mastery of Moroccan craftsmanship and yet, at the same time, still manage to feel contemporary

Morocco has plenty of beautiful old town areas but Rabat's Oudaias Kasbah neighborhood must be one of the Country's most picturesque. This is a peaceful and perfectly quaint district that feels miles away from the city, despite being right in the city's core. Inside the walls of this old fortress, the lanes of neat white-and-blue houses rimmed by colorful flowerpots and flapping washing have a lost-in-time atmosphere that's hard to beat. Even better, unlike the old town areas of Fes and Marrakesh, there are hardly any other tourists here, so exploring this pretty corner of the capital feels as if you've been let in on a well-kept secret.

Rabat, (Capital City), is home to the Country's most important museum, the Royal Palace, and the Mausoleum of Mohammed V, as well as several historical attractions. Situated right on the Atlantic Ocean, with the Bou Regreg River running to the west separating it from its sister-city of Salé, Rabat is a pretty place. It has a much calmer atmosphere than nearby Casablanca.

Rabat's rambling medina area has a distinctly Andalusian style to its buildings as most of the architecture here dates from the 17th century, when Muslims from Spain's Andalusia region arrived. This makes it very different from the medina of Fes and Marrakesh. The two best shopping streets are Souk es Sabbat and Rue Souka, and several interesting buildings within the district make a wander here worthwhile. We took time to visit the Koubba Mosque as well as the Merenid Fountain and Grand Mosque both on Rue Souka.

For anyone interested in Morocco's modern art movement, this new museum is one of Rabat's top things to do. The collection housed in an impressively renovated building dating back to the French colonial days is small but holds artworks from nearly all the country's top names in the art world. A visit here makes a lovely contrast to viewing the traditional artisan work for which Morocco is rightly famous and shows the contemporary side to the country's long artistic expressions.

Directly across the Bou Regreg River, facing Rabat, the town of Salé is home to several interesting (madrassas - Islamic schools of learning) and mausoleums. In particular, the Abul Hassan Medersa is worth a visit. It dates from the Merenid era in the 14th century and has an interior covered with beautifully restored examples of traditional religious decoration, including zellige tile-work and carved wood panels. If you climb up to the roof, you can enjoy excellent views across the water to Rabat.

South Africa -The land of Apartheid

"If Inkatha managed to achieve its aim of becoming a mass movement, the apartheid government would be hoist by its own petard." Ben Temkin

During my university days in the United States, I had close contact with many ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party members that fled South Africa and settled in the States. Some of those people were Professor Cosmos a renown poet, and Pat Masekela a woman activist and a linguist whose active membership in the African students' union contributed enormously to our understanding of the apartheid system and its horrors. Together with students from Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), the two most oppressed African nations at the time created great awareness around the campus on the struggle for their liberation.

After the fall of apartheid lead government of Botha, and the opening of the country by Nelson Mandela's government, we received an invitation by King Goodwill Zwelithini to attend the two-hundred-year anniversary of Zulu Kingdom in the last week of September 2003 through our governor whom he met several times before. We left Lagos on September 23, 2003, on South African Airways flight to Johannesburg along with our aides and guide.

From Johannesburg, we took a connecting flight to Durban on the same day. Flying over this rugged and beautiful country one can see even from the air why the Europeans invaded this territory. The typography of this country by itself tells many

stories from the beautiful coastal areas to the undulating plains of the Zululand; the terrain captivates my mind throughout the journey. In Durban, my hotel suite was directly facing the Indian Ocean as several ships passing through the port could be seen on the horizon in and out of the port a striking scene remaining in my mind each time I think about South Africa.

On September 24, 2003, we drove northeast of Durban to Stanger a city where in 1816 Shaka the third son of Zulu Chief Senzangakhona seized power and led the Zulu in a series of bloody battles against rival peoples. King Shaka has a reputation of a great warrior, outstanding fighter, and fearless in a battle that endured for decades, deterring both the Boers and the British from settling in the lush Zululand. There were repeated clashes between the British and Boer settlers and the Zulu in the nineteenth century, but the fiercest wars were in 1879 when the British finally defeated the Zulu and established their sovereignty over the land.

Today Zulu are the largest indigenous group in South Africa numbering about 8 million people. As in the time of Shaka, the Zulu monarchy remains a cornerstone in the maintenance of Zulu customs and traditions. The King hosts an annual celebration, which makes every Zulu participant from the rank of the president to the common person to dress in animal skin usually of leopards and other wild animals, the men carrying a spear and ox hide shield in one hand on the other the traditional battle ax stick (the Sotho). The unmarried women dress in leather strip skirts and or leopard skin around their waist half-naked to entice would-be suitors. I found Zulu culture quite like some Northern Nigerian pagan tribes in the middle belt region while their love for stick fight resembles that of the Fulani. Dancing and singing and drinking of sorghum-based alcohol take most of the ceremonies that last for hours.

The traditional Zulu dancing is quite rigorous as both men and women kick their legs and stamp their feet to the rhythm of skin-covered drums. The men tend to show battle or hunting movements by using leather shield and stick in their dance, while the women are gentler and less artistic in their body movement. We spent the whole day watching the different groups perform their dances, and occasionally one person will lead the songs while the entire crowd takes over in Unisom the whole stanza.

The King invited several important dignitaries to the occasion from Madiba Nelson Mandela, President Tom Mbeki, vice president Jacob Zuma, Mntwana Mangosuthu Buthelezi the Minister of Home Affairs, and a host of other people from many parts of Africa were there to witness the two-hundred-year anniversary. It was my first time of meeting the great heroes of the struggle against Apartheid particularly Mandela, Buthelezi, and Jacob Zuma. Buthelezi was particularly interested in us and had interactive discussions on both political and social issues affecting the African Continent and its people.

The King arrived at the venue with pomp and pageantry as the ceremony commences, everyone including the important dignitaries stood for him and paid their respect. The Zulu revered their King and the traditional institution, to the extent when he speaks no matter the size of the crowd everyone pays absolute attention. The King was having lunch with us after the ceremony at a secondary school in Stanger when I colloqued the Emir of Kazaure sitting by the side of the vice President Zuma kindly asked him to pass on the butter try in front of the King. His reply was astonishing "I am below that standard to pick anything that lies between me and His Majesty."

The following day September 25, we traveled to meet King Goodwill at his Palace town of Ulundi a provincial city for another ceremony quite like the one at Stanger but more traditional and friendlier. Almost everyone in the crowd is dressed in leopard and cheater skins, while quite a few in lion and other wild animals. The King wore around his waist and on his shoulders and head a soft leopard skin, and a small hide shield and stick that distinguishes him from the ordinary Zulu. His deputy and a member of the Zulu Royal family then Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Buthelezi led the Zulu hymns, chants, and dances in honor of Shaka's memory.

I was highly impressed by the level of decorum pervading the ceremonies particularly when King Goodwill stood to present his annual speech. Before he begins his speech, his praise singer chanted for more than thirty minutes calling on his authority and history of the Zulu Nation as everyone in the crowd remained silent. His speech was long but very relevant to the problems of the black South Africans particularly the polygamous Zulu people that centered on family values and decency. After the ceremony at a lunch, I had the privilege of engaging Mr. Buthelezi into political discussions in which he confided in me of the relationship between ANC and Inkatha. He gave me his autographed biographies and exchanged phone numbers. I found Buthelezi a simple and respectful politician whose contribution to the emancipation of black South Africans could only be likened to that of Nelson Mandela, Steve Biko, and the like.

Chapter Eighteen

New Horizons

"A 'NO' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'YES' merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoid trouble". Mahatma Gandhi

The 1979 Nigerian Constitution has generated substantial interest and debate among many sections of Nigeria, resulting in several cases in the law courts seeking interpretations and or operations of some provisions of the constitution. As a result, there was demand from both constitutional lawyers and legislative bodies to review some aspects of the constitution in order to forestall the eminent constitutional crisis. The Military took over the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on December 31, 1983, suspended some aspect of the 1979 constitution, and promised institute a constitutional review, by first setting up of eighteen members Political Bureau in January 1986, under the leadership of Samuel J. Cookey. The committee charged with the responsibility of conducting a national debate on the political future of Nigeria that will establish a viable and enduring people-oriented political system devoid of perennial disruptions.

On September 7, the Military government under Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida set up a constitutional review committee of forty-five members under the leadership of Hon Justice Muhammadu Buba Ardo to review the 1979 constitution and produce a document that will be workable, adaptable, and acceptable to Nigerians. The review committee allowed only six months to review and amend the 1979 constitution and produce an enduring document that will form the basis for satisfying the needs and aspirations of Nigerian people. The committee, which incorporated all recommendations of the Political Bureau accepted by government and amendments to the 1979 constitution by the military, also took 438 memoranda from the public.

On April 4, 1988, Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu (Wazirin Dutse) came to my residence one evening to urge me to contest election to the Constitutional Conference of Dutse Federal Constituency seat. He was a member of the Drafting Committee and nominated member to the Constitutional Assembly. I tried to convince him that I do not have either the time or the legal or political experience to participate. I was convinced by his insistence and reasoning to accept the challenge but told him categorically that I will need his support and that of my brother (Galadiman Dutse) to reach out in the campaign for the seat. Luckily, we need only to contact the ten council members of Dutse Local Government whose membership in the council partly was at their instance.

I contested the election into the Constituent Assembly on April 23, 1988 and won with the overwhelming majority against my opponent who was also a well-known personality in Dutse Local Government. Immediately after announcing the result, I was faced with a great dilemma as to what to do with my businesses some of which

are in the take-off stage, while some were beginning to stabilize. Leaving the administration of these companies to my assistants for a prolonged period will mean their sudden closure. However, I weighed in my mind my responsibility to the nation and my constituency overrides any personal interest.

The Constituent Assembly members assembled for the inauguration address in Abuja on May 11 by President Ibrahim Babangida. Its Chairman Justice Anyogulu swore the members in on June 4, 1988, and targeted nine months to which to debate the draft constitution. However, due to the number of contentious issues raised by the Presidential speech, its discussion alone took us three months to deliberate. We broke into committees in August, and our committee was Public Funds headed by Mr. Olabiyi Durojaiye to which I was elected as his deputy. Our team worked very hard to ensure that Public Funds receive adequate protection under the constitution. In our first meeting, we decided to be guided by the famous document of Thomas Paine "Public Funds ought to be touched with the most scrupulous conscientiousness of honor." The fundamental objective of our committee was, therefore, to not only prevent and expose financial indiscretion and malpractice but also establish a stricter financial discipline, reduce waste and encourage frugal spending. Through transparency, we believe the Nigerian Nation be saved from the crushing burden of debt repayments.

To achieve these objectives, we recommended the following steps and amendments to existing provisions.

The Central Bank of Nigeria has not been accorded deserving status to enable it to administer monetary policies including setting limits to foreign and domestic debts independent of the ministerial control as obtained in most developed nations.

The Office of the Accountant General of the Federation should be statutory and protected from possible intimidations, by uplifting his status to that of the Auditor General. His Constitutional role should empower financial discipline in all public establishments and make annual accounts open to public scrutiny.

On Security Vote, our committee views as a great source of financial indiscipline and corruption, though essential to the administration of government considered maintenance of a memoranda records on all security spending.

Setting up of a Budget and financial monitoring agency with the power to scrutinize and investigate financial misdeeds of public office holders, which the committee thought, would go a long way in reducing financial mismanagement and crimes.

On the floor of the House, I made several presentations highlighting the dangers of corruption and embezzlement and how best to safeguard our resources to ensure the future of democracy. Unfortunately, however, many members refused to support stringent provision as many of them were aspiring politicians who see the restriction as tantamount to denying them the required funds to patronize their supporters.

Curbing Corruption in the Public Sector

"Man is a being in search of meaning" Plato

The failure of the Nigerian Constitutions from pre-independence to 1999 to address the issue of corruption and embezzlement led to the imprisonment of many governors and political office holders in 1983 and 2007. The brazen disregard for accountability and transparency in financial matters has left the nation and its people in abject poverty, illiteracy, and rising crime. Our committee's recommendations on setting up a financial crime monitoring body would have reduced the insatiable greed of office holders forcing them to account for their stewardship. This recommendation despite extensive lobby was defeated at the main chamber with few votes. It was a sad defeat for our committee work, but later, the government saw the wisdom of fighting corruption and established the EFCC, ICPC, and other corruption fighting bodies.

Contentious Issues

"The most difficult thing in life is to know yourself" Thales

There were other contentious issues from different parts of the country, each in direct conflict with the other, which makes the assembly's work slow and rowdy sometimes. The Ibo members came with the agenda to resist the imposition of the Sharia legal system and to demand the creation of more states out of the southeastern region. The Hausa north was adamant of the Sharia legal system and was determined to fight to any length the status of the Federal Capital City Abuja. The Yoruba and the Christian minorities of the North had each their own agendas of secularism, Children born out of wedlock and political control of regional and ethnic areas. Each time any of these issues tabled for discussion, the entire house will be in great commotion. The debate became so intense that the Federal Government had to intervene to save the assembly and the Nation from further polarization.

The Sharia issue more than any other ignited a firestorm of moral intensity and political shrewdness. The Northern Muslim members drawn from civil service and universities were a political novice who could not balance political realities with moral uprightness. Kano State has the largest number of elected representatives of forty-three members many of them in their thirtieth. The Western members were mainly from the Awoist political circles of the (UPN). They are mainly lawyers and businesspersons. The South and South-South candidates were a combination of young and not so young professionals.

The combination of such a cocktail of ideas and interest makes the coming together on issues even of no consequence much harder to digest, as every section is suspicious of the other. I made quite a few friends while trying to bridge the social gap that existed between the contending groups. To allay their fears, we traveled with one of my close friend Mr. Duben Onya (later minister of foreign affairs) to

Enugu to address a church gathering on the Sharia and as it affects non-Muslims. I also made a similar trip to Port Harcourt with Dr. Selma to ease the anxieties of the delta people. Among the Northern Christians, I established a friendship with two key elements from southern Kaduna Late Stephen Shekari and Dr. Harrison Bongon now the (Agwam Atyap), Chief of the religiously embittered Zangon Kataf. From the Western Christian group, I was in the constant company of Mr. Durojaiye and Rev. Olumiluwa one-time governor of Ondo State.

My relationship with these groups went beyond the period we were at the Assembly to a more intimate friendship between our communities. I took the time to visit them in their localities and each time emphasizes the need for understanding between our two religions. After I became an Emir, I used my influence and position to attend engagements in their communities in solidarity.

Tired of the acrimony between the contending groups, on November 13, 1988, the Federal Government ordered the dissolution of the two most contentious Committees State Judicature and General Provisions. The Sharia debate, however, kept resurfacing, until a letter received from the Government on November 28, 1988, to halt any further debate on Sharia indicating that the Assembly members have exceeded their brief. This directive did not, however, go down well with the Christian Members; therefore, they adopted a new strategy focusing attention on Secular Issues. After heated one-week debate on whether Nigeria will be a multi-religious or secular Country; we adopted the Clause in favor of the latter through a voice vote on December 7, 1988.

Unfortunately, despite all efforts to accommodate minority fears in all the contentious clauses, the constitution has never been used as the new military administration of General Sani Abacha suspended it after taking power from the interim government appointed by General Ibrahim Babangida. Even Abacha's constitution never saw the light of the day when General Abdulsam Abubakar hurriedly set up a committee to review the 1979 document in his one-year tenure in 1999.

Sharia Legal System and politics

"May God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference". Serenity Prayer
In 1999, when Governor Ahmed Bakura (Zamfara State) introduced the Sharia legal system in the state, I was not surprised by the reaction he received from non-Muslims and western media. Many of the contradictions in the implementation could have been avoided if proper preparations and coding were put in place before the introduction.

These contradictions gave Sharia adversaries a good weapon to paint the otherwise good legal system in a terrible light. The haste by politicians to score a political point backfires as it turns their intentions to merely political gimmicks to gain popularity.

The pressure on the governors at the time was too much to bear and therefore drifted to falling into injustice by amputating (Jangeme) a cattle rustler while allowing people in government to get away with millions of stolen monies from the treasury. The enemies of sharia found a good reason to condemn the system as barbaric, inhumane, and selective in application.

Other events in Sokoto and Katsina states where two single women facing adultery charges drew the attention of the international community to an unprecedented scale and painting sharia in the worst possible manner. The two cases became not only a hot potato for the politicians but also stressed up the judiciary and the legal system. The ordinary person in the street was even more confused because he now views sharia mainly chasing the poor and allowing the political class to further disregard the main tenants of Sharia equality before the law (adalchi). To further compound peoples' skepticism, the sharia states paled poorly in terms of social amenities such as schools, hospitals, road networks, water, and power supply. Many governors in these states use the sharia to grease the palms of the Ulama to keep people in check and to attack anyone that opposes their activities.

In my state, Governor Ibrahim Turaki did not hide his feelings towards sharia to his confidants and did everything possible to discourage the establishment of what he calls political sharia in the state. His government established several committees working on different guidelines and working against each other for several months as delaying tactics. The public applied pressure on him to set a date for its implementation in Jigawa State, and even when he succumbs to the pressure, he deliberately stayed overseas to avoid giving the launching any credibility.

Three days to the appointed date August 2, 1999, Dutse town witnessed an unprecedented surge of the crowd wanting to be part of the historic event, unfortunately, on the appointed date and time the person expected to sign the document was away in Asia. The chief Judge Justice Tijjani Abubakar and the Secretary to the State Government Barrister Ibrahim Hassan came to my residence to discuss what to do and say to the waiting crowd. We jointly agreed that the Secretary to the Government should go ahead and lunch sharia in Jigawa State and agreed to take joint responsibility if the governor sends him any query.

We drove to the venue and after prayers and some words from invited learned persons the Secretary offered some apologies and excuses for the governor's absence, but he mandated him to lunch the sharia in the state. The courts waited for several months after the lunching for the codes to be available and passed into law by the state assembly. It took personal efforts of Justice Tahir to get the codes written and printed for the ministry of justice to present to the assembly.

Sharia Law application is by far the most controversial contemporary issue of the twenty-first century. While I was on official trip to South Africa in 2003, I was approached by a highly respected figure who brought from his briefcase a national

daily with a front-page article condemning the legal system that is about to sentence a woman to death for committing adultery. I tried to convince him that the system of sharia beside been ordained is strongly protective of the weak, and innocent through the law of evidence. I assured him that the woman will not be sentenced according to my understanding because the evidence before the court is not one hundred percent foolproof a pre-requisite to finding her guilty of the offense.

I tried to explain to him that the Sharia legal system is not only about punishment as they are made to believe. Sharia to Muslims means five things that touch on their daily lives. The first is the ritual worship (ibadat), secondly, is human interactions, and contracts (mu'amalat), the third is morality and manners (adaab), the fourth is beliefs (I'tiqadat), and the fifth is punishment (uqubat).

The laws of (Ibadat) act of worship include ritual purification, prayers, fasting, Zakat, and pilgrimage. The laws of (Mu'amalat) deals with financial transactions, endowments, inheritance, marriage, care of the old, children and orphans, divorce, foods and drinks, slaughter, hunting, evidence, and others. The two alone produce volumes of books that cover more than half of sharia code, while (uqubat) punishments deal with vises, murder, theft, adultery, alcoholism, gambling, and other social evils in society.

Unfortunately, many Christians and uninformed Muslims translate sharia solely as punishment rather than a codification of Islamic ethics that "commands the good and forbids evil." The misunderstanding emanates from secular based media deliberately to distort the real benefits of sharia to Muslims that guided their way of life for centuries.

It is the sharia that brought about many reforms in human rights (610- 661) AD, during the period of the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) mission and the rule of the four Caliphates who compile the sharia codes based on Qur'an and Sunnah. Even western secular historians generally agree that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) preached against what he saw as the social evils of his day namely slavery and women rights. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a reformer condemned practices of the pagan Arabs such as female infanticide, exploitation of the poor, usury, murder, false contracts, theft, and other vises. The egalitarian nature of Islam represented a very considerable advance on the practice of both the Greco-Roman and the ancient Persian world and may have influenced parts of the English common law.

Other likely influence of Sharia law on English common law include the concept of a passive and impartial judge, judicator, the judge as a blank slate, justice rather than morality, the law above the state, individualism, freedom of contract, privilege against self-incrimination, fairness over truth, individual autonomy, untrained and transitory decision making, overlap in testimonial and adjudicative tasks, appeal, dissent, day in court, prosecution for perjury, oral testimony, and the judge as a moderator, supervisor, announcer, and enforcer rather than an adjudicator.

The similarities of Sharia law to other laws such as the United States Common Law are equally striking. The common law concept of property law, leasehold, duty, possession, holdover tenancy, joint ownership, lost property, license, trespass, acquisition, duress (okra), transfer, water rights, and many others are found in the classical Islamic property law. The Islamic concept of (Ijtihad) is the equivalent of equity in English law and equivalent to the "reasoned distinction of precedent" in the United State Laws.

Other precursors to the common law concepts are found in classical Islamic sharia law and jurisprudence. This includes advocacy ratio decidendi (illah), arbitrary decision making, legal opinion, discretion, public policy (Istislah and Maslaha), freedom of religion, equal protection, reasoning by analogy and distinction, consensus and precedent.

The pieces of evidence of Islamic legal system's influence on civil law, international law, legal education, environmental protection, humanism, democracy and freedom of speech, human rights, medical, and military ethics, are so overwhelming that no one can dispute its contribution to secular laws.

Chapter Nineteen

Creation of New States

"The difference between the impossible and the possible lays in a person's determination". Tommy Lasorda

One day in July 1990, while I was preparing to take my horses for the daily exercise, Malam Saleh Chiroma came and informed me of a meeting at Buba Aliyu's office at new Court Road Gyadi-Gyadi Kano. He narrated to me how the group was formed and how far they have reached in the submission requirements for Jigawa State. He requested me to invite Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu to the meeting, which on the appointed date both Dalhatu and I were present when the committee gave us the full details of their preparations to apply as required by the Military Ruling Council, and they solicited for our financial support to carry out this noble task.

We agreed to share the initial requirements of [N120, 000] one hundred and twenty thousand Naira between us, which was used to complete documentation and travel logistics. A committee was set up to organize fundraising later to create awareness among the population and to provide a substantial fund for the project. Wudil Local Government office chosen for its strategic importance to launch the appeal fund. The euphoria of breaking away from Kano and finding new life in a new State was visible in every face that attended the launching of the appeal fund. Many people including the organizers spoke at length for the need to raise funds to support our ambition for a better life. Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu (Wazirin Dutse) Alhaji Tahir (chairman Tahir Oil Ltd) and I together contributed more than 90% of the total money required by the various committees.

The Politics of Emirates

"What comes from God is impossible for man to turn it back" Herodotus

On 27 August 1991, Jigawa State was created with headquarter in Dutse, but little was known about its component local governments due to some political disagreements with Kano. The announcement of Dutse as the capital really hurts the feelings of the older emirates particularly, the people of Hadejia whose anger lead to protests and burning of public buildings and properties in the town. Many of their leaders vowed to change the course of events by engaging in media propaganda against the new capital. Several damaging articles are written and sponsored, but when we realize the damage these publications are causing, some concern Dutse indigenes fought back by working with the media houses not to publish any more debate about the suitability or otherwise of Dutse as a State Capital.

Col. Olayinka Sule the first administrator of the new State, worked so hard to ensure the takeoff of the impoverished capital city. Until the creation of the state, Dutse was the headquarters of Dutse Local Government area. It was lucking not only modern

amenities such as electricity and potable water but also infrastructures to support its new status. He administered the state from the small local government secretariat built a few years earlier to replace the temporary mud structure on Fagoji Hill.

His first task was finding adequate residential and office accommodation for the civil service, and the provision of potable water and electricity to the town. Emergency boreholes sunk at Shuwari supplied water to the town, while two 33KV lines one from Potiskum considered the longest 33KV line in Nigeria, and the other from Kano supplied very weak power to Dutse. His family stayed at a three-bedroom house on top of Fagoji Hill belonging to Alhaji Wada Abubakar later sold to the government as its emergency government house.

My greatest admiration of him was in 1985 during Hajj, when he was asked to take charge of the airlift of stranded pilgrims in Jeddah airport. He was at the airport for many days walking up and down organizing and assisting the stranded pilgrims with his task force team until he was able to get the last pilgrim out of Saudi Arabia.

Col. Olayinka Sule had one hundred and twenty-six days to establish the administrative machinery and share all current assets with the mother state of Kano. His task was by no means easy in view of the serious resentments from both Kano and within the new state for the choice of its capital. His second headache was the lack of adequate infrastructures and accommodations for the new government to function smoothly.

Until then water, electricity, and telephone were unavailable in the state capital. He set first priorities water pipeline to bring in water from a borehole in Shuwari to the new capital, National Telephone Company to connect the town with the already inactive network, and the National Power Authority to connect the town to the national grid from Potiskum and Kano. The Potiskum line considered the longest 33kv line in the world and therefore the power supplied through this line was almost useless.

He achieved these objectives from his temporary office and residence, under immense pressure from within and outside. The only bank in town was a Union Bank rural branch that has neither the capacity nor the infrastructures to handle all government transactions from their rented accommodation. The cash bullion truck makes on the average of four trips to Kano a day to bring in enough cash for the ongoing projects.

The second time was when he came to see my father at the palace to hand him a letter of elevation to the first-class emir. Though my father refused to honor him by refusing to accept the elevation letter, he politely begged him to accept government gesture in good faith. My father's reason for refusing to accept was based on his conviction that accepting the offer will hurt the feelings of Emir of Kano. Realizing his adamant stand on the issue, he called me aside and asked me to sign on his behalf

and try to persuade him that a new state is created and therefore his allegiance to Kano must be based on mutual respect.

The third time I came close to him was when he was a member of the Supreme Military Council; I went to seek his support for the creation of either Miga or Aujara Local Government in my emirate. He was quite helpful and did his best to secure the Miga Local Government.

The misunderstanding generated by the creation of Jigawa State and its capital continued to polarize the civil service and to a greater extent the government. The governor must devise a political means of appeasing the older emirates by breaking the nine local governments inherited from Kano into two emirates while retaining the old order of protocol to give them an edge over the new ones. Historically, Hadejia, Kazaure, and Gumel were second class emirs until their uplift to first class status by the Abubakar Rimi administration. Gumel was the first to be elevated, followed by Dutse, then Hadejia and Kazaure in that order. The other local governments from Kano that were not part of the Jigawa State agitation made up the Ringim Emirate with a first-class status. Dutse elders concede to this arrangement and continued to seek reconciliation with the rest of the state to enable meaningful development of the new State.

This new development brought about the reversion of Dutse District Council to a higher status and subsequent reappointment of incumbent District Head to First-Class Emir. The military administrator of Jigawa State Colonel Mohammed Olayinka Sule installed my father Muhammad Sanusi Emir of Dutse on 27 December 1991 in dramatic circumstances. His unquestionable allegiance and respect to Emir of Kano Ado Bayero was a great factor in his refusal to sign the document. It took many days of persuasions from respected people including his colleague in the Co-operative Movement Alhaji Sayyadi Mahmoud who was also elevated to Emir of Ringim to sign the appointment letter.

The new State of Jigawa with its capital in Dutse however, did not achieve any meaningful development for many years. The state capital remained glorified local governments headquarter through a deliberate attempt by the top civil servants to move the capital to Hadejia. Government after the government tried to break away from the dirty political arrangement that serves no one, but the anger and antagonism from within the civil service encourage further disaffection. I continued to urge Dutse people to show restraint in replying such utterances against Dutse and to accept everyone as part of the community. Nevertheless, sporadic anger against Dutse continued each time a political situation arises. The anger of old emirates usually manifests itself in civil discussions and or political utterances.

Even though has a very rich history dating back to 1421AD which was confirmed by recent excavations in the palace, the town has remained very rural until the creation of the State. In 1991 when the capital was announced, it was a small

neglected local government headquarter with virtually no modern amenities. There were quite a few streets and its population were under five thousand people. It has only one rural banking facility, a post-primary institution, a private clinic, a lock-up prison, a police post, a library, and a small market. The more prosperous towns particularly Hadejia were quite envious of Dutse's status and were determined to undermine any development.

Later, the removal of Ministries from the State Capital to the various local governments by the second civilian governor Ibrahim Saminu Turaki was a testimony of the inherent distrust and anger of some section in the state that did not recognize Dutse's status. In some emirates, the community leaders openly celebrated the decision to decentralize the state administration even if that decision serves no one's interest. Some community leaders went as far as congratulating the government for decentralizing the ministries.

The assault on Dutse sponsored by Turaki's government did not end in the relocation of ministries and other organs of government; it went as far as destroying the means of livelihood in the capital by withdrawing vital facilities such as water and health care. I was under pressure from the local community to disassociate myself from Turaki's government. I had a hard time balancing my role as the traditional ruler and custodian of peace and political demands of my subjects. I made it clear to those who will understand that I am under oath to remain loyal to any government in Jigawa State, therefore; I could only plead with them to excise patience and pray for a less hostile government.

Political Intrigues

"We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us on what we have already done" H.W. Longfellow.

On 2 January 1992, Barrister Ali Sa'adu Birnin Kudu sworn in as the first civilian governor of Jigawa State and took over the problems left unattended by the Olayinka administration. He was a young man with great zeal to bring about reconciliation within the fractured state.

He was until his election as the governor relatively unknown legal officer with the First Bank Kano. His winning the party ticket was because of the disqualification crisis of Babangida's experimentation with democracy that forced the SDP to replace Sule Lamido with Ali Sa'adu for the governorship race in Jigawa State. His party won with an overwhelming majority, thus giving him a comfortable lead to implement his party programs.

Ali was a dynamic individual who spends most of his time trying to solve one problem or the other. He surrounded himself with intellectuals and technocrats, whom he gave free hand in running the affairs of their ministries. I first met him a week after he dissolved the Dutse Emirate Council and appointed known politicians

to take charge of affairs of the Council. He invited me to his office after discussing the issue with his political boss Alhaji Sule Lamido to intimate me of his desire to appoint me the Senior Councilor to replace my bosom brother the Galadima. He sent late Abubakar Bello (Matawallen Dutse) twice to extend an invitation to me to come and discuss the issue, and all the time I decline the offer.

Even though it took notable persons sympathetic to the new emirate, such as Alhaji Sule Lamido to persuade me to accept the appointment, deep in my mind I was concerned and had a great fear that my turning down the offer may plunge the Council into anarchy. I made several efforts to meet with Alhaji Sule Lamido to intervene in the matter, reinstate my brother, and remove those whom the government found destabilizing from the Council. When I first approached him on a day during the crisis to request his intervention, he reassured me that the government meant well for the changes and will not do anything to hurt my father or his family. The government made changes to strengthen the administration and avoid serious political consequences in the future of the young emirate.

On May 17, 1992, while fueling my car at Darki village, I met Sule Lamido and discussed the issue of my appointment as a senior counselor. He reiterated his commitment to saving my family from future embarrassments. I drove back to Dutse that day and accepted the offer. I resumed as Senior Councilor with great caution, as it was my first time in public service appointment.

I took over the administration of the emirate to succeed my brother as the District head of Dutse after a disagreement with the Ali Sa'adu PRP based government and my brother who entrenched NPN stalwarts in the council administration.

I had no prior political experience to handle the complex relationship between the political and administrative requirements of the office, yet on several occasions find my actions in conformity with the political climate of the administration.

On some occasions, I wanted to resign due to pressure from within the system and outside, but each time I was persuaded by my father to stay steadfast and help him in the administration. My father trusted and supported me in solving complex social issues because of his tremendous experience in public administration.

In the first one year into my appointment, I mastered the art of dealing with complex social and political issues as it relates to my job and was able to gain the confidence of the Governor in matters of grave controversy. He relied on me to deal with local and religious conflicts and gave me tremendous support in dealing with the council that was pure of a political class. I was always counting on him to support my ideas of reform in the administration of the emirate.

The day General Abacha dissolved the elected governors and appointed military administrators, I was the first to visit Ali Sa'adu in solidarity and sympathy over the dissolution. I was emotionally disturbed by the news and did not know when I burst into tears when I bid him farewell. I saw in Ali Sa'adu tremendous potential of a

young and dynamic leader who given time will transform the young state into an enviable position.

Crisis from within

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty". Sir Winston Churchill

The power to appoint and remove village heads and the power to discipline district heads made my office the envy of all aspiring princes and their supporters. I was constantly been attacked for every decision I took in the course of executing my responsibilities. I was determined to make changes for the good of the system by discouraging corruption and intimidation of the Talakawa by Village and Ward heads, particularly as regard to land disputes, which was hitherto central to all conflicts in rural areas. I made it mandatory for all district administration to keep a detailed land registry of all public lands, by ensuring that copies of such documents are kept at their local government headquarters for reference purposes.

The more I tried to bring changes in the district and council administrations; the more my opponents object and put pressure on me to change such a decision. Political meetings held in Kano on how to deal with me and possibly take over my office as they succeeded with my brother the Galadima when he was the senior counselor. His adversaries took advantage of a missing council vehicle to write to the government claiming that the car was not stolen as reported by the senior councilor but sold to raise some money. This simple incidence deliberately magnified in order to bring about changes in the council affairs in favor of the SDP/PRP government. They took the opportunity and announce the formation of a twenty-seven-member council nominated by the state government. It was not easy for the adversaries to deal with me politically or administratively the same way, because I was economically self-sufficient to the extent that the council relies on my financial support. The council's total monthly grant is just enough to pay for a few office supplies and nothing more.

The group had to change their strategy to get me into conflict with the security officers and if every effort fails; hired assassins targeted me for elimination. The opposing group recruited more hands to include non-members of the ruling houses of Dutse, and including my close friends, to achieve their objective of facilitating their ambition of ascending to the throne after my ailing father. If they succeed in eliminating me, their chances of taking over will be greatly enhanced since my elder brother's record was falsified and deliberately manipulated to make his comeback very difficult even as senior councilor let alone as an Emir.

They set up a large network of informants to monitor my daily activities in the office and in my private and family life. Even my security staffs were fully infiltrated to give details of my movements and detailed strategic locations at my Ranch

Residence. On several occasions, I discovered charms and other black magic substances within the compound indicating connivance with some persons in the household. I tried as much as possible to keep my family at ease with the happenings and resorted to taking charge of my personal security and that of my family.

I applied for a gun license in Kaduna rather than in Kano where I felt my opponents would use their influence with the police command to block my application. My driver of many years Adamu Panshin introduced me to his brother-in-law a police officer who works in the armory and is a ballistic expert of many years. He helped me process and acquire both a license and a short gun. The acquisition of the permit to carry arms gave me an added sense of security.

I turned to my close friend Lieutenant Col. Garba Ali Mohammed who was the commander of the Short Service Course at Kaduna Defense Academy, to teach me the basics of self-defense and assault. He was very hard on me during target training sessions, typical of his military carrier, but the lessons learned from him became my greatest treasures and achievements in life. He found time to identify areas of strategic importance in my residence and gave my family security drills. My family and I will be forever grateful to him for those exercises.

Second Military Administrator

"Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises" Demosthenes

Col. Ibrahim Aliyu took over the administration of Jigawa State immediately after Ali Sa'adu. He is a soft-spoken, unassuming, and resolute soldier who is humane in his dealings with the public. He is a person of honesty and simplicity who made many dishonest people around him quite uncomfortable. He is a moralist of refuting whose insistence on moral values and accountability in public affairs, savored him with many civil servants and contractors.

Colonel Aliyu is a self-disciplined soldier whose self-control and respect earned him tremendous respect from the public as well as the civil servants in the state. His actions always are consistent with the required rules of behavior for good leadership. He appointed people of unquestionable character and integrity in sensitive positions and relied heavily on their counsel and advice.

He loves his family yet, as a governor, he maintains his barrack lifestyle not allowing his family to take advantage of the privileges of the government house. His children look like any other ordinary children in town and do not take them to special schools outside the state.

He was quick to realize through his vision the need to construct a road network in the capital city as a precondition for any meaningful development. He created a ring road interconnected with township roads for easy accessibility from one settlement to another. On one occasion, he invited me to take him around the old wall and meet with the residents. After the tour, he concluded that what is most urgent to his

administration is to connect the various communities that make up the greater Dutse to pave way for future developments.

When he awarded the road network contract, he faced stiff opposition and innuendo from different interest groups, but he refused to listen or change his views. One of such complaints was that he was spending public funds building roads that go nowhere. Thanks to his vision and determination, today most of the road networks in Dutse stand to his credit. Likewise, his decision to build a hotel and the choice of its site is a testimony of his great vision.

On the death of my father, several interest groups tried to bribe him to appoint one of their own as the emir, but he carefully and politely refused to change the decision of the Kingmakers. His principled stand on issues of fairness and justice is unparalleled in the history of the state. He did the same in Kazaure when emir Ibrahim died, and has throughout his tenure maintained a cordial relationship with all the emirs and traditional institutions.

Documentary on Idris Aloma

"Excess of grief for past misfortunes is madness, for it does not prevent future misfortunes" Self

On 25 December 1994, Professor Philip James Shea suggested to me that a young woman producer approached Professor Murray Last of University College London by name Mehreen Saigol to assist her in making a documentary about Savannah warfare, which will be aired on American satellite TV channel [The Discovery Channel].

The program will be about King Idris Aloma's famous warrior groups from history in the pre-gunpowder age. The intent of which is to create an impression of what it would have been like for an ordinary soldier to have fought in any of his military adventures. The film intended using location filming and reconstruction of events to show how difficult it was to fight in the open Savanna. He asked me if I would assist in providing my horses and regalia in the production of the documentary. They targeted the Eid-Fitr celebrations in Dutse for obvious reasons. The durbar was small and colorful, while the environment perfectly meets all the requirements from the production point of view.

Having realized the frosty relationship of the Abacha regime and the western powers, I wrote a letter from my office to the state government enclosing all correspondences between Seventh Art Productions and Professor Shea requesting for permission to allow the crew to make the documentary on January 2, 1995. I made several reminders to the office of the secretary to the State government, but no response either verbally or in writing.

Suspicious of the State Government silence, I contacted the minister of Internal Affairs, Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu (Wazirin Dutse) on January 31, 1995, and told him of the plan. He suggested to me to write to the minister of Information Professor

Jerry Gana and seek Clarence to invite them to Nigeria. I had no problem obtaining the relevant papers, which were sent to them in the UK to support their application for a working visa.

Everything went well as per as the documentation and preparations for the great event during Eid-Fitir in Dutse and Kano. I suggested to Professor Shea to seek His Highness the Emir of Kano's permission to film part of the Kano end before proceeding to Dutse because I am privileged to extend or delay our Durbar as the senior counselor. The Emir consented without hesitation and linked him up with the courtiers to ensure the success of the filming.

I waited for more than ninety days without a reply to my request from the Jigawa State Government, but since I have a Federal Government approval, I was not overly worried about the state government's consent. I was very wrong because unknown to me there was a grand conspiracy brewing to remove me from office by some clique of powerful relatives; who sees my presence as a threat to their ambition to succeed my father who was in his early eighties and ailing.

I have enjoyed a good working relationship in the past with the Military Governor, but this issue was deliberately used to harden his stance against me. He received a brief of some security implications to his government and himself as sole administrator of the state if he allows the filming. I was very unaware of the state government's plan and therefore proceeded to invite the producer and the camera crew to come to Dutse.

The crew landed at Kano Airport one week to the celebrations to select locations and interview would be actors and create 15th-century scene. Prof. Shea was responsible for all their logistics and translations. He received them at Kano with their equipment and proceeded to identify a site in both Kano and Dutse. They came to my residence in Kano to discuss their ideas and requirement at Dutse.

On the Eid day, filming started in Kano without any hitch and proceeded to Dutse the second day to film our procession to the Government House as is the tradition. The State Security Service personnel in Dutse stopped the filming within the first hour of our procession. I did all I can to explain to them that the crew was not in Nigeria illegally, and the documentary scripts were tendered to the ministries of internal affairs and information. The film was a re-enactment of King Idris Aloma's infantry three hundred years ago, not to as alleged to ridicule the Head of State or any other person.

After trying for several minutes and holding on the procession, to convince the officials failed to win their approval, we decided to give it up and meet with them in their office after the durbar. Luckily, enough the minister of internal affairs was taking part in that durbar, so I decided to let him know what happens during the procession. He phoned the minister of information immediately to find out whether his ministry was responsible for stopping the documentary. The minister was not

aware of any reason why the filming should stop. He reiterated that his ministry was aware of their arrival into the country and has no objection to their scripts. The third day we tried to convince the local security and the state government as to the honor the film will bring to Dutse and Jigawa State by tendering yet again the scripts and requested them to follow the crew wherever they go to avoid a breach of security.

While all efforts to let them go ahead failed, I suggested to them to go back to Kano and use my ranch to recreate another scene with my horses the next day. In the evening as they were about to leave, a security officer came to the guesthouse to invite them to Abuja for interrogation. Even at the initial stage, the security officers refused them permission to talk to the British High Commission officials. I called on a lawyer whom I engaged one week earlier to draft their contracts with the selected actors to advise me on what legal ground we could secure their release.

While they left for Abuja, I called on the British High Commissioner to let him know what was happening to his citizens. He promised to do something even though it was a weekend. That was the last I heard from them or any official, until three days later I received an invitation to go to Abuja for the same reason and to meet with the deputy chief Alhaji Sada Ilu at the National Headquarters.

I was in Abuja a day earlier just to ensure compliance with the invitation. I also wanted to see my close friends General Garba Ali Muhammad Minister of Works, and Makaman Kano Alhaji Sarki Abdullahi Ibrahim the principal private secretary to the Head of State General Sani Abacha and explain to them my version of the story. In the evening of that day on our way back from evening prayers in a nearby mosque, we stopped at General Magashi's residence in the same barracks with General Garba Muhammad. We waited for a few minutes to give them time to conclude their Maghrib prayers, after which we exchanged pleasantries.

I was a little nervous and suspicious when I saw among his guests some members of the Dutse Royal Family whom I had strong suspicions were behind the plot to get me into trouble and pave their way into the succession seat. I kept wondering in my mind what they were there for that day, but I refused to show any sign of fear by remaining calm. General Magashi was very unaware of our family politics and commented jokingly "what brought you to Abuja?" I told him I was invited by the security agencies to explain my role in an aborted documentary film. We all dismissed the idea that I will ever participate in any breach of State security.

We left his residence, but my mind was not at ease after meeting the group there, I told General Garba Mohammed my fears, but he convinced me to leave everything to God. In the early hours of the next morning Thursday, March 9, 1995, I drove to the State Security Headquarters a beautiful building at Maitama District with its glass windows reflecting the early morning sun. We stopped at the gate to find out whether we had an appointment. Within five minutes, a smartly dressed young man

lead me to a reception upstairs, where I sat alone for more than thirty minutes before I was ushered in to see the boss.

Malam Sada Ilu received me very well and listened to me attentively before he made any comments. I tendered all the papers in my file and requested him to go through including all the federal government approvals. He was an intelligent and incorruptible officer, who is un-intimidating. He read all the papers one by one and finally handed them back to me, yet he was cautious not to blame the State office for overblowing the issue. He said, "we will reappraise the situation and call you back if the need arises in the near future". He gave me his private phone number and walked me down to the elevator, where an official was waiting to see me out of the premises. That was how the issue ended.

Court Order

"He who relies upon most in the will of God will finally triumph over all evils" Self

Barely ten days after my invitation to the SS headquarters in Abuja, had I had another misfortune on Monday, March 20th, 1995, was I invited by Bashir Muhammad Dalhatu (Wazirin Dutse) to attend his swearing-in ceremony as the new Minister of Power and Steel at Aso rock villa. I headed back to Kano immediately after the ceremony to catch the 4 pm flight to Sokoto, where I have a meeting arranged by my site engineer's office in Sokoto with the Sokoto Agricultural Development Authority the next day.

I allowed my driver to put extra speed, but with great caution, to enable me to catch the only flight. When we reached my compound at Dorayi Karama quarters in Kano, I found a large crowd in front of the main gate apparently arguing. At first, I thought it was a vehicle accident, but when we approached the gate, I saw someone posting a bill on the gate and several other places on the outer wall. It was a high court order to auction my property.

I came out of my car and approached one of the men standing with a couple of police officers to find out what happened. The man apparently an auctioneer has a court order to sell my estate and recover a delinquent loan from a local branch of International Bank for West Africa Ltd.

I had neither an account with the bank nor borrowed or guaranteed any person to borrow from the bank. The only bank I was dealing with at that time was the Nigeria Universal Bank in Kaduna State and even that I had only a regular overdraft facility, which I have not drawn from. I tried to explain to the auctioneer that I have no business with the bank in question and I still hold the original titles of my property. He was at first very uncooperative, but when I went into my library room and brought out the original copy of my certificates, he was holding a back. I sat down with him in the garden and explained to that the bank risks paying heavy damages if we go to court over the issue, but he was adamant that he has the court order to call

the bids. I sent my driver to bring my lawyer who negotiated with him a three-day grace period for us to contest the issue in the same high court. I missed the flight that day and had to continue my journey by road that night through the terrible road guttered by giant potholes and dusty detours that I earlier on avoided.

On my return to Kano two days later, I discovered from my lawyer's brief that a cousin of mine who shares the same first name with me swindles the International Bank for West Africa Kano branch by issuing a forged certificate on my property to secure a loan of [N700, 000]. The loan became delinquent a year earlier, and the bank pursued him with threat letters. Whenever he was under pressure from the bank to pay off the debt, he will issue a bad check from other bank accounts.

It took my lawyer more than two weeks to obtain clarification of the true document from the Ministry of Lands in Kano before the court granted leave on the matter. I wanted to sue him and the bank for the embarrassments to myself and family, but my wife and family discouraged me from pursuing the issue further.

Attempted Assassination

"Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing". Helen Keller

The issue of been branded and watched by the security agencies had continued as a result of constant lies been leveled against me by my adversaries who had access to the top security personnel in Abuja. Unknown to me, I was branded as top NADECO sympathizer, therefore was targeted for elimination. First was an attempted robbery made on my house on April 4, 1995, which failed partly because they were ill-equipped to force their way into the house. We exchanged a few gunshots for about thirty minutes before they decided to abscond. The damage to my property was minimal except for some broken security lights and window glasses.

I took extra precautions regarding my security and my family from that moment on by increasing the number of security guards and re-arm myself and my staff. I did everything I could to make future incursions into my compound extremely difficult and dangerous. I installed electrical and electronic gadgets, in addition to building concrete shelter within my bedroom.

On Sunday, June 9, 1995, when I was preparing to travel to Kaduna where I relocated my office, a friend of mine came to my house and extended an invitation from the military governor at government house for dinner on Tuesday, June 11, 1995. I canceled all my plans and waited for that important invitation. On the appointed date, I was at the government house half an hour earlier not to miss the opportunity to dine with the governor. While I was waiting at the reception, I saw three important personalities, all connected with the security and defense coming in to see the governor. At about 10.30pm the usher leads nine of us into the dining area, where

we sat for a late dinner. It was a private dinner, and everyone was discussing freely national and state issues.

After dinner, we went to another living room for coffee and dessert. I politely requested permission to leave, which was denied because His Excellency wishes to see me in private later. I sat patiently for more than an hour until all the invited dignitaries departed. I seek permission for the second time to leave but was asked to hold, because the governor wants some advice on his horses that they think will help the groom to improve on their health conditions.

He took me around the stable and saw every horse and some other livestock in the fence adjacent to Africa House. At around 11.30pm I was given an armed escort from the government house to follow me home to avoid been harassed at police checkpoints. They saw me to my main compound gate at 11.55pm, and the gateman shuts the main gate. It was a ten-hector estate and one must pass through three gates to the main family house that was in the middle of the estate.

At 2.00am, my wife who was nursing a seven-month-old baby (Safiyyah) woke me up when she heard some gunshots in the compound. I was too tired and sleepy to listen to her. She woke me up the second time to warn me of the reality of the attack. I heard some sporadic gunshots that kept getting closer audibly. I grabbed my double barrel shotgun and pushed my wife and her baby into the bunker for safety and loaded the gun with bullets. The armed men carrying more sophisticated weapons have managed to break into the compound after killing one security man and my resident electrician. They also shot and fatally wounded my driver and horse groom, while the rest of my staff hid in the vast gardens surrounding the ranch.

Within a few minutes, I recognized the voice of one of the women in the compound who was eight-month pregnant pleading to be saved because she was unable to identify my bedroom in the compound. They kept shouting back at her to do so or risk been shot like her husband. The terrified woman kept pleading with them to save her life because she does not know for sure which bedroom I occupy.

While the argument was going on, I peeped through the window and saw two men dressed in army uniform loading their automatic rifles from a steel ammunition box. The rest of the gang occupied strategic locations in the compound waiting for the two to break into the house. From another window, I saw three more armed men laying in the garden and taking aim at the house in case anyone attempts to escape. The leader was dressed in long rove with a white turban covering his identity in the typical Hamas style. He directed them to storm the house with their AK47 assault rifles; within minutes, they shot their way into the main living room shooting everything on their way. Realizing that if, I allow them to get to any member of my immediate family; I will be forced to surrender myself, which means death. I was lucky my house was configured to give maximum security to my children's rooms.

We exchanged fire for three hours continuously but all the time mindful not to exhaust my stock of bullets before theirs.

The whole village was awake, quiet, and frightened, as that was their first of experiencing such in the neighborhood. Many of them thought it was a military exercise, and those in greater distance thought it was a military coup de tat since it coincides with the anniversary of the famous June 12. The ferocity of the firepower kept everyone away including the police checkpoint near my residence.

At six o'clock the minarets of the mosques around the village echoed the call for prayers, which forced the commander of the operation to call cease fire. Thirty minutes after they left the compound, I ventured out with great caution to assess the damages done. I found my electrician and my horse groom shot dead in front of their compound, while my driver and gardener were lying in a pool of blood in other locations. Immediately, I carried the survivors to the hospital to save their lives, but the emergency unit of the government hospital was ill-equipped to provide the necessary support to save their lives. Frantically, I drove to a private clinic at Gandun Albasa to get such emergency treatment that was not possible in the government hospital. They removed three bullets from my driver's arm, and two bullets from my gardener's chest.

Before I left for the hospital, I directed my staff not to allow anyone to tamper with the exhibits until my return, but a close friend of mine who was with me the fateful night at the government house came and removed all exhibits before the arrival of the police to the site. The items include an army boot, a bucket full of used shells, bloodstains, and a powerful searchlight. The only evidence he could not tamper with was the destruction done to physical structures and bullet holes all over the walls. I rushed furiously to the government house to report the incidence but had to wait for more than one hour as the governor was attending the weekly security meeting with the police commissioner and his cabinet.

The first person to come out of the meeting was the police commissioner who berated me for daring the government. He shows no sympathy to my predicament while addressing me rudely and at the same time warning me not to complain but to blame myself for whatever happens. I remember his passing comments "why did you flange yourself into the sea if you knew you cannot swim." I replied, "I will rather drown than to enslave my conscience." He said, "Then be prepared to bear the consequences no matter how grave." With those words, he entered his waiting car leaving me bewildered and more frightened as I was ushered in to meet the governor. As I ascended the steps, I crossed an old schoolmate and friend who is a member of the State Security Council who raised his voice "Congratulations General Nuhu for winning the war." I was too disturbed to pay any attention to his comments and preceded immediately to the governor's office. I sat in front of his desk to give him my version of the incident, but before I concluded, he told me that the bullets used

in the operation were rubber bullets. I was extremely angry and felt more vulnerable in his presence but pull out of my pocket four pieces of 7.5 caliber bullet shells that I picked in my bedroom and tendered them furiously to him, asking him to verify. I left the government house more frightened than ever realizing that it was a sponsored attack and have nowhere to take my case to. In the evening of that day a Lebanese friend Habib Jaafar, came with his staff to commiserate with me over the incident and suggested that I should go with him to meet his friend the Assistant Inspector of Police Kano zone. I narrated to him the uncooperative attitude of the Police Commissioner and his staff and my fear that the case may not be investigated. He promised to take all necessary steps to transfer the investigation to his office and will appoint his trusted staff to the job. One week after my meeting with him he was prematurely retired from service and the assistant commissioner heading the investigation was transferred to Borno State; while the Assistant inspector handling the case was transferred Plateau State.

I had to relocate my family to General Garba Mohammed's house at Gyadi-Gyadi quarters to ensure their security. I did not disclose anything to them regarding my decision to relocate them except for the general clean-up and renovation of the premises. While they were staying at Gyadi-Gyadi, I was sleeping in different places in the city to avoid further attacks on my life. The family was shuttling between our inhabitable house destroyed by the armed men and friends' residences daily for five months until my appointment as an emir.

This incidence which made me insecure has surprisingly made me more determined to refocus my life and accept that success comes with a price. The determination of my adversaries to get rid of me further reinforces my resolve to meet up with the challenge. In my psychology class, I learned how to cope with fear, and the control of imaginations, which became handy in dealing with the situation. I was further encouraged by my father's comment when I reported the incidence to him, he said "risk is your greatest security in life".

Arsonist attack

"He has the most who is most content with the least" Diogenes

On June 20, 1995, eight days after the attack on my residence, another horrible incidence occurred at my office in the Palace, where an arsonist set fire to the building. This attack compounded my problems and further shattered my life and my family. Since it contains important and sensitive documents, and as head of administration must take responsibilities. I must do my best to fish out the perpetrators. I volunteered to go to the police and subject myself and the council secretary whose office the fire started for investigation. We wrote our statements and the police officer in charge of the case permitted us to return home pending the

outcome of his investigations. He made several arrests and interrogations of staff and people suspected to be in sympathy or connected with my adversaries.

One week into the investigations, the police were able to find out that the arsonist is a clerical officer in the secretary's office whose main purpose of setting the fire was to cover up some improprieties committed by him. He stole a fertilizer allocation paper for staff and sold to a dealer for a specified amount. His idea was that by burning the office, even the stolen documents would be included among lost documents.

The Death of my Father

"Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving that there is no need to do so, almost everyone gets busy on the proof". J.K. Galbraith

My father died in the early hours of Wednesday 29 November 1905 and was buried at his personal house at Shuwari at 3 pm the same day. I was attending a meeting in Sokoto when a manager in my company phoned and asked me to return home immediately. I sensed his death because I left him in bed recovering from malaria. I was shocked but not surprised because he had pre-demonized his death and had given me his last word before I left. He kept urging me to continue to support the family and to do whatever it takes to unite the family.

I left immediately for Dutse by road on a journey that took more than six hours even on an emergency. Besides fueling stop at Gusau, we did not stop anywhere as I was determined to be at the funeral on the appointed time of 4 pm. Unfortunately, I was not destined to bid his final farewell before his burial.

His death left a great vacuum in the family, and speculations as to who will succeed him as the emir. Sorters of the various interest groups urged the female members of my father's household to evacuate their quarters in redness for the incoming emir. I was not at all amused by this development and had to use my position as a senior counselor to assure them of a peaceful transition.

Chapter Twenty

Emir-ship Appointment

"Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got a hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations". G.B. Shaw

Seven days after the death of my father, the Secretary to the State Military Government Dr. Tanko Ayuba {Falakin Dutse} phoned me to request my application to succeed my late father. My simple reply was I am not interested, which angered him very much. He, nevertheless, believed I should write even if I am not interested to give our family a chance in the selection. His insistence draws the attention of the secretary emirate council Alhaji Lawal Gwaram [Dan Darman] to send my resume without my consent to the government.

On the same day, the kingmakers met and voted four to one in my favor to be the next Emir of Dutse. The procedure was that any decision from the Kingmakers would pass through the State Council of Chiefs for endorsement before the State Executive Council could deliberate and approve.

On Monday 11 December 1995, the Secretary to the State Government invited all aspiring princesses and kingmakers to give the final decision on who will be the next Emir of Dutse. He conveyed the decision of the government through a letter addressed to the chairperson kingmakers committee and read aloud publicly to a large gathering. Even though I had the feeling that the decision will favor me greatly, I was all along hoping that my elder brother {Galadima} will be given a chance in the interest of unity of the family. I was under great tension and confusion when my name was mentioned as the new emir of Dutse.

Shortly, the kingmakers and courtiers stood up to pay their homage one by one. The various palace musicians- the clarinetists, the kettle drummers, the Trumpeters, the talking drummers, the Horners, the flutists, the lutanists, the strums, and the praise singers filled the air with disconcerting tunes each trying to outplay the other in proving their allegiances.

Shortly after the announcement, I was moved from my seat in the council chamber to the throne and robed in white cope (Alkyabba). One by one, the kingmakers and the council members took their turn by prostrating in my presence to pay homage. The courtiers in the chorus were accepting their allegiance as they bend down to take their turn- (Amin Sarki ya Amsa). I was deeply absent-minded thinking of the enormous responsibilities of been the head of the many clans and tribes, as well as the entirely different life ahead.

It was late in the afternoon and everyone in the town and indeed in the country has received the news of my appointment, those that have my phone numbers started calling to congratulate me while those who could not reach me wrote letters. My

greatest surprise was the number of people from the various communities and villages in my emirate that took turns in long queues to come and pay personal homage. At late evening, I had to apologize to numerous people waiting in the palace to either catch a glimpse of me or pay their respect.

My first area of concern as an emir was to create an enabling environment in the new capital where everyone will feel at home and respected regardless of his or her position in society. I took the time to tour the entire towns and villages in the emirate preaching peaceful coexistence, tolerance, and respect for one another. I know deep down in my mind the mobilization of people towards a common good was the surest way for any development. I encouraged every village head to be accommodative to all manner of good people that came into his domain. They were under obligation to support them and protect them from harassment or intimidation of any sort. I insisted that the people of Dutse should remain humble and not be provoked by anyone to create disharmony or civil strife. Dutse people should remain united under any hardship and live to our longstanding slogan "Stintsiya ma durin ki daya".

Abacha Administration

"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires". W.A. Ward

General Abacha took over the administration from the Interim National Government with the support of most of the aggrieved parties on November 17, 1993. They were hopeful that the landmark ruling of the Lagos High Court "declaring Interim National Government illegal" on November 10, 1993, would automatically restore their mandate. The relative calm that followed the broadcast indicates full support by at least the SDP members who felt cheated by the annulment of June 12 election results. Abacha immediately appointed military administrators in each state and set up an administration at the federal level.

I was asked to represent my father who was already in his advanced years, along with Emirs from Jigawa State on a solidarity visit to pay our allegiance to the new Government. We were about the first State to send a delegation to visit him at Dodan Barracks in the early hours of November 20, 1993. We first met Colonel Al-Mustapha and Inspector General Ibrahim Kumasi who ushered us to meet with the new Head of State. The meeting was quite brief, opened with a prayer by the leader of our delegation for peace and stability of the nation. The New Head of State called on us to give maximum support to his administration and his government is a child of necessity. He promised to do everything possible to return the country to democratic rule. He further reassured our delegation, that he would listen to genuine advice from well-meaning Nigerians on how to move the country forward. However, seven months into his administration he was still unable to decide on the election results, which the presumed winner of the presidential election Mashood Abiola

hoped to achieve by supporting the coup. On the anniversary of the election, Abiola went into hiding and declared himself the President. His arrest in July, led to a nationwide labor action, which almost paralyzed the economy of the nation.

In March of 1994, his Government arrested forty persons including Former Head of State General Olusegun Obasanjo and his deputy General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua in connection with an attempted coup. The two former leaders along with some military officers were court marshaled, convicted in July, and sent to various prisons around the country. The added political pressure from various organized groups and from the International community's forced the government to unveil a three-year transition to civil rule program on October 1, 1995, Independence Anniversary Speech. Things began to take shape politically as new political parties were registered; however, few months after their registration, the parties began to agitate for his transformation to a civilian president by adopting him as their presidential candidate.

One week after my coronation, on 20, January 1996, I had the opportunity to meet him in private at Aso Rock and had an open discussion with him over the political situation in the country. I was very frank with him considering my personal relationship with the family and my position as an Emir ranging from my greatest concern in the falling standard of education in the North to political issues. I suggested to him with all respect that he should ignore the call to vie for civilian presidentship for two reasons. One is that he has nothing else to aspire in Nigeria, after serving to bring the country together during the civil war; he rose to the highest office in the military including Minister of Defense. My reason number two was that a civilian president must be accountable to the legislature whose membership may include his staunch opponents who would like to humiliate him at any given opportunity.

I continued with my crusade against Tazarche by visiting most senior Emirs to request them to discuss this matter with him in private or in-group in order to dissuade him from the risky venture. Unfortunately, however, the response I received was a cautious one. The agitators for Tazarche, on the other hand, were putting more and more pressure on him to declare his interest in the political arrangement. I continued to send my respect and advice through a proxy to him not to listen to the agitators because of my great respect to him and love for his welfare. Abacha remained my idol despite this for several reasons. He was truly a nationalist and a prudent manager of public funds despite the allegations of misappropriation by his staunch enemies in the Obasanjo government.

It was much later after his death that I tried to find out from eminent personalities in and out of Abacha's government why he wanted to transform to the civil president. I was totally disappointed with Obasanjo his staunch enemy when he attempted to elongate his tenure (Tazarche) for the third term and allowed his children to take

lucrative government contracts. The universal African socio-political disease (leadership for life) started from independence where every leader in the continent except Nelson Mandela, John Kufuor, Tom Mbeki, and few others who resented the temptation to continue longer than their stipulated terms in office has caught up with every president or head of state.

Third Military Administrator

"The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary". Vince Lombardi

Lt. Col. Rasheed Shekoni came to Dutse full of great ideas to transform Jigawa State. In handing over the administration to him, his predecessor Col Aliyu said that "I am happy that today I hand over the administration of Jigawa State to a young and dynamic soldier". He is not only bright but also an articulate and tireless person whose vision of transforming the rural state stirred him to embark on many viable projects. Unfortunately, his tenure was short by the death of General Abacha who appointed him as a governor.

He concentrated on building the necessary infrastructure to make the state capital function as the administrative nerve of the state. He constructed a befitting government house, commissioners' residence, a hospital, several schools, and medium and intermediate housing for civil servants and legislators. He abhors sycophancy and merits hard work as a leader ruled the state in a military tradition of goal seeking.

My stimulating encounters with him were always on how to bring about change in the lives of the less privileged members of society. Unfortunately, many people around him in government do not share his aspirations. One day despite his order to remove all police checkpoints in the state to allow citizens easy access to their places of business, an illegal mobile police checkpoint erected on a Sunday at Jahun resulted in the death of two persons and another two wounded in an encounter with power drunken police officers.

The whole town went in frenzy encouraged by youth who wanted the removal of the police force temporarily stationed in their town. The youth chased all police officers out of town and barricaded all roads leading to the town. There was a complete breakdown of law and order in the town that threatened the security of the State. I received a call from him to intervene and reassure the public of government determination to punish the offenders and compensate the victim's families. I drove to the town in the company of a few palace staff to see things for myself and to reassure the people of government concern over the incidence. However, as we approached the town, a group that mistook us to be the governor's entourage ambushed us with stone missiles.

When they realized it was the emir, not the governor, they plead into the bush leaving the burning tires on the middle of the road for us to clear before we could move. Few

kilometers from this point, again another group brandishing weapons and leaves in protest attacked us. I came out of my car and walked towards them, but they refused to listen until one of them ordered that they should respect the emir and listen to what he has to say.

I spoke to them for about fifteen minutes urging them to give the government a chance to investigate the matter that I promised to pursue to the conclusion. After a few dissenting views, most of the gang, accepted my pledge, and removed all blockades leading to the town and left the scene. It was a great triumph for me that the issue causing great tension in the State has at least been resolved amicably.

On June 8, 1998, the day General Abacha died, I was on an advocacy tour of Kiyawa District to inform the public on incoming voter registration exercise. Alhaji Mustapha Aminu [Dan Iyan Dutse] met me at the guesthouse to inform me of the death of the Head of State, and to ask me to drive to the Kano Airport to receive his remains. I left in utter confusion and sadness to the airport where I met Lt. Col. Rasheed Shekoni already waiting at the VIP section. The body, which did not arrive until around nine at night, was loaded into a waiting ambulance for the funeral rites at the racecourse. The uncontrolled crowd surged as the body prepared for the funeral rites. It was an unprecedented crowd that left many people wounded as the funeral takes place in the open air.

His death though unfortunate created an opportunity for the return of democracy, and new hope for many Nigerians who felt left out in the running of the country namely the Yoruba elites. The Northern military elites immediately after the burial ceremony, met at Kano Government House to select his successor to avoid rift among the military hierarchy and those close to power. The choice of General Abdulsalam Abubakar was obvious for many reasons, nevertheless, was a good decision. He was under a specific mandate to return the government to civilian administration within one year, as any extension may lead to civil war or serious political crises in the country.

A high-powered military delegation appointed under the leadership of Generals Ishaya Bamaiyi and Sarki Abdullahi Muhtar meets with all opinion leaders to seek advice on the best way forward to resolving the imminent political crises. The delegation met with us on the 12th of June 1998 at the Lugard Hall in Kaduna for more than seven hours of stormy debate on the pros and cons of zoning political offices as a remedy for future political stalemate. Some members felt strongly that the South-South or South-East should produce the president, while quite a substantial number favored the South-West for the simple reason of pacifying them after June 12 episode. Others were more cautious and preferred to keep it within the North. It was quite a rowdy meeting, which we left without a consensus.

However, the meeting succeeded in bringing out several issues that may affect the survival of our nation. We all left with the feelings that compromises must be

reached if we wish the country to move forward. I praise the efforts of the Head of State General Abdulsami Abubakar in finding a middle of the road solution to the problems raised.

Fourth Military Administrator

"There is no cure for birth and death except to enjoy the interval". George Santayana

Col. Abubakar Zakariyya Mai-Malari was an interim administrator of Jigawa State following the appointment of Abdulsalam Abubakar as Head of the Military Government. In the short tenure as Administrator of Jigawa State, he achieved quite remarkable results in terms of guiding and gearing the political process and taking-off of the civilian administration. He supervised and directed a peaceful transition and the conduct of electioneering campaigns by the political parties.

The political actors in this election were relatively unknown except in their local communities, yet people were eager to elect the new faces in the hope of achieving positive change in their economic and social life. Col. Abubakar was fully aware of the public sentiments and refused to play an active partisan role for fear of been blackmailed as imposing his candidates in government. He refused to discuss the candidature of any political aspirant, even when confronted with facts about some candidates. One of such examples was a case against a candidate indicted by a court of law on criminal charges.

He not only actively pursued infrastructural development but also established sound programs, which his wife and women group actively articulated including postnatal and maternal care for rural women. These programs, unfortunately, did not receive any attention from the incoming civilian administration leading to their failures.

Obasanjo's Third Republic

"People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in the world are the people who get up and look for circumstances they want and if they can't find them, make them". G.B. Shaw

I am not a Military apologist, but the way and manner the civilian governments of my time performed have less to be desired in terms of providing social services, and even the so-called freedom of expression. The failure of the system to provide an enabling environment for democratic process was responsible for the large-scale corruption and embezzlements at all levels of government and incurable poverty among the population.

The first civilian government failed because of tribal mistrust, and the second one failed because of corruption and mismanagement of the economy. The third republic salvation is in the great desire of Nigerians to enter the league of democratic nations even if conditions are worse than in the military era. The world opinion after the fall of the Soviet Union has turned to the democratization of government and the rule of

law. At the initial stage of Obasanjo civil administration, he called eminent people from all the six political zones separately to discuss issues of national importance. I was chosen along with another Emir of Kazaure to represent our state at the meeting, which took more than five hours. At the end of the meeting, Obasanjo, unfortunately, refused to allow frank discussions by snubbing anyone that mentions marginalization or injustice meted to people of the North. The most unsavory remarks were his concluding remarks "The Northwest was responsible for all military intervention in Nigeria's history, let me warn you that the international community of today will not tolerate any more military dictatorships. If you think otherwise let you try."

I felt hurt by his comments, but in total respect to the office of the president, I tried to correct that impression, but he did not allow any more comments from the floor. He furiously left the conference room and headed to a dining area where lunch was served to the guess. We followed him to the table where he the emir of Zazzau and Zamani Lekot were served late lunch to seek permission to leave. The meeting ended without achieving its intention as many of the invited guests refused to stay for lunch. Regardless of my personal negative assessment of Obasanjo's government, one thing is clear to me that he sees himself as the father of the Nigerian nation. During his first official visit to my palace, I had the opportunity to discuss with him on a one to one basis and my assessment of him during the discussions was that he was fully committed to serving his country. He promised to lunch his first fertilizer distribution, complete the 132KV electricity line to Dutse, and to turn Kano-Maiduguri road into a dual carriageway and he did before he left office.

Second Civilian Governor

"If money is your hope for greatness, you will never achieve it. The only real security that a man can have in this world is through honesty, dedication, and experience". Henry Ford

A son of a wealthy produce merchant, Ibrahim Saminu Turaki a onetime state chairperson of SDP Jigawa emerged as the winner of a hurried political arrangement by the military to return the country to civilian rule. My knowledge of him before he became the governor was quite vague, though my daughter shares the same apartment with his senior wife at Ahmadu Bello University, I first met him at Ibrahim Abacha's funeral. He is stubborn on his ideas, but a political organizer who captures the attention of his supporters by his simplicity and subtle ego.

He first came to my house in the company of Alhaji Bello Maitama (Sardaunan Dutse), Alhaji Ibrahim Baban Kowa (Walim Ringim) and some other people on the campaign trail. In our discussions with him, he lamented the lack of development in Dutse the State Capital and promised, if elected will ensure that Dutse becomes the most beautiful capital in Nigeria. He criticizes the military administrations for the underdevelopment of the State Capital and Jigawa State after six years of Creation.

He has great plans that will reverse this appalling condition within the first two years by creating jobs in agriculture, revamping the educational system, and providing adequate shelter at an affordable price.

Ibrahim Saminu Turaki is a person of high intellect, who by appearance deceived many people that see him only on television or radio. His brain works faster than his mouth; therefore, usually in a conversation, one must be quite attentive to grasp his ideas. He stammers and jumps from one incomplete sentence to another in a polite manner. He is a man of peace who will go to any extent to please his opponents when he wronged them. He loves children yet, he is not a family man in the true sense due to his nomadic lifestyle. He is, of course, a genius and a divergent thinker whose ideas of reality and fiction are sometimes the same.

Through his cunning, shrewd and dictatorial tendencies manipulated the affairs of government. He disperses the ministries, yet he centralized and consolidated his power over the legislature, the political elite, the civil servants, the judiciary, and the traditional institutions. The famous drip policies deliberately coined not only to control financial resources by the chief executive but also use the resources to his advantage.

One day we were coming after Juma'at prayer from Garu, stopped at Marabisawa and directed the commissioner of agriculture to relocate the village and turn it into a green lawn. Neither Garu nor the village had drinking water for many years, and the sources of water were fifteen kilometers away. When I tried to explain to him the infeasibility of the project, he insisted that it could be done. First relocating the village that has been in existence more than three hundred years to a new location will not only cause a social problem but also create political tension. Secondly, how will people in Garu accept the idea of watering grass in their backyard while they have no water to drink? Thirdly, many people in the area rely on their farms and domestic animals for their economic survival; therefore, will not welcome any decision to keep their animals away from the lawn.

On another occasion, he took me and the chief Judge Justice Tijjani Abubakar to Fagoji Hill and then to another Hill along Madobi Road and tried to convince us on his imaginary project of building relocating the State House of Assembly and the High Court to the two hills that will be linked by cable car. When we tried to rationalize with him the impossibilities, he argued and tried to convince us of its viability.

At one time, he ordered the Dutse Capital Development Authority to build an artificial lake around the Government House tapping the water runoff from Zai village. Without any feasibility study, the project embarked upon but instead of damming the water, the river-sand filled up the dredged area-causing flood around the area.

His reputation as the idea governor pitched him against his opponents when he tried to introduce frog farming in the state. The pressure was too much on him even by his supporters to drop the idea for a more rational aqua project. I had the opportunity to travel with him on several occasions, but each time we work on an idea, it will remain an idea. For instance, we tried to convince him of substituting the hoe for a faster and easier mechanical tool if we are to achieve any meaningful agricultural development in the state. He was supportive of the idea, but a few months after our discussions, he purchased mini tractors that had no real useful or practical advantage to the farmers.

Emir of Kazaure and I approached him one time to encourage him to build cheap housing using local raw materials and technology available in the state. He accepted the idea, but he brought in an American Company to build prototype adobe housing that costs twice as much or more than what will cost using cement creed.

On his one-year anniversary as governor of Jigawa State, the Council of Chiefs having realized the inherent weakness in the running of his government wrote a two-page letter urging him to reconsider his e-governance for a more people-oriented leadership that will provide basic needs to the people of Jigawa State. The Council decided to write the letter later turned against it as anti-government. When he decided at some other time to create more local governments our Council was only informed after a law was passed. The seventy-seven Local Governments created by his administration were created to serve the personal interests of his associates regardless of their viability. The National Assembly which has the sole power over the creation has never been consulted. What even made the idea impracticable was his unwillingness to allow the local governments their funds.

He patronizes his political cronies throughout the state through a monthly stipend popularly known as [Yan goma] or unaccountable polling allowance. The money was not in any way intended for the public good because the government kept an open-ended guideline to the beneficiaries. When confronted by a myriad of petitions, he directed that the (Yan Goma) group should use part of the money for local projects and part as their allowances.

He became the governor of Jigawa State with the full support of people whose hate for Dutse as capital has been legendary. Even though he reassures me many times in private of his great plans for the Capital City if he becomes the governor, he worked passionately with those who were aggrieved and jealous of Dutse as the state capital. He found their idea of decentralization of ministries and e-government quite handy in allowing him to corner the resources of the state to his advantage.

Few weeks after his swearing ceremony, he re-located all ministries from Dutse to other local government areas. The decentralization was a win-win situation for the people that hate Dutse and his own agenda of keeping every civil servant away except his relations in the working of government. One of his first moves was to

abolish ministry of finance and replace it with the treasury, where he was the sole signatory to all accounts.

The running of government, therefore, remains a close family and friend's affair. Contrary to the established zoning character in appointments, he as the governor, the secretary to the state government and acting governor, the accountant general, the treasurer, auditor general, and head of the service, were all from his immediate constituency. He promoted several of his relatives and mediocre civil servants and politicians to top positions to maintain secrecy in financial transactions of the billions of Naira accrued to the State during his eight-year tenure. The Local Governments became redundant through a deliberate policy of joint accounts where all the subventions put under the governor's personal care.

He was the most nomadic governor in Nigeria who was reputed to have spent more hours in the air than in the state capital over the eight-year period. He maintained several passports to enable him to move around several countries whenever he wanted. His purposes and passion are so intelligible to every person that comes across him, as the right person to lead the impoverished state of Jigawa out of its predicament. Unfortunately, he is intrinsically an idea man who hardly could differentiate the difference between goal and reality. Through his unwitting brave, he convinced his followers and detractors alike that his ideas of governance will bring fortunes to the state. In Ibrahim Saminu's political life the difference between realities and rhetoric are as clear as between bad and evil.

One of his fine qualities, however, was his ability to bring down himself and his ego through generosity and lobby to the doorsteps of his adversaries and admirers. He is not good with words, as a politician would love to master oratory, but no doubt an intelligent man, crafty, and politically shrewd, with great ability to douse potential dangers or create mischief.

A reflective comment he made during his inaugural speech in 1999, he asserts that Jigawa State had suffered under-development for seven years under the military administration; his government under his leadership will make the state the envy of other states. He ruled Jigawa for eight consecutive years of relative peace, yet too many political and economic observers believed that the people of Jigawa were no better off than they were under the military administration. In his final year of the administration, the Central Bank economic indicators rated Jigawa State people as the poorest in the federation, despite its number fifteen position nationally and number five in Northern Nigeria in revenue earnings from the federation account.

The State under Ibrahim Saminu Turaki earned a total of N225, 625,079,685 according to Federal Ministry of Finance figures [June 1999-May 2007]. This works out to an average of Naira 2.4billion a month. The revelation coming at the end of his tenure dealt a serious blow to his credibility, transparency, and capability as a leader who failed to utilize the resources for the benefit of his people. Even worst

still was his arraignment by the EFCC for money laundering charges immediately after he left office as a governor.

Third Civilian Governor

"Excellence is the result of caring more than others think wise, risking more than other's think safe, dreaming more than others think practical, and expecting more than others think possible"
Origin Unknown

Alhaji Sule Lamido is my contemporary and had known him since 1959 at Birnin Kudu boarding primary school. Our fathers were great friends and, on many occasions, visit each other to discuss issues of mutual interest. He was one of the most intelligent students who passed his examinations with distinctions, and therefore had no difficulty gaining admission into the premier secondary school of the North (Barewa College Zaria).

His poignant, provocative, and hard comments on social and political issues sometimes pitched him against traditional establishments. In 1991, he was a leading candidate for governorship race in Jigawa State under the platform of (SDP) inexcusably dropped on flimsy reason to deter him from leading a social revolution in the state. Likewise, in 2003 contesting under the (PDP) ticket deliberately sidelined for fear of upsetting the establishment.

His controversial stun on many issues has endeared him to radicals and pitched him against established authorities. Imprisoned by the military for his non-conformist attitude, driven by his oratory and political education of late Malam Aminu Kano gets him closer to the anti-established order than to realities of the time. During his campaign tour in 2003, in the company of his close friend Alhaji Abubakar Rimi visited my palace to seek for support and prayers. Rimi made an analogy of the predicament of the masses that by virtue of their votes elect a governor whom intern appoints and depose an emir, yet the masses prostrate before the emir. This comment did not go down well with the courtiers even though what he said was the truth.

While he was the minister of foreign affairs, several attempts made by his opponents to pitch him against the traditional institution in the state, but he did all he could to disabuse the minds of traditional rulers that he has nothing to gain considering his background and upbringing. He was however cautious in maintaining a relationship with some who overtly attack him for belonging to the left.

In 2007 electioneering campaign for PDP gubernatorial candidature, a group of politicians came to urge me to prevail on him to stand for election. I promised them to do my best but at the same time will not guarantee that he will listen to me. Reluctantly I sent an emissary to invite him to come and see me at his convenient time within one week. He came at the appointed time, but when I approached him with the idea of contesting the election as requested by some elders, he categorically denied any interest for so many reasons according to him. We spoke at length, but

he remained adamant that he would support any candidate that I have in mind provided he is from PDP. I reminded him of his imposition on me in 1992, when he insisted that I take up the appointment of Senior Councilor in the newly reconstituted Emirate Council.

When all persuasive reasoning failed, I told him directly that I will not tolerate his evasive attitude, and if he fails to accept people's request, I may have to turn to blackmail by invoking the wrath of Allah against him. He was shocked by my outrage and therefore asked me for some time to think over it. He said he will contact his political associates and will let me know his decision within the shortest possible time. That was how I roped him to contest the gubernatorial election.

He like many other moral leaders understood the necessities of learning of how to listen and get along with adversaries to achieve visionary goals. It is an ingredient of effective moral leadership, which I admire of him. He is a rigorous social activist of Aminu Kano political school, who is always willing to be of help to the poor and the underprivileged people in society. He started a social contract with the physically challenged persons by introducing welfare assistance on assumption into office as a governor.

Of all the governors I worked with in Jigawa State, Sule Lamido strikes me as a great power artisan. He does not only understand the nature of the power game but also able to fight his way simultaneously on a wide variety of political landmines. He is meticulous in reasoning, decisive and prompt in action against antagonists, unpredictable in dealing with sensitive issues, and persuasive in his offers to the public.

On the assumption of office, he made community participation in all matters of sensitive nature as a means of motivating people and their allegiance towards a common goal. He adopted a deterrence strategy against mounting opposition as to his capability and or suitability to be the governorship candidate of the parties' alliance, by retreating and refusing to respond to the various allegations and accusations against his lieutenants. He embarked on restoring dilapidated road infrastructures, education, and health, systems throughout the state with unbelievable vigor within his first year in office. Within two years he did not only transform Dutse the state capital from at best a local government headquarters to a modern city with a homely atmosphere. History will record him as the father of modern Dutse and indeed Jigawa State.

Chapter Twenty-One

Blowing My Trumpet

"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be achieved without hope or confidence". Helen Keller

Construction of Dutse Central Mosque

My father was approached on 23 January 1994 by a group of elders from what is now known as Yadi, to seek his permission to establish a Friday Mosque to ease their four-kilometer journey every week to Garu Mosque. He ordered me to discuss with the Local Government Chairman late Adamu Abubakar and secure land for that purpose. He was quite supportive but told me that he must seek the government's permission to pay compensations to the affected persons whose land will be used to site the mosque. A few weeks later the state government wrote a letter to the Chairman and copied to the emirate council that the state government is interested in the project and has appointed a twenty-two men committee to see to its execution. I was listed in the committee, which comprises twenty-four people one from each local government in the state under the Chairmanship of late AVM Muhtar Mohammed (Wazirin Dutse).

The committee met several times in Dutse, finally selected its site, and organized a fund-raising initiative after commissioning architects and engineers to produce final drawings. A date for the fundraising 16 April 1994, was agreed by the committee after consultation with the government. The turnout was good and twenty-three million six hundred and seventy-six thousand one hundred and eighty-six naira in cash, checks, and pledges collected that day. Unfortunately, more than 60 percent of the money was not redeemed including pledges from the Chairman AVM Muhtar Mohammed and Alhaji Bello Maitama (Sardaunan Dutse)

The committee appointed Alhaji Abdulkadir Dantata as the main contractor to handle the project under the supervision of Descon Nigeria Ltd, management consultants. Five years after its takeoff the project has not gone beyond foundation level. The few pillars constructed could not support the building. The contractor withdrew his staff from the site due to lack of money in the account to continue with the execution of the project. He tried several alternatives to raise money for the project and failed including a swap with the government to give his company some road construction contract in exchange for free completion of the project.

In 1998, when Col Mai Malari became the administrator, I approached him with the idea of handing back the project to the emirate council, which he obliged. This transfer not only made the committee unnecessary but also the contract been entered with Alhaji Abdulkadir. He became enraged, wrote, and circulated several nasty letters accusing me of sidelining his company in favor of my own. His allegations were so damaging to my image that I told his close associates of my displeasure and

surprise over his emotional outburst. Few years after commissioning the Mosque, he met me at my Kaduna residence and apologized for what happened and seek my forgiveness.

I pursued the project through direct labor with the support of Governor Ibrahim Saminu Turaki and philanthropist friends Abdulkadir Kawu [Madakin Lafai] a quantity surveyor, Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu [Wazirin Dutse] and Engineer Hamza Ibrahim [Barden Dutse]. We used the services of Newpro Consultants to secure good sub-contractors and to negotiate the various segments of the construction. The entire work comprising the main mosque, women wing, thirty-five toilets and baths, library complex, and offices were completed and ready for commissioning on February 28, 2003. The late Sultan of Sokoto Muhammadu Machido, in the company of the late Shehu of Borno Mustapha Umar El-Kanemi, late Emir of Kano Ado Bayero, a host of other eminent emirs of Jigawa and Bauchi states and respected Ulama throughout the federation was at the commissioning ceremony on 28 March 2003.

The Jama'atu-Nasiril-Islam

"I am indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well" Alexander the Great

When I became the emir, I did all I could to enlist the support of fellow emirs to bring some changes in the administration of JNII. However, the conflicting interests in its organizational structure make it impossible to ascertain its true financial position. After Justice Bashir Sambo's resignation as Secretary General, he assisted us in uncovering certain facts that determine its poor performance as an organization. He was quite helpful in giving us detailed information on several issues and suggestions on how to bring the desired reform.

We formed a pressure group of six emirs of Suleja, Argungun, Zuru, Kazaure, Birnin-Gwari, Yauri, and me, nicknamed the firebrand emirs. We met several times and enlisted the support of several other emirs and influential Ulama within the country. Our mission was to bring about changes in both the administrative and policy directions of the organization that for many years overshadowed by the activities of a more result oriented Islamic organizations particularly the Izala.

Our Ideas as radical as they seem too many members was the only way to shake up the dormant organization that only meets once or twice a year for not more than a few hours. We wanted the emirs to remain, ad-hock advisors, while the day to day running of the organization left in the hands of permanent younger leaders. We suggested the creation of several working committees to take charge of the policy formulations.

We took tours of all the emirates in the northern states explaining our ideas to our colleagues and the Ulama. While some of the younger emirs and Ulama saw this as the only way to make JNII relevant to today's need, the older and more conservative members saw it as eroding their power and therefore resisted any move

to implement our ideas. Each time an issue arose at the general meetings; there will always be two opposing sides even if the issue is non-controversial.

Religious crises

“Life is a series of experiences, each one of which makes us bigger, even though sometimes it is hard to realize this. For the world was built to develop character, and we must learn that the setbacks and grieves which we endure help us in our marching onward”. Henry Ford

By far the most difficult and destabilizing issues I had to face in my public life emanate from religious disharmony particularly between the firebrand Muslim youth and the leaders of Pentecostal Christian churches that sprung up as a result of economic hardships. To achieve the correct balance between the ever-increasing desires for each group to assert its position as the dominant faith I had to work with each group and listen to a minute and sometimes irrelevant details. My position as an emir and head of the Muslim Ummah and at the same time a community leader sometimes pitched me against a group when I attempt to rationalize issues.

One of such cases was the Dutse Religious Riot in 2006, which caused so much anger on a non-religious issue. Both sides deliberately misled their followers giving the opportunity to unemployed youth to take advantage of the chaos to break in shops and steal.

A senior police officer serving under the Jigawa Command in Dutse was dating two free women one a Christian and the other a Muslim, both were aware of the other's relationship with the officer. Three weeks to the month of Ramadan of 2006, the Muslim woman took her textile material to a tailoring shop unknown to her the outfit belongs to the Christian woman opponent. On the appointed day, she went to collect her dress from the shop and found that the material cuttings were not sown as promised. An argument ensued between her and the tailor for several minutes of exchanges; the Christian owner appeared and passes a nasty comment on her opponent.

The matter referred to the District Heads office who tried to mediate between them, but the jealous women refused to agree on the completion date. For two days, he tried to solve the problem without success and referred the matter to the emirate council. I ordered a security meeting with all the security agencies present where I enjoined them to be extra vigilant to avoid religious crises even though the two protagonists were women of low virtue.

Three days later, while preparing to depart for Kaduna to attend the opening ceremony of annual tafsir by Dr. Ahmad Gumi, I was informed that thousands of people are protesting in front of the District Heads office against the Christian woman whom they accused of blasphemy against the Holy Prophet of Islam. Without hesitation, I drove to the scene where I found the Police Commissioner Alhaji Abubakar Sardauna trying to resolve the crisis.

While we were discussing with the rioters, a mobile police pick-up passing with riot police shot teargas canister at us causing us to lose control of the situation. The mob arrested the mobile police inspector who ordered the gassing and was about to lynch him when we went to rescue him from their hand. The police commissioner sensing the charged mob atmosphere, whispered to him to hold my cone and his uniform. We walked him one kilometer to my residence while the crowd of more than five hundred youth armed with dangerous weapons followed us behind shouting at him and urging us to hand him over to them for retributive justice.

After taking him to the safety of my waiting room, we came back to the crowd to address them to allow the law to handle him according to his crime, but already many of them out of anger have left and set up roadblocks around town and driving the Christian population into the State Police Headquarters. For several hours, the Police Commissioner and I went around town confiscating dangerous weapons from the hooligans that refused to disperse from the streets.

Several of them under the influence of drugs set several shops and Churches on fire. While the burnings were going on, some Ibo Christian traders congregated around their shops watching from a safe distance our efforts to disarm the hooligans; suddenly we found ourselves caught in a hail of stone throwing from both sides. We had to run for cover and headed straight to the Police Headquarters where the families of the Christian population are taking refuge. As we walk through the refuges, some aggrieved persons were passing nasty comments against me but had to ignore them understanding their anger.

I walked straight to the deputy commissioner's office upstairs, only to find him talking to his wife unconcerned by the event. I left in anger back to the streets where the hooligans have taken control due to serious misunderstanding among the top police command where the Christians and the Muslim officers evidently have taken sides. The Police Commissioner a Muslim was trying to ensure no life was lost refused to order any police officer to take up arms, which was against the wishes of his two Christian deputies. They refused to support him in protest and take the opportunity to send text messages to their superiors in Abuja insinuating that the Commissioner deliberately refused to use force on the rioters because he has taken a side in the conflict against the Christian community. The commissioner left with no alternative but keep persuading the rioters to disperse amicably with the small support of few Muslim police officers under his command.

At 4.00 pm while we were going around to pacify the reasonable groups, to give up their stand for bloodshed, the State Governor Ibrahim Saminu Turaki who was away for several weeks suddenly appeared in the town and went straight to the Central Mosque where hundreds of worshippers have gathered to pray the Asar prayer. Immediately after the prayer, he grabbed the microphone from the Imam who was pleading with the congregation to avoid any bloodshed. The Governor, against the

advice of his security officer, went ahead to plead with the restive youth to return to their homes, as the government will investigate the issue. Suddenly the mob charged forward to take over the microphone from him. The Imam ushered him into his car as the crowd armed with dangerous weapons chased him out of the mosque with slight injuries sustained by his security guard.

We followed him to his office, after several efforts to locate his whereabouts around the town. It was getting dark, and our concern was if action was not taken within one hour, the situation might further deteriorate. When we located him, it took us several minutes to convince him to call a security meeting and declare dusk to dawn curfew in the city. He finally agreed and ordered the Police Commissioner to impose a twelve-hour curfew. I went back with him to the Police Headquarters to plead with the refugees to return to their residences, assuring them of full protection. Several NYSC members who were in the town for an event that day had nowhere to stay and could not find food to buy. We arranged with local hotels for their accommodations and a small stipend to buy daily needs.

The following morning, the Police Commissioner and I went back to government house to meet with the Governor and to submit our reports on the destruction, and to urge him to compensate the victims since no life was lost. He gladly accepted the proposal and set up a committee to ascertain the damages, which he later paid fully to the victims. Several groups paid me a thank you visit including the Christian Churches the following day praising my courage and saving lives. Two days later, to my surprise, my attention was drawn to a communiqué issued by the Northern Christian Association of Nigeria in Kaduna condemning my behavior and that of the Police Commissioner during the riot.

They assert that I arrested a mobile police officer and detained him in my residence for several hours and forced him to convert to Islam before releasing him. This press conference called on the Inspector General of Police to reprimand the Police Commissioner for his partisan role in the riot. This was an absolute lie that really hurts my feeling and angered my staff who spent the whole day with me trying to save lives and minimize damages to property.

The Commissioner of Police Abubakar Sardauna became the greatest victim of the riot as several of his staff who had for one reason or another unhappy with his leadership took the opportunity to write false reports against him and his role in the affair. Among them was the Director of State Security a Christian and his immediate deputy another Christian. The Inspector General sent an assistant Inspector General (Didari) to investigate the matter, but he too was misled in believing that the CP was guilty even before the investigations commenced. With pressures from the Headquarters, he too had to put some blame on his conduct in the riot, which warranted his interdiction for several months. God so kind the truth revealed after the Inspector General reviewed his case and dismissed all allegations against him.

Dutse people remembered this fine officer as second only to late DIG Baba Ahmadu another philanthropist by nature.

Da'awah Activities

“Dear to us are those who love us... but dearer are those who reject us as unworthy, for they add another life; they build a heaven before us whereof we had not dreamed, and thereby supply to us new powers out of the recesses of the spirit and urge us to new and attempted performances”.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

One day in February 1996 while on tour to Gwaram Local Government, I came across a convoy of European Christian Missionaries dressed in local costumes coming out of a small feeder road apparently from a village called Kadangare. I found out from my aide that, the area has a substantial number of pagan communities in the area that could be of great interest to the Missionaries. From that day on, I set out to find out more about these communities and tried to make friends with their leaders by inviting them to the palace on different occasions. One afternoon a group of Ulamah from Birnin Kudu came to visit me and to give me their support in Da'awah work particularly in the Pagan areas, but they will need to be mobile. I approached Halifah Isyaku Rabi'u to provide such assistance which he donated ten bicycles and some cash.

Within a few months, the group was able to convert several Pagans and their families into Islam. I invited late Emir of Kazaure Hussein Adamu, Emir of Ringim and other neighboring emirs from Bauchi State to come and share with us in a grand ceremony that attracted more converts from the community than we ever envisaged. This success gave me more encouragements to pursue the rest of the Pagan communities in Birnin Kudu and Gwaram Local Government areas. Within three years, our program received a further boost from the Governor's wife Hajia Zahara'u Turaki, who spent a great deal of her time and money in the propagation particularly among women converts. She encouraged her husband to provide some essential amenities to the communities including housing and schools for their children. She worked tirelessly encouraging women in these communities to give up alcoholism, fornication, and nudity by providing them with teachers and reading materials.

Two cases will remain in my memory; one was the occasion of the Pagan four-year rites, which I tried to stop for fear of marginal converts reverting to Paganism. The ceremony went ahead despite my pleadings with the Pagan community leaders. While the ceremony was going on at Kadangare, the Imam attached to the recently constructed mosque called the afternoon prayer that apparently angered the organizers to call for his death. He escaped to the neighboring village and find asylum with the village head. The drunkards went into jubilation of their success in driving not only the Imam away but also driving Islam out of their community.

The man who ordered the ambush [Sarki Kana] later was to become a Muslim community leader who spends the rest of his life serving Islam. The other was another Pagan leader who nicknamed himself [Gyauron Sarki] residual seed in protest of my Da'awah work in the area. I employed several techniques to get him to accept Islam, but he became more and more evasive. One day he confided in me when I made a surprise visit to his house, that if ever he will accept Islam it would be after his mother's death. He told me that he would not do anything to hurt his mother's feelings.

Few weeks after my visit, his mother died, and he sent me a message through the District Head that he will perform his mother's death rites after which he wants to meet with me to accept Islam. He honored his pledge to his mother and to me. He abandoned his gods and turned himself to Islamic ways.

Economic Empowerment of the under privilege

“Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life”. David M Burns

Through the instrument of Zakkat, supported by Governor Ibrahim Saminu Turaki, our council was able to collect annually and distribute cash and a substantial quantity of food items in all the villages to the needy. The Fourth Republic civilian regime governor of Zamfara State Ahmed [Yariman Bakura] in 1999 established Sharia Legal System in his state. The tempo quickly spread to all Muslim States in the North creating tremendous opportunities to pursue justice through the instrument of religious injunctions. The government of Jigawa State realizes that it cannot escape the political tide of Sharia, and therefore had to do something quickly to support the agitations.

I supported the enactment of the Sharia Legal System, in Muslim controlled States because of my faith. Secondly, the first republic constitution, which gave the regions partial independence in judicial matters, has worked so well to the benefit of the regions. The imposition of a unitary system of government by the military after the 1966 coup created serious erosion of regional powers and setting a condition of religious bigotry and intolerance.

The Sharia as practiced in the Northern Region of Ahmadu Bello was contained in the penal code, allowing non-Muslims greater latitude to choose what court to determine their civil cases. The re-enactment of Sharia, therefore, was nothing new but was deliberately politicized to take up a different meaning emphasizing the criminal aspect of Sharia. Governor Ibrahim Saminu Turaki came up with Zakkat administration as a state policy to fight poverty and empower the poor through the mechanism of Zakkat [re-distribution of wealth from the rich to the needy]. Every emirate including Dutse Emirate Council saddled with the arduous responsibility of ensuring the successful implementation of the new government policy.

The emirate Council vigorously commits its energy to the realization of this noble cause. We established as a first step, a general policy and coordination committees at local government and district levels, while committees on assessment, collection, and distribution were established at village and ward levels. Moreover, Da'awah and enlightenment campaigns took top priority as prominent Ulama assisted in taking the message to their committees.

The zeal, energy, and commitment devoted to this cause evidenced by the phenomenal successes recorded over the years indicate the level of success. Within the first three years, the collection has almost tripled i.e. from N27million total collection in 1421AH to N57 million in 1422AH and to over N80million in 1423 AH. The distribution of proceeds particularly in the countryside has considerably reduced rural-urban migration during the dry season and has considerably reduced the number of destitute seeking livelihood outside their villages. The Success of Dutse Emirate Zakat Committees is legendary as several Islamic and Charity organizations across the country sent several delegations or wrote to solicit for advice and guidelines for setting up similar committees.

Our collections for endowment are equally impressive as we were able to build several Mosques, Islamic schools, and support medical institutions and orphanages.

Supreme Council for Islamic affairs

“An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come”. Victor Hugo

One of the greatest controversies I went through during my trusteeship was the day Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs decided to seek Federal Government support for the renovation of the Abuja National Mosque. Those who supported the idea of approaching Vice President Atiku Abubakar for such support failed because he set up conditions that are contrary to their interest. When they discovered that his conditions would serve no financial benefits to them, they discarded the idea temporarily, until when President Obasanjo organized his fundraising for the National Ecclesiastical Centre. It was a perfect excuse for them to approach the government once more for financial support. He too gave them very tough conditions for government support, which they blindly accepted. One of the sticking conditions was that the mosque becomes a national monument and he will serve as its chairperson.

My objections to these conditions led to my removal from the board and pitched me against the Federal Government. I did my duty as a Muslim to protect the Muslim Ummah from such a monumental disaster but was rebuffed by some high-ranking scholars who made a terrible mistake of believing in the sincerity of the people in government. Notably among my accusers were late Justice Bashir Sambo (May his soul rest in peace) argued that there is nothing wrong in the president of the country protecting the interest of all faiths. He accused those with contrary views of bigotry

and challenged anyone to produce evidence of the government's intention to turn the mosque into anything other than a place of worship for Muslims.

Interestingly, when they handed the mosque over to President Obasanjo, he quickly appointed his men as members of the committees leaving the diehard supporters of his government takeover without any specific role in the affairs of the mosque. One of them wrote a petition to President General SCIA, accusing President Obasanjo of undermining the Mosque constitution, by leaving them out. Within two years, even Justice Bashir Sambo was at loggerhead with the government leading to his eviction from his Abuja residence televised purposely to humiliate him as an illegal occupant in his residence.

The Daily Trust Newspaper wrote an editorial condemning the actions of those who mortgaged their responsibilities as custodians of the religion of Islam in Nigeria for the un-Godly act. This editorial generated substantial interest and discussions as to the appropriateness of the decision to hand over the renovation and maintenance of the new National Monument by the SCIA.

At the heat of this debate, Plateau State was in serious religious crises at Yalwan Chandam resulting in mass massacres of Muslims in the area. The governor of my state in his effort to score a political point with the federal establishment as a champion of peace decided to call for a peace conference of Muslim and Christian leaders in Kaduna to discuss issues of mutual interest. The organizers were in great haste spent millions of naira, to attract people of importance to the conference, but the government of Kaduna State refused them permission to hold the conference in Kaduna for obvious reasons. He then decided to move the venue to Dutse, this time for Muslim leaders only as preparatory to an inter-religious one in Jos with the support of his friend Governor Joshua Dariye whom he invited to Dutse for a state visit.

The governor sent invitations for the conference to various Muslim organizations in Nigeria, but on the appointed date, the governor was deliberately not in the country to open the meeting. The Birnin Kebbi delegates went to seek permission with their emir Mustafa Jakolo to attend the conference. He was not happy that a meeting of such importance would not involve either JN1 or SCIA. Some delegates who confided in me confirmed his displeasure over this issue. He was said to call some top people in the Villa alert them on the danger of such a meeting in Dutse. He reasoned this will give me a platform to discredit the Federal Government on the National Mosque issue.

Temporary Exile

“The more tranquil a man becomes, the greater is his success, his influence, his power for good. The calmness of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom”. James Allen

Around my residence and the Dutse Central Mosque, several security men took a position to prevent the meeting, which many Islamic leaders from different organizations were eager to attend. By late afternoon, I received delegates from many states, even though the organizers did not contact me officially. I sent for the commissioner for religious affairs who was also not in the full knowledge of who will open the conference in the absence of the state governor. Together we attempted to get him on the phone through his personal assistant without success. It was much later in the night that we found out he was in Japan, and there is no way he could attend the conference that was a few hours away.

While I was retiring for the night, the director of state security services came to my residence in the company of some officers to take me out of the state. He told me that he was under instruction from Abuja not to allow the conference and he was ordered to move me out of the state. I was surprised by what he said, particularly linking me as the convener of the conference. I tried to argue with him by producing my invitation indicating my role, but he was bent on taking me out of the state. While we were still arguing, I phoned the governor's cousin and personal assistant and narrated my encounter with the security director.

He was then in contact with the governor, who suggested that I should leave the town for that night and directed him to buy me a ticket to Singapore in the next available flight. The state security director was not in favor of allowing me to spend the night in Dutse and therefore insisted that I must go with him that night to an undisclosed location. I told him of my resolve not to leave my Palace at that hour voluntarily, unless by force. After long discussions, he allowed me to retire on condition that the security officers shall remain in my residence until morning.

In the early hours of Friday, August 20, 2004, I left Dutse in the company of my senior wife and her little daughter for Lagos on route Singapore. We waited at Kano airport most of the day waiting for a Lagos flight, which eventually took-off at 16hrs barely two hours to take-off on the connecting flight. We rushed through the security at the Murtala Mohammed Airport Lagos, and our luggage checked in the boarding area. I have for many reasons refused to disclose to any member of my family or staff my situation in fear of misrepresentation or outright instigation. When I was leaving Malam Aminu Kano Airport, I addressed my staff and told them I was going on a medical check-up and will return as soon as possible.

While in Singapore, Governor Turaki invited me for a dinner one evening on his way from Japan during which he suggested that I write an apology letter to President Obasanjo over the incident, which he will deliver in person. I was totally annoyed with his suggestion that I should offer an apology for what I have not done or any

knowledge of what has been done. I told him that I have not committed any offense against the President or the Nation to warrant an apology. I was very innocent of the happenings as I was not the initiator of the conference and had not invited anyone for the conference. When he insisted, I told him categorically that I would rather face the consequences than to admit guilt.

We left the dinner table thinking that he has accepted my reasoning, but to my surprise, he rang the Head of Service Jigawa State Ibrahim Manzo and directed him to summon my brother the Senior Councilor and publish an apology to Mr. President in the dailies on behalf of the Council. I called on the Senior Councilor and few people in the council not to publish anything regarding this issue, but they were pressurized by the government machinery to do so even if it hurts my feelings. Few days after, someone called me to tell me that he has seen our council apology in the Daily Trust Newspapers. After been away for more than one month, I was permitted to return home on October 1, 2005.

While I was away a protest was staged at my Palace as a result of a malicious rumor circulating in Dutse that my long stay overseas was on the invitation of the Catholic Church to support their bid for land in Dutse to build the biggest Theological University in Africa. On my return, I summoned a council meeting to hear reasons for a protest staged by Muslim youth in the town in which I was accused of receiving gratification. The report presented at the council was a cover-up of connivance with some influential members who through ignorance endorsed the protest. I set up my own inquiry, interviewed several community leaders, and concluded that the issue has been politically castrated by a family member to malign the governor and me whom they believe conspired in the underdevelopment of Dutse as the capital city. I was so enraged with the huckstered attitude of the council in handling this issue that I ordered the council to go on indefinite recess unless there is an emergency. For several weeks, I continued to observe the individual members as they come privately to confess their ignorance to the happenings and to absolve themselves by seeking forgiveness. After taking full control of the situation, I directed the council members to return to daily briefings and subsequently to full meetings.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Contemporary Issues

“A man’s accomplishments in life are the cumulative effects of his attention to detail” John Foster Dulles.

Moral Traditional Leadership

Despite all odds militating against its natural power, the traditional leadership over the years assumed a different kind of role in society as a beacon for morality, culture, and religion. The emir of the twenty-first century derives his power from beliefs, expectations, and emotions of the historical and cultural past which the institution played in the emancipation of tribal and or religious unity. He is known as the “Amirul Al-mu’umineen” Commander of the faithful whose authority and influence transcends all levels of society. In carrying out his duties to God and humanity, he must work with the government in the maintenance of peace and harmony within his domain. His active participation in the transformation of society becomes a necessity if he is to maintain any relevance in his community.

Those who argue that traditional institutions today have lost their relevance, hence its retention and or participation in government is in direct conflict and inconsistent with modern democratic process, are doing so out of ignorance and or mischief.

The undermining of the traditional institution over the years has led to the destruction of cultural values, harmony in our communities and creating serious lapses in moral upbringing of our children. In traditional Nigerian-setting age plays an important role in translating community values, however, our constitution failed to consider the importance of age in community life by recognizing adult suffrage as the yardstick for public office. In Northern Nigeria, the age factor in our electoral process has done great damage to the image of local government officials who on many occasions have divergent interests and aspirations with their Communities.

One of such examples was a case of an elected young person who after assuming office built a mansion amid makeshift houses in his village. The villagers met and decided one day to move a few kilometers away in protest. On his return to the village, he found that everyone in the village has migrated to the next village in neighboring local government which provides safe drinking water, a school, and a clinic.

Traditional institution and the Rule of Law

“Culture is an instrument wielded by teachers to manufacture teachers, who, in their turn, will manufacture still more teachers”. Simone Weil

Unless we recognize that it is the right of traditional societies to retain part of their cultural values through recognized institutions and leadership, it will be impossible to ensure a smooth transition to modernity. People who believe in destroying the

institution are doing so only to serve self-interest, not for the prosperity and stability of the larger society. A case in point is the current insurgencies that have devastated largely States with diminishing roles for traditional rulers prove the importance of traditional institutions. Boko Haram terrorism found a breeding ground in Yobe and Borno States while Cattle rustlers fund sanctuary in Zamfara, Kaduna, Nasarawa and the Benue States. All these states have suffered from fragmentation of traditional institutions to suit the selfish interest of their political leaders.

In contrast to the undiluted emirate system in Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Zaria, Jigawa, Kwara and above all Sokoto enjoy civility and peace within their Jurisdictions. One major reason for their relative peace is the stability and continuity of the system they operate. Without any doubt, traditional values are essential ingredients that support strong democratic ideals, promote economic, political, and social advancement of any society. Democracy and tradition have complementary goals in matters of security, social harmony, and physical development. Even where the two have divergent views, or definitions of the bases of authority, a requirement of community life, order, liberty, faith and opinion, the differences are not so pronounced. Our experiences in Jigawa State have shown the practical application of harmonious relationship between the political elites, traditional rulers, and Ulamah in solving matters has made the working of government responsive to the needs of the public. I will, therefore, support for this reason alone, a role in the constitutional arrangement for the traditional institution. Community aspirations and values are the guiding principles to which government conceive and execute all-developmental projects, the traditional institutions remain without doubt the best yardstick of measuring community values and aspirations. The Democrats have therefore nothing to lose by working hand in hand with the aristocrats if that will bring in social harmony and security.

Poverty eradication

"If one advances confidently in the directions of his dreams and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours". Henry David Thoreau

Corruption in the public and private sector has stalled every effort to develop the enormous resources of this country for the benefit of all. Poverty, illiteracy, and disease have taken its toll among the underprivileged rural and urban population. In 1966, when the first military coup de tar took place, the coup planners among other things charged the first civilian government of corruption and nepotism. Subsequent military regimes not only open more avenues for corruption but also institutionalize and encouraged high profile contract inflation. The flagrant abuse of the financial guidelines in public and private sector opens several doors for white elephant projects at the expense of valuable, people targeted projects.

Corruption in public service, which sadly increased with the economic and financial growth of our nation, the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen reducing the poor to a miserable existence. Greed for self-aggrandizement has not only denied the poor all basic needs but also breeds an unstable socio-political environment that undermines their efforts to develop full potential.

One other issue militating against the total eradication of poverty in third world nations is the imposition of Structural adjustment programs by the World Bank - International Monetary Fund as the regular prescription administered to any desperate nation that falls into the debt trap of the advanced capitalist countries. In all cases, the poor of these nations are the major victims of harsh medication. Our country fell into this trap after we squandered our wealth to stage a Festival known as Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in 1977.

One year later in 1978, Nigeria took its first multi-billion-dollar loan to pay for our false lifestyle. Since then the Nigerian rich have always found their way out, leaving the middle class and the poor to continue with the never-ending erosion of their income and standard of living.

In 1989, when I was a member of the Constituent Assembly, I attempted to show the abuses of foreign loans and the need to curb our insatiable demand for such loans by both Federal and State governments. Today I am vindicated as even the World Bank Consultants and our economists have agreed, that such loans are not only inimical to development but also a source of high-level corruption.

Part of the conditional ties of the International Monetary Fund prescription is the total withdrawal of agricultural and all other subsidies that benefit the poor including water and medical care. The greatest irony of this is that while our subsistence farmers in Nigeria or elsewhere in a third world country are been denied the meager agricultural inputs and fertilizer subsidy; farmers in OECD countries enjoyed in 2005 a total subsidy of more than 400 billion United States Dollars.

While a farmer in advanced nations enjoying full subsidies plus technical and scientific advantage could produce more efficient crops at a highly competitive price; a farmer in a third world country is left on his own to compete or perish without any support from his government. The dominance of neo-liberal ideas within the World Bank was responsible for this belief that poverty has little to do with privilege and inequality; rather its solution is through the promotion of economic growth by creating free markets, reducing government involvement in social services, and attracting foreign investments.

This strategy has not provided any solution to the endemic inequality in Nigeria and elsewhere. For any nation to succeed in the eradication of poverty, must combine the commitment to economic development with the introduction of social policies that specifically and directly address poverty issues such as education, health, social security, rural development, and human services.

In Jigawa State as well as other northern states, the cumulative effect of neglect in social services has devastated the population to a zero-sum game between the rich and the poor. I have said several times that easy credit facility alone could not solve poverty; it must be supported by social services.

Politics of succession

"Life is a dream for the wise, a game for the fool and a comedy for the rich and a tragedy for the poor". Sholem Aleichem

The Nigerian political scene, particularly from civilian to civilian government, has always led to military takeover because of winner take all attitude of our political class that is opportunistic and morally bankrupt. If a politician in the position of a local government chairperson or a governor of a state, will steal public funds in his or her trust with impunity and escape justice, by installing a puppet through corrupt and rigged elections aided by those delegated to conduct free and fair elections, democracy will remain a mirage.

In 1999, the transition from military to civilian in Jigawa State as well as other states in the federation hastily organized to enable the military hand over to what they call safe hands. A great number of those who took over the mantle of leadership were either their protégé or political touts. This explains the level of corruption and mismanagement in the running of governments throughout the eight-year term. The transition from military to the civilian government does not seem to be any better, as most chief executives parted ways with their deputies to either perpetuate their position as dominant political leaders or to impose their own stooge candidates after they left office. In our state, for example, we had three deputy governors in eight years, and as the election nears, the governor installs his protégé the secretary to the government as acting governor even though there was an elected deputy governor.

Public Security

"Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation is the foundation of love". Martin Luther King.

Public welfare and security are the primary responsibility of any leader, I exposed myself to dangers a time to ward off greater dangers. One of the major headaches of any traditional ruler in Northern Nigeria is the non-ending annual conflict between farmers and herdsmen. The Emirate councils of modern-day understand the issues militating against peaceful coexistence between communities and could be used effectively to resolve such disputes without bloodletting or going to a lengthy civil proceeding. Our Council in most cases receives and mediates cases on the same day unless there is insufficient evidence or one of the parties is unable to attend the sitting. On exceptional cases, the issue may drag for a few days or weeks depending on the circumstances. In contrast to regular courts, where shreds of evidence determine the success or failure in a case, the Emirate Council, on the other hand,

depends on its own experience of the people and culture to reconcile or resolve issues of conflict. Our experience in (sulhu) conflict resolution in association with DFID has attracted the attention of international communities as well as local NGO's. Today Dutse Emirate Council is accepted leader in conflict resolution that has even received commendation from His Royal Highness Prince Charles and several world leaders.

Ecological Issues

"As human beings, we are endowed with freedom of choice, and we cannot shuffle off our responsibility upon the shoulders of God or nature. We must shoulder it ourselves. It is up to us".
Arnold Toynbee

Poverty has a direct link to environmental degradation and resource abuse in our society today, particularly in the destruction of our water and forest resources. Because about two-thirds of our populations live in rural areas, their income is mainly from agriculture-related activities. Our land, therefore, is continuously degraded, our forests devastated, and our water polluted causing serious loss of biodiversity. Human-induced environmental degradation invariably affects our natural environment causing climatic changes that reduced our ability to produce and sustain our livelihood.

Degradation of resources reduces the productivity of the poor making them even more susceptible to extreme events (weather, economic, and civil strife). These events have continuously afflicted the poor making them extremely vulnerable to diseases and less secure in their homes. Within my first year in office, I realized not only the government's inability to enforce environmental laws but also an individual understanding of the dangers of environmental destruction. The local government officials responsible for the protection of the environment were the same people promoting its destruction for pecuniary reasons. When all efforts to get them to work with our council in protecting the environment fails, we decided to work on our own and use personal resources to promote environmental awareness and discipline.

In 1996, we raised more than two million tree seedlings and broadcast several grass species that were extinct in our area. The trees planted along major roads in the early period of the rainy season and tendered throughout the period provided not only shelter to the public but also added to the aesthetic beauties of the towns and villages. To protect our forest reserves, we worked through the government to raise seedlings of gum Arabic, which the local communities planted and tendered within the reserves as a cash crop.

I often ask myself one basic question -what would have been the socio-economic position of Nigeria if we were still under Colonial administration? One thing for sure would be the railway system would have been not only in operation but also extended to more towns and villages. The electricity supply would have been more

regular and our industries more functional. Our water supply enhanced to meet world standard, while our hospital and health delivery systems were more able to cope with the outbreaks. Our educational system would have been strong enough to compete academically with any other educational system in Europe or America. Our agricultural production would have given us a comparative advantage to the extent of becoming a leading exporter of agricultural goods. Our military and Para-military units are more professional and better equipped to take part in peacekeeping operations. City buses would still have been running on routes and schedule, while taxis and motorcycles must comply with traffic rules.

What I am not sure would be our political stability as there would be more dissent and agitations for independence possibly war against the colonial government as it happens in some countries. Our elites would have formed pressure groups to liberate the country from foreign domination when in 1972; the oil became truly the world's most sought out commodity. Ethnicity, tribalism, religious bigotry, and many other social crises would be encouraged by the colonial government to reduce pressure on their administration. We would have been operating a parliamentary system with a bi-cameral legislature. We would have been driving on the right, and our vehicles left-hand driven. Our coins and currency would have the portrait of Her Majesty the Queen engraved. Our forest resources, our lakes, and waterways better protected from degradation and pollution.

Sustainable Agriculture

"A house is not a home unless it contains food, a fire for the mind as well as the body". Margret Fuller

I have observed throughout my working years with the NAPC and ALDA, in the early 70 that unsustainable agricultural policies were largely responsible for the serious decline in the industry that employs more than two-thirds of our population. Pre and post-independent Nigeria experienced at least five major agricultural visions, and sub visions from Operation Feed the Nation to Green Revolution, through [DFRI] and the establishment of [ADP's]. These visions in one way or the other supported our governments' resolve, to promote and develop the potentials in our farming communities and influenced their attitude and encourage them in making use of modern farming methods and technologies.

The first vision was what I call the "Slave Labor" characterized by the Colonial thirst for raw materials for their industrial growth. Promoted by the Royal Niger Company under its founder Sir George Goldie and further actualized by the Colonial administrator Lord Lugard. The provision of the railroad, water, and land transportation became the major thrust of the vision. To further supplement these, they introduce more efficient crop husbandry to increase the yield and animal driven plow to reduce drudgery.

The second vision based on the "Regional Competition" under the national leadership of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and the three regional premiers. It was a continuation of the first vision, except that the three regions were in direct competition with each other in the production of cash crops. It was also a period of the Marketing Boards, and appointment of indigenous businesspersons as LBA's, and the intensification campaign of the benefits of inorganic fertilizers.

The third vision was in the late seventies lead by General Obasanjo tagged "Operation Feed the Nation." This vision was remarkably different from the first two as its focus was self-sufficiency in food production. Despite the massive campaigns, this vision failed to energize the youth, because the policy administrators did not consider the complex interplay of social and economic realities of the time.

The second republic under President Shehu Shagari introduced politically motivated fourth vision termed the "Green Revolution." This was the period of economic reforms or structural adjustment policy packages by the world financial institution. It encourages the withdrawal of subsidies, deregulated prices, devaluation of currencies, reduction of public sector employment, privatization or commercialization of public enterprises, commercialization of social services, increase in indirect taxation, and liberalization of labor laws were the key features of the structural adjustment program. The greatest set back to this vision was that the SAP policies hampered any intention of the government to achieve its goals, by the opening of cheap agricultural imports from Asia and elsewhere to the detriment of local production. Rice and other agricultural commodities became too cheap that farming became the greatest losing venture of the time.

The fifth vision is what I will call "Survival of the fittest," which aims at promoting the production of selective cash and food crops that could favorably compete in the world market. Crops that have no appeal to the global market will therefore only rely on the local market or become out of production. Charles Darwin theory [1859] of natural selection or survival of the fittest characterized the global trade termed "the new world order." The goal of globalization is not only cropping with no global appeal will diminish; but also, people, companies, and national economies that will not be able to stand the rigors of global competition will banish.

Although all the five visions recognize mechanization and credit facilities, as the prime mover to agricultural development, it has achieved very little in providing appropriate technology to the subsistence farmers. This was a serious oversight and lack of due considerations to details in our agricultural planning and execution. Here I will put the blame on our policy implementation, for failing to consider the complexities and interplay of the opposing agrarian and capitalist systems operating in our society and indeed throughout the world. The result of which, lead to the compounding failures of our agricultural initiatives. Today many young people perceive farming as the employer of the last resort, only for those at the lower level

of society, or retired government officials who have no trading skills or wish to hide their loot in remote areas.

Having realized farmers desire to increase their incomes, our council introduced and supported the farmers in the production of Irish potatoes, Sugarcane, Cassava, and Gum Arabic as part of the government program to improve cash crop production in the state. We worked with the Jigawa State Rural Development Agency to nurture, distribute, and assist Fadama Farmers Associations in the emirate to produce marketable quality and economic quantities of Irish Potatoes, Sugar Cane, and Gum Arabic.

Educational reform

"Anyway, no drug, not even alcohol, causes the fundamental ills of society. If we're looking for the source of our troubles, we shouldn't test people for drugs, we should test them for stupidity, ignorance, greed, and love of power". P J O'Rourke

No area of development in Northern Nigeria requires more urgent attention than in the educational sector. Several educational conferences, seminars call for reform and investment if we are to promote and accelerate our developmental efforts. Education is not only a precondition for economic growth and development but also life-support for human and social development. Education, therefore, constitutes a key element and a major vehicle for modern industrial, agricultural, commercial activities as well as productive and organizational skills that social policy administrators should never ignore.

I, therefore, worked hard to convince the government of the need to pay greater attention to the development of our curriculum in primary and secondary schools to meet the basic needs of traditional and rural population. One of the major successes was allowing our community to establish charter schools that will take care of our immediate needs and to allow the community to run their educational institutions devoid of government control and interference.

My priority after receiving government approval backed by the law establishing Dutse Model primary and secondary including Capital schools was the setting out of the relevant curriculum and the recruitment of professional hands to meet our desired goal. With the support of the government, we recruited twenty-two expatriate teachers and an equivalent number of Nigerian staffs for the three schools under our care.

I also solicited the support of the seven local government councils in my emirate to provide hostel accommodation as well as grant scholarship to deserving female students who could not afford the tuition and boarding fees. Our schools were among the first in the state to offer computer science at various levels of the curriculum. Within the first eight years of our existence, we have withered accusations and innuendos from particularly the ministry of education officials and established solid

academic records that dispel all biases by providing and catering for the needs of all children regardless of social status.

During our period of administration, these schools produced a substantial number of graduates who became real professionals in different fields of endeavor. My daughters and sons were a privileged alumnus of the two schools,

Constitutional reform

"All great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honor, duty, mercy, hope". Winston Churchill

Occasionally I disagreed with my colleagues whether the traditional institution should be given a specific role in the constitution. My argument stems from my belief that the institution has over three centuries developed to an indispensable part of our society, yet several academics and political class believed that the institution has no relevance in today's democratic system, therefore, should not be given any role in our constitution. In my opinion, the reason for this hostility emanates from the nature of our colonial upbringing and our concept of democracy and progress. While in many developed countries of the world constitution reflects as much as possible their cultural and social environment, most developing nations imported the western style of democracy without recourse to their historical or cultural norm.

Our first experiment was with the parliamentary system imported from our colonial masters, and when it failed, we thought of the American model that also did not produce any solution to our endemic tribalism, and religious intolerance. If we have adopted our traditional age long values, create, and modernize our approach to social issues, we might have developed a system that is truly Nigerian or African.

The interplay of culture, tradition, and religion should be the starting point of our efforts to establish a harmonious relationship between the past and the future. We could use the traditional values of our societies to structure our modern political goals. Nigeria is a country of hundreds of different linguistic and cultural groups that have existed as neighbors for centuries even during the slave trade some communities have established ties with one another in protecting its population by promoting interdependency.

Nigeria needs a paradigm shift from believing that the state is the engine through which, society is shaped and transformed rather than being the instrument which society uses to shape and transform. On many occasions, I used my council to articulate socially accepted decisions that help harmonious interaction between different social groups in our society, which could not have succeeded by any legislation.

If we wish for our people meaningful economic development, we must lay an acceptable foundation that serves the interest of all or most of its ethnic constituents and allow reasonable control of local resources. Any constitution that neglects these

realities, will only fuel more suspicions and disharmony between governors and the governed.

Traditional leaders whether recognized by the constitution or not remains the main vehicle to which we could build the various bridges and achieve peace and security in our nation. The destruction of traditional authorities in many parts of Africa was responsible for the horrendous crisis and genocide in Somalia, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and even in Nigeria. A constitution that fails to recognize the importance of traditional leadership and its contributions to the overall development will be a document in futility.

Economic Empowerment

"And still the time, especially in the economy, is very tough, very difficult. It's necessary to be active still, to work, to fight, to make our economy more competitive". Aleksander Kwasniewski

Poverty, whether as a result of relative or absolute deprivation is a major global concern, but if policies or programs are targeted to benefit the poor, it must identify with their needs, outlook, and desires. Nigeria with all its human and material resources ranked among the 10 poorest Nations on earth. This means the great majority of Nigerians could neither afford a balanced diet nor drink potable water. They do not have the money to buy new clothing or afford to rent permanent shelter. They have no access to proper healthcare, let alone afford to pay school fees for their children. They have no electricity in their homes and could not afford a means of transport. They have no regular and sustainable employment to enable them to obtain credit facilities.

Although poverty is not necessarily gendering wise, women population makes most of the poor in Nigeria. Women in African societies have their roles defined as cooks, producers of children, and above all unequal partners. Some people argue that poverty in Nigeria cuts across gender, urban and rural dwellers and therefore, micro-credit programs should target not only the gender poor. It is not surprising therefore that most, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Government micro-credit programs target women as the most desirable beneficiaries.

If we define poverty in its general terms of low living standard devoid of all access to basic needs that are essential for human existence such as enough food, water, shelter, clothing, education, and health care; we can comfortably say the starting point for any poverty eradication program is to examine our economic, educational, and social policies that discriminate against the poor.

Several poverty programs created by NGOs and Governments to alleviate the sufferings and misery afflicting the poor; treat all levels of poverty in the same manner. But not all poor are the same as poverty has different levels and require different solutions. Some of the poor need only access to micro-credit, while others need the skill to get out of the poverty bondage. Neglecting the various levels of

needs, desires, and outlook of the poor was responsible for the failure of our poverty alleviation policies today. Despite these serious lapses, on the part of policymakers and or managers of poverty alleviation, the issue of sustainable development of the individual, family, and community everyone agrees is the starting point for meaningful success.

Qualitative poverty assessments (Talakawa Summit) undertaken by Governor Sule Lamido recently, indicate that finance alone could not solve poverty, but could be used to build on poverty alleviation programs. The Poor not only lack money and tangible assets: but also, psychologically very insecure and exposed to all kinds of risks, that makes them dependent on other people's decisions. The positive side of the Talakawa Summit was the candid views expressed by the poor themselves that given the opportunity they are equally dynamic and innovative.

My experience of living and study in advanced countries has given me the opportunity to analyze the basis and causes of poverty. My assessment leads me to conclude the difference between developed rich countries and the underdeveloped poor ones is not the age, natural resources, racial origins, or climatic conditions of those nations, but rather the attitude of its people molded by their culture and education.

Beliefs are the basic ingredients that guide people to behave in a particular manner be it religious, cultural or civic responsibilities. I was astonished to find how different my ethical values as a Muslim Nigerian are from my nominal Christian host family in the US and UK. Their respect for laws and regulations, work ethics, punctuality, and productivity far exceed what obtained in my culture and country. The orientation to be punctual and be productive in these countries is taught to children from early childhood through retirement, unlike in my culture where time is what is convenient and the motivation to be productive is nonexistent.

The transition from poor underdevelopment to rich developed nationhood must, therefore, be accomplished through conscious efforts to develop individual minds towards attitudinal change. Superstition, laziness, and idleness must give way for pragmatism, active lifestyle and innovation for any nation to make the transformation. Unless these basic principles are achieved, we shall remain the poor and underdeveloped country.

Primary Healthcare Services

"A good conscience is to the soul what health is to the body; it preserves constant ease and serenity within us, and more than countervails all the calamities and afflictions which can befall us from without". Joseph Addison

In the poorest regions of the world, an estimated one in five children will not live to see their fifth birthday, primarily because of environment-related diseases. This tragedy translates into 11 million childhood deaths a year worldwide, mostly due to

malaria, acute respiratory infections or diarrhea, all of which are largely preventable. Official attitude towards administration of vaccines has previously created public suspicions as to the efficacy of the vaccines and the intentions of the donor advanced countries. Many People in the Muslim world including northern Nigeria see the efforts of the developed nations as a great contradiction. On the one hand, they are against population explosion in the third world, and on the other spending huge resources to support population explosion in third world nations.

The cause of many environmental conditions that affect health emanates from reckless use of natural resources by the developed countries. They must show leadership in reducing carbon emissions, the use of certain chemicals if environmental health problems are to be addressed. The salient message of responsible health care delivery system is to prevent rather than simply treating diseases and ailments after they have occurred.

Governments' health care agencies, policy-making groups, private businesses, communities, and individuals nationwide should ensure responsible use of natural resources to avert significant health problems and its economic consequences.

Efficacy of Polio Vaccines Controversy

"A man is not rightly conditioned until he is a happy, healthy, and prosperous being; and happiness, health, and prosperity are the result of a harmonious adjustment of the inner with the outer of the man with his surroundings". James Allen

The controversy of the efficacy of the poliovirus vaccine started because of the dreaded meningitis vaccine trial by Pfizer, which claims several lives, of children in Kano. My brother's child who was given the dose of such a trial vaccine lost his hearing and several other children of his age lost their sights. It was a great disaster that people who witnessed the happenings became skeptical of any form of vaccination.

I was not in any doubt of the efficacy of the polio vaccine until when I received an email and a book criticizing its efficacy by linking it several side effects including infertility. The report also indicated its contents that include tissues of primates and other animals. I was convinced that the report was written as a result of a highly researched investigation. I ordered my people not to accept the vaccine until we investigate the genuineness of the report. Through investigations, I came across an accomplished university Professor in pharmacology Dr. Kaita from Ahmadu Bello University who confirms my fears. He suggested some sites and sent me several works of literature including his own regarding the efficacy of the oral vaccine, which was banned in the United States many years back.

I discussed these issues with colleagues who had earlier on brought the issue to our Council of Chiefs and later to JNl meetings. He raised our awareness to the extent that we were ready for a confrontation with the government to save our children and

their future. I fully supported the idea that government has a responsibility to safeguard its citizens particularly after the Pfizer episode in Kano. When WHO team visited my palace on advocacy tour, I reiterated the point to them that while we believe in the ability of the UN to protect humankind from the vagaries of capitalism, the individual countries need to prove the efficacies of any drug imported into its territory. I refused to accept any explanation from any group including the Minister of Health and Dr. Awosika the head of federal Government vaccination team until they agree to allow a full investigation into the serious allegations against the vaccine.

The issue was referred to JNI, by the Federal Government, who arranged a hastily visit South Africa, India, and Indonesia of selected members who unfortunately had no medical training or experience on the issue confounded my suspicion. They returned with a conflicting report, which further heightened our resolve to fight for a true assessment. The debate of polio vaccine divided the JNI into two camps of pro and against the vaccine. Several reasons were advanced by anti-oral vaccine team, including why not Malaria? Which kills millions of Nigerians as against polio that only disables its victims? While this debate was going on, the Sultan of Sokoto nominated me to represent Jigawa in the National Traditional Rulers Council on Health.

This appointment provided me an opportunity to assess the contending issues and accept the official and true explanation for its desirability. I approached the State Government to intervene in the issue by placing orders of its own vaccine from a Muslim country and to include regular vaccinations in their programs to end the logjam. The government released 27million Naira to the Ministry of Health to import safe vaccines for use in our state. I worked with the various stakeholders to ensure that the vaccine was administered to our children as the previous fears were averted. I allowed my children to receive the dozes as an example of my commitment to the eradication of polio in our state.

Within two years, we recorded tremendous success in the administration of the poliovirus vaccine resulting in substantial reduction in wild polio cases within the emirate and the State. In places where the community or individual household rejects the vaccine, I ordered the village and ward heads to ensure compliance.

Technology and Society

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So, throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore dreams". Mark Twain

The major appeal of modern science lies in the development of applied technology that shapes our lifestyles, making life more enjoyable and less tedious. I was born in the dynamic century when powered light, telephones, paperclips, X-rays, the Model

T car, vaccines, lasers, television, transistors, word processors, artificial hearts, Concorde, zippers, plastics, filmless cameras, Sputnik, contact lenses, jet engines, vacuum cleaners, radar, pneumatic tires, penciling, oil rigs, light bulbs, nylon, robots, detergents, land reclamation, plastic surgery, foam rubber, holograms, space shuttle, cellular phones, and many other inventions changed not only the way we work in our offices, homes, factories, hospitals, farmlands, battlefields, sky, and oceans but also shaped our psyche, culture, and religious beliefs. I have in my lifetime witnessed an explosion of human ingenuity that was beyond the comprehension of my grandparents. Science and technology have made it possible for me to make the transition from primitive to modern lifestyle. Even my fathers' generation has seen the world transformed more than the past 70,000 years when mankind first learned to use tools and light fires.

There is no doubt, technology is increasingly important in the modern world. Its amazing development, however, has been a major source of concern for our spiritual as well as social well-being. Although most of the existing technologies or inventions were designed to expedite the way we think, manage, store, handle, analyze, communicate, and handle our lives, the obvious misuse of some technologies has raised serious ethical questions that even their positive results practically serve no useful purpose.

The quest for a human to want to discover and improve about almost everything leads to the rapid development of science and technology at an incomprehensible speed that makes censorship impracticable. Great achievements recorded in technologies particularly in communication, health, agriculture, education, industry, and space travel have indeed made life much more interesting, yet ethical issues raised by some advancement such as cloning, organ and tissue transplant, weapons of mass destruction, pesticides, emission of gases, nuclear, cellular phones, satellite television, and many others have in reality made the future of our civilization quite uncertain.

In my University days, computer technology has limited applications and its size in relation to its memory makes it cumbersome to produce quick solutions to simple programs. Punch cards must be typed, arranged, and loaded on to the computer in serial order to produce simple calculations as against what could easily be achieved with handheld calculators of today. Bush radios have been replaced by transistors, film cameras by digital, manual automobiles by automatics, black and white television by plasma, analog wristwatch by chips, the examples are too numerous within the space of a century.

Unfortunately, our society and culture have imprisoned our thoughts, our minds, and our intellects to remain perpetual consumers of technology, not its creator. We have created a condition of rewarding the least contributors to society over and above the engines of development. Our university professors earn less than a local government

chairman, our specialist doctors earn less than local government councilors, our engineers earn less than a local party chairman, our economists earn less than a petty trader and our architects earn less than a local contractor.

If our society is to become relevant in creating and shaping our future, we must promote and reward scholarship, hard work, honesty, integrity, and compassion. We must try and adapt technologies to suit our needs not shape our needs to adapt to technological development. It is time to wake up from slumber and stop lamenting about the past or present in order not to miss the future. I am sixty-four when I wrote this sentence and may not live to see remarkable changes made either in our behavior, or in our determination to be in the forefront of technological know-how, but our children can start from now and make a brand-new ending.

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