

Illegitimacy of Capital Punishment: Its Unethical Contemporary Resurgence in Igboland, Nigeria.

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Abstract

Murder was proscribed even as a retaliatory measure as Gen 4:15 cautions: “if any one kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over”. This divine injunction was re-enforced by the Decalogue’s “You shall not kill” (Ex 20:13) as handed to Moses. Igbo ancestral heritage preserved a similar ethical value as it made Igbo hospitality part of a cherished religiosity. Murder was absolutely forbidden. Blood is considered the principle of life and therefore sacred. Any offender who lets blood must be compelled to placate the goddess of the land or face banishment. The Nigerian-Biafra War incidentally allowed the practice of Jungle Justice whereby infiltrators were instantly killed. Hitherto, robbers like infiltrators receive death sentence from the mob that have lost faith in both the police and the judiciary. The police allegedly connive with robbers, ally with the judiciary, and intimidate people –acts reminiscent of power misuse that makes them lose their ethical relevance. The mob usurps power to rid the society of bandits before they escape. This contemporary societal cleansing clashes with the original ethical position of Igbo people on capital punishment as it enshrines jungle justice despite the intervention of Mary Slessor. This effort calls on Igbo people to control the prevalence of Jungle Justice. It calls on the police to sit up and beckons on all to be guided by the index of a developing society. Nigeria cannot be developing when a segment of the total polity still remain wolves to fellow humans.

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Introduction

The biblical narrative after Adam and Eve's dismissal from the Garden of Eden presented Cain as being furious and hostile to his brother – Abel, on account of God's rejection of his (Cain's) offering and acceptance of Abel's. The anger which arose out of this rejection led Cain into fratricide (Gen 4:3-8). Had Cain no other alternative to improve his economy; and how did he economically and socially thrive after he eliminated his brother, Abel? What offence did Abel commit to merit death by Cain's judgment? God's reaction stood out and remains a paradigm in the determination of sentences to murder cases. Igbo ethos does not welcome incidents of murder. Igbo traditional wisdom folk-tale built within the animal-world portrays the protection offered to the chicken by the tortoise when the former was chased by a fox as a predator. It was once said that the hungry fox searched for a prey but could only sight a chicken wandering far around the tortoise's house. It made for the chicken but by some instinct the chicken dived into the tortoise's house and begged for immediate protection before the fox's arrival. The tortoise quickly hid the chicken in a basket at a corner. The fox suddenly rushed into the tortoise's house and inquired of the chicken it saw around the house. The tortoise in response said that it would be better to consult a fortune-teller to be sure of the chicken in question. A fortune-teller was invited by the tortoise. As he came, he divined to the hearing of the tortoise, the fox and the chicken that "that chicken *abughi anu oriri*", i.e. is not an edible for the fox. The fox with all its power understood the amphiboly as meaning that the chicken is not edible but the fortune teller meant that that chicken is under an astute custodian.

In the light of the introductory biblical reference it becomes pertinent to address any unpleasant incident in Igboland which clashes against the regulation on murder especially in the contemporary Igbo society. Even in the animal world, the feeble ones are protected from ferocious ones. Has the modern age any reason to embark on a "tooth for tat" rather than fine-tuning the culture with Christian elements? It will be necessary to know from where the society lost its bearing, how our culture started to assimilate unusual trends, and the way out of the phenomenon.

The Meanders of Capital Punishment

Capital punishment is the execution of a criminal convicted of a crime. About the 18th century in England it was meted out for a vast number of crimes particularly for those against property. According to the records of The New Encyclopedia Britannica (1994), by 1970, death had been eliminated as a statutory punishment in many countries including Portugal, Denmark, Venezuela, Austria, Brazil, Switzerland, and Great Britain except for treason and piracy. In U.S., the Supreme Court ruled in 1972 for the unconstitutionality of Capital Punishment but a later Supreme Court ruled for the constitutionality of Capital Punishment as life imprisonment would not be effective as a deterrent against crimes. The opposite school of thought, however, maintained that innocent persons were often executed on account of errors of justice. All countries have not specifically opted for or against Capital Punishment.

The Right to Punish

The authority to punish solely belongs to God as the source of authorities. Human law-makers only partake of God's legislative authority and in some measure have the right to punish. According to Evans L., (1981) all societies bound together by laws and norms can exercise the right to punish transgressors. In most early legal codes, the penalties are those of death, torture, mutilation, exile, the deprivation of civil rights or of

property. In most primitive societies they condescend to the *lex talionis* (Ex 21:28-37)-“an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”. Traditionally, the purpose of punishment had been for prevention, deterrence, and reform. Punishment as retributive involves pain; it is an evil that the offender suffers against his will. It is meant to curb the offender the instincts of committing the offence again. Any punishment, said Bentham J., (1948) is in itself evil because it inflicts suffering and pain. At the same time, the object which all laws have in common is to augment the total happiness of the community. Punishment must not add extra lots of pain to the community. For Evans, punishment should aim at the reformation of the offender’s own life. It may sometimes not be adequate; for it is impossible to make any compensation for a life that has been destroyed by a murderer. Even the murderer’s execution cannot adequately match the moral iniquity of the offence. All punishment must seek in its measure to arouse a comparable hope otherwise it would simply be vindictive and mere affliction of pain. Punishment might not fit the crime but it should attempt to fit the criminal. It is difficult to find a moral equation between bodily suffering and moral guilt. That explains why Aristotle (Book Two) says that punishment is a kind of remedial treatment and must be a contrary of what it cures.

Capital Punishment

Three basic views on capital punishment according to Geisler (2010) consist (1) reconstructionism which insists on death sentence for all serious crimes, (2) rehabilitationism which would not allow it for any crime, (3) retributionism which recommends death for capital crimes. Capital punishment has metamorphosed into (life)-imprisonment in many countries that do not uphold the system. Imprisonment which is dissociation from the immediate society remains a form of exile for the offender so that the society would be rid of criminals. For Evans L., the use of prisons as a place of punishment is relatively modern. It is supposedly derived from a religious sense of “seclusion as an opportunity for the contemplation of one’s sins” in the 19th century. Prison, in this respect, is a place where one is prepared for some responsibility. In effect, one is being prepared to be better behaved in any opportune society. The question that must be answered is whether one can be trained for freedom in a condition of captivity? No matter the proper response to this question, the security of the society remains paramount and argues for being remanded in such captivity. The prison remains the proper place of the criminal. Pius XII (1955) sees the prison as purposeful as the punishment makes the offender to return through repentance and expiation to the state of liberation. The seclusion brings back the violator of the law into the order of duty from where he withdraws himself. The offender must welcome what his deeds deserve through the justice of utilitarian ethics. For Bentham J., (1948) there is a justification for punishment through which the greatest good for the greatest number is most effectively secured.

Zero Tolerance to Capital Punishment in Igbo Outlook

Ilogu E. (1986) assembled 24 injunctions and prohibitions which regulate morality in Igboland. Interestingly, none as at now attracts any capital punishment. They are:

1. Stealing of yams either from the barn or from the farm.
2. Homicide.
3. Incest.
4. A freeman (diala) having sexual relationship with an Osu (an outcaste), or spending the night especially with the Osu in his or her house.
5. Suicide, especially by hanging.
6. Poisoning someone with the intention of taking his or her life secretly.
7. Theft of domestic fowls especially a hen in her hatching pot where she can easily be taken along with her eggs.
8. A woman climbing a palm tree or kolanut tree, especially if she does so with a climbing belt (ete).
9. Theft of any kind committed by an Ozo titled man.
10. Adultery by a wife.
11. A wife throwing her husband down on the ground in the course of a domestic row.
12. Deliberately killing or eating any totem animal... Totem animals include the sacred or royal python, sacred cows, goats or rams associated in one form or another with the community's origins or destiny.
13. Deliberately cutting the tendrils of young, growing yams in another's farm.
14. Secretly altering land boundaries, especially during the night.
15. Willful arson.
16. Divulging the identity of the masquerade – especially if the offender is a woman.
17. A woman breaking confinement by cooking and serving meals during her menstrual period, especially if the husband is an Ozo titled man.
18. A widow having sexual relationship while still in the period of mourning her dead husband.
19. Dying a “bad death” i.e. death resulting from an infectious disease like leprosy or smallpox, or dying within one year having sworn an oath. Perjury in traditional society is akin to the biblical unforgivable sin and anyone guilty of it was denied the normal courtesies of mourning or a decent burial.
20. A cock crowing at an awkward time in the night i.e. between the hours of 8 pm and 5 a.m. which was supposed to be the business time of the spirits and the ancestors. It is the height of impudence to disturb them.
21. A husband deliberately breaking or throwing away his wife's utensils.
22. A woman giving birth to twins. (This has for long ceased.)
23. A baby being delivered with “feet first” rather than “head first”.
24. An infant cutting the upper teeth first.

It is necessary to note from the above that the long Igbo tradition forbids premeditated murder. It can be recalled that the sixteen year old-son of Ezeudu inadvertently killed by Okonkwo as the latter's gun exploded when he was dancing a traditional farewell at the very funeral ceremony of Ezeudu remained a case in point. Uchendu, Okonkwo's living maternal uncle was certainly disturbed over the child's death but following the customs of the ancestors he was relieved of a terrible consequence. In his words, “It is a female *ochu*” as Achebe C. (1986:91) classified it. Achebe C. (1986:158) translated “*ochu* as murder or manslaughter”. At any rate, no matter inadvertent, the offence has

its punitive sanction because it is a crime against “the earth-goddess to kill a clansman” and any man who commits it must “flee from the land” according to Achebe (1986: 87). Okonkwo, the inadvertent killer, suffered other inconveniences apart from the traditionally automatic imposed exile. The exile must last for 7 years. To cleanse the land Okonkwo had polluted with the blood of a kinsman, his house should be demolished with his animals and barns destroyed. As Achebe C. (Achebe: 87) presented the tradition in this way: “if the clan did not exert punishment for the offence against the great goddess, her wrath was loosed on all the land and not just on the offender”.

Significant is the stress on exile and immediate departure, as Okonkwo had no option but to ‘flee from the clan’. Could he not have chosen to commit suicide? That would have been worse as his diseased body wouldn’t be buried by the clansmen, according to the tradition. Nothing hinders one from interpreting the exilic situation or his foreign confinement as “prison par excellence” even in that traditional sense. It means that apart from the walls confining one, one can also be confined in another environment without interactions with fellow clansmen. Such traditional prison had been operative to seclude, protect and reform people towards a better behavior. That is for the female *ochu*. Achebe C. demonstrates the cases of male *ochu* as featured in Ikemefuna and Oduche’s deaths. The murderer must also flee. After purposely killing Oduche in the course of the land dispute, Aneto was in readiness to flee before he was caught by the “*kotma*” of the “white man” according to Achebe C. (1986:125). It implies that having fled, culprits may reduce tensions between conflicting parties in the case of a female *ochu*. The duration of the fleeing does not just placate the land goddess or make up for the crime for premeditated murders. That explains why the culprits property should as well be destroyed. If we were to ask whether the *lex talionis* is being applied by the Christian Igbo race; the answer can be found in this Igbo proverb: *ihe ruo na ito otokiri*, meaning – “after the third count, – an action must be taken”. The Igbo person will forgive on several counts, but when taken for granted (and that is the third count), he may likely voice out. Lk 6:29 demands the offer of the other cheek when someone hits the other side of the cheek but to hit thrice would necessitate the sale of one’s coat for “whoever has no sword must sell his coat and buy one” (Lk 22:36) as the need calls for it. The Igbo practice of three offences finds some justification in this sword-analogy. An insistence on fleeing supports the Igbo man’s aversion to capital punishment. The culprit is offered an opportunity to flee which is equivalent to self-imprisonment. One must not indulge in criminal acts. The latter promotes the case of multiple physical assaults which indeed was the outright cause of the Nigeria-Biafra War. When both cheeks are battered, the situation goes beyond “turning the other cheek” and calls for selling the coat to buy swords. Achebe C. (2012:84) spoke profusely on the necessity to react over such consistent provocations. In his words:

“... the Northerners turned on Igbo civilians living in the North and unleashed waves of brutal massacres that Colin Legum of *The Observer* (UK) was the first to describe as a pogrom. Thirty thousand civilian men and women and children were slaughtered, hundreds of thousands were wounded, maimed and violated, their homes and property looted and burned – and no one asked questions”. Such acts fall under premeditated murders and cases that the Igbo people by tradition are forbidden to be involved in. When provoked beyond the traditional count, a reaction is supposed to follow. The situation for selling coats to buy swords came. Ordinarily the tradition does not hand down a verdict of capital punishment as a reprisal. The reason thereof is because blood should not be let since it is not only precious but sacred. For this reason, Achebe (1986:40) made Ogbuefi Ezeudu to warn Okonkwo not to participate in the killing of

the ‘boy that calls him father’. It could be argued traditionally that the way Okonkwo died by suicide was a repercussion of his violation of that tradition never to kill a clan’s man, not to talk of the one that calls him “father”.

The Contemporary Outlook

The respect to Igbo tradition seems to be giving way as tempers rise on account of certain situations just as the modern Igbo society questions the rationale behind certain customs and traditions. Surprisingly, as the modern society questions ancient improper customs as killing of twins which is an aspect of killing clansmen, the society embarks on what has been formerly accepted as jungle justice- an instant verdict of capital punishment declared on a culprit on account of a certain misdeed. An examination of the ancient ritual killing of twins will betray the senselessness of the system and how its insistence debunks Igbo people’s traditional non-tolerance of capital punishment. How can a tradition pre-condemn an unborn child to death and still washes its hands clean from the scenario of capital punishment? How can a custom pledge absolute loyalty to a goddess that continuously claims the innocent lives of children? The modern society has certainly exposed the error of the ancient custom but has erratically fallen into another blunder whose consequence is equally fatal. Our modern society proffers reasons for behaving the way it does, namely (a) the government agencies like the police and the judiciary have become so corrupt that they misuse the power invested on them to sanitize the society. (b) The more the society permits the situation, the more the society becomes insecure. In its judgment, jungle justice becomes the plausible alternative to take the bull by the horn.

The Killing of Twins

It must be said immediately that the killing of twins was not an Igbo cosmic phenomenon. It prevailed predominantly within Arochukwu and Ibibio-Efik areas. That twins must be killed as obtained within these enclaves should be traced back to the superstitious rootedness of those people. The towns upheld the belief that twins were evil and must not be allowed to live. Arochukwu people and those of their environs believed that Chukwu-Ibinukpabi, the supreme God abhorred twins. With this erroneous assumption, twin babies were sentenced to death as soon as they leave their mothers’ womb. They wondered how humans could resemble lower animals like dogs, goats, cats and chickens to reproduce multiple births. Such a resemblance was considered an aberration of nature and therefore evil. For these animists, God is said to have created one man and one woman at each point in creation. Onukwube O. (2010) infers that families of twins were even looked at with suspicion. The families were reduced to the status of ‘ohu’- people whose ancestors were slaves. A man whose wife has given birth to twins was regarded as an outcast, a harbinger of evil and bad luck. Whoever accepted twins accepted bad luck. As a measure to sustain any of the slaves, families who were favoured with the phenomenon of twins had often killed one under the pretext that the mother gave birth to a single baby.

An Oversight of Mary Slessor’s Intervention

Mary Slessor (1848-1915), of the United Presbyterian Church denomination came from Aberdeen – Scotland. She was very much touched by her mother’s stories on the prevailing cruel-some killing of twins in Igboland. She later convinced her father (Robert) that she would embark on a mission to dissuade the killers from such savagery. She was approved by the Mission Board of the United Presbyterian. She had to fight obnoxious notions of the native people about twins. The natives believed that twins

could not go to Chukwu, the supreme deity whose oracle is in Arochukwu. Twins were banned from entering *ulo-nta* ceremony, the stool of the ancient Aro kindred where only true sons of Aro are allowed to attend. Twins were regarded as the work of the devil as God created only one man and one woman at a time. According to Onukwube O. (2010), discrimination against twins in Arochukwu has been abolished. Sequel to Mary Slessor's effort to abolish the killing of twins, there were rites of cleansing through which twins were accepted back into the community and consequently allowed to enter the *ulo-nta*. The ritual cleansing is indicative of Mary Slessor's successful evangelization mission. The adoption of cleansing became the fruit of the mission. By implication, the god – Chukwu Ibinaukpabi has been appeased to accept other ritual offerings in exchange for twins. Mary Slessor's additional success, simply put, is the abrogation of the necessity of the rite and restoration of the integrity of twins in the society. Chukwu-Ibinaukpabi is only a fiction and twins had been executed for what did not exist. Parents of twins who were denied traditional titles because of parenting twins were as well permitted to take such titles through the ritual cleansing. A celebrated instance was the rite of *eze-ogo* conferred on Joseph Okereke Ukwereyi of Amangu village in Arochukwu. At the 14th year of his twins he was not denied of the traditional benefits. If there was still discrimination, he wouldn't have been chosen. "The *eze-ogo* is the highest office in the village. What Joseph did was to pass through that traditional cleansing" according to the narrative of Onukwube O.(2010)

Modern Igbo history is relieved when one observes that such discrimination against twins does not exist any longer, even in Arochukwu. In the eyes of Uweh A., (2013) killing of twins has been abolished and only exists in the imagination. When one recalls the Igbo people's natural hospitality, the *umunna bu ike* popularity and the general predominant Igbo Christian faith and praxis, it becomes embarrassing that such barbaric acts as extra-judicial killings in the form of jungle justice should rear up its ugly head when the killing of twins which is equal to fratricide had been totally overcome.

Jungle Justice.

Jungle justice does not defy definition but it is better demonstrated than defined. It is a form of punishment usually meted out by an angry mob on alleged offenders. The mob passes its judgment in response to a certain raised alert indicative of an on-going gross misconduct or public misdeed perpetrated against the innocent. Punishment here should be seen as a penalty inflicted for an offence, fault or immoral behavior. Two basic schools of thought emerge on the concept of punishment. Utilitarianism holds that punishment serves as a deterrent. In essence, no punishment is inflicted on account of the crime that has been committed. Punishment, therefore forestalls a future repetition of the crime. Retributive school of thought holds that punishment is justifiable because the offender must be made to pay for his crimes based on the philosophy of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Indeed, the evil man must reap what he sows. The unjust must not go unpunished. This school of thought sees punishment as a right of the offender to be punished accordingly. The retributive school insists on the punishment now while the utilitarian school insists on the necessity of the punishment to curb off future occurrence. In both, punishment must prevail but none specified the magnitude of the punishment. This is where the application of jungle justice errs because it misappropriates a state power in the determination of a death sentence. State power even is not absolute, according to Peschke (1978). The mob means well to sanitize the society but the philosophy of 'suspects must die' is an appropriation of power. The police and the justice system should be reformed. If punishment deters crimes, it must

be proportional to the offence. The punishments that are jungle justice oriented are never proportional to the crimes.

The Spread and Versions of Jungle Justice

Jungle justice is wide-spread and has even become an international phenomenon – no more an event confined to developing countries. It is observed in Nigeria, in South Africa and even in U.S.A. There are many forms of Jungle Justice: the suspect can be instantly burnt alive, the lucky ones are brutally undressed and made to walk home, some are asked to drink crude oil, acid or whatever form of fatal concoctions. They can instantly be beaten to death, stoned to death or beheaded; all are done under the public gaze. Die-hard criminals who defy burning-flames are compelled to submit to decapitation. Rarely are the suspects buried by the mob. Any attempt to provide a rescue when once the mob builds would result to the death of the rescuer. Even the soldiers become helpless when the mob builds up as they can be accused of colluding with the suspects.

Sample Verdicts of Jungle Justice

(1) A young man met his sad demise for actually stealing a necklace. He was repeatedly hit with all sorts of implements and later had broken bones before suffering the slow agonizing death by burning. The worst aspect of this public lynching is that in a mob of 60, probably only 3 were affected by the victim's misdeed. The other 57 were only blind sheep, thirsting for blood, just because someone pointed at the victim and shouted "Ole" i.e. thief/robber. (Siena, Aug 08, 2011 <http://www.nairaland.com/729172/jungle-justice-it-justifiable>)

(2) A gruesome video surfaced a mob inserting broken bottle into the genitalia of a woman stripped naked over alleged stealing of pepper after some men raped her with sticks repeatedly. Friday, 6 December 2013. (<http://www.allaroundgist.com/search/label/jungle%20justice>)

(3) The burning of the 4 UNIPORT students (5/10/13): Chiadika Lordson, Ugonna Kelechi Obusor, Mike Lloyd Toku, Tekena Elkanah. Ibisoba Elkanah, a sister of one of the four UNIPORT students brutally murdered in Umuokiri village, Aluu, Rivers State, narrated how her younger brother and his friends were lynched as some law enforcement agents bore witness as the biblical Saul and only shouted "burn them alive". The allegation was that they were strangers who aimed at stealing laptops and phones that belonged to their friend that raised the false alarm. The truth of the matter was that they went to recover a certain amount of money owed to them by one Coxson Lelebori Lucky alias "Bright" who raised the false alarm. At the end of the day, the Inspector General of Police –Mohammed Abubakar cleared the 4 slain UNIPORT students of armed robbery. (<http://www.facebook.com/JungleJusticeMustStopInNigeria>) (<http://bbc.in/QdxD6D>)

(4) The Nigerian Police is not left out of this imbroglio. The officers were recently reported to have become something else. A police officer currently at large killed a 21 year old okada (tri-cycle) rider by name Kunle who was out of school due to ASUU strike for disobeying the ban on okada. The incident happened in Ikorodu. (<http://www.allaroundgist.com/search/label/jungle%20justice>)

Analyses of Samples

In all the four samples, one can read how the dreadful cankerworm of extra judicial killings has eaten deep into the fabrics of the Nigerian society. To curb it out is the task that stares the country at the face. Jungle justice has debased Nigerians to a primitive

level that cannot be contrasted with the happenings at our ancestral era when twins were abhorred and killed. Whose deeds could be said to be more monstrous: the act of killing twins or that of jungle-justice? Numerically, only twins were killed but with this generation in question, jungle-justice cuts across tribe, gender and age.

In our first sample, it beats anyone's imagination to experience how life could be lost because of necklace. The mob has no conscience and cannot be trusted with any valid sense of justice.

In the 2nd scenario one readily encounters masculine gender suppression with an entertainment of sadism. Both are existent in the society and need to be curbed. To spread pepper all over someone's body cannot be explained through any other way. The insertion of the broken bottle into the genitalia is only slow murder which in no way is proportional to any theft of pepper, no matter the quantity.

The 3rd sample exemplifies the in-thing for which jungle-justice should be abrogated. More often than not innocent people are caught and killed only to be declared innocent by the very agency that witnessed the unholy mob sentence.

The Nigerian Police is conniving with jungle-justice perpetrators otherwise they cannot lack the sufficient tear-gas to disperse the mob whenever they tend to surge together for such nefarious exercises.

The Current Societal Feelings On Jungle Justice

The following questionnaire was presented to various people of varying age and mixed intelligence for the purpose of determining a possible prevailing judgment on the dominance of jungle-justice in Nigeria.

Jungle Justice Questionnaire

Jungle justice by definition is a form of punishment usually meted out by an angry mob on alleged offenders. The mob passes its judgment in response to a certain raised alert indicative of an on-going gross misconduct or public misdeed perpetrated against the innocent. Jungle justice generally aims at removing the life of the criminal as the only way of sanitizing the society.

In your opinion, should jungle justice be allowed, () ignored () or enforced()? Yes or No.

If you favour any, state your
reason(s):.....

.....
.....

If you do not favour any, state your reason(s)

The questionnaire opened the eyes of many to the thinking of the society over the prevalent jungle-justice. Out of 400 responses, 205 still favoured the continuity of jungle justice and appealed that the phenomenon should be enforced. They see no chance of justice in the police and the Nigerian judicial system.

145 were opposed the relevance of jungle justice. 50 pleaded that the phenomenon should be ignored. Those that wish jungle justice to be allowed argued from the standpoint of the ineptitude of the police force. Those who opposed the continuity of the phenomenon saw the practice as brutal, and a reliving of the detested Roman horrifying scenario at the amphitheater. Those that argued that it should be ignored accuse the police of sponsoring its abrogation so that they may perpetrate further evil as they support obvious culprits.

Analysis

A critical insight on jungle justice challenges the country's justice system just as it threatens the innocent and shocks the passers-by. The public dread the treatment meted to fellow humans but as soon as they challenge their reasoning they begin to feel the necessity of extra judicial killings as it remains the only option to sanitize the society given the alternatives of the present moment to safe-guard the lives and property of the helpless citizens who struggle on daily basis without any government support to make economic ends meet. The figures are indicative of the gross task of Human Right in the country. It highlights the long way ahead to ensure a total eradication of jungle justice. It speaks clearly on the uphill task facing the Nigeria police if it may ever reclaim its image towards a proper functioning of the country's justice system.

Conclusion

It has become evident that capital punishment was from the beginning unquestionably intolerable on the basis of the divine declaration from the offence of Cain. Primitive beliefs on gods and goddesses prevailed on people to seek for protection through extermination of twins considered to be unnatural. The eventual intervention of Mary Slessor brought about a new order as it promoted and injected a new insight into the rights of twins. This is corroborated by the Igbo traditional custom that certainly frowned at murder or retaliatory killing as in the cases of Okonkwo and Aneto respectively. How can jungle justice remain valid after the civil-war? A lot of things came and went with the war: acceptance of lizards as possible delicacies, consumption of cassava leaves as proper vegetables, the sales of unrefined salt from Ibru, suspicion of persons as infiltrators and many more. All these are gone but jungle justice that took root in the civil war remains unabated within our culture and society, in our villages, towns, and cities. As the war has truly ended, all war fronts and war distasteful hangovers should also end. It cannot be allowed further because of certain anomalies observed with some enforcement agencies since it is unjust in itself. Those agencies should rather be looked into and their deficiencies addressed, as the continuity of jungle justice remains a misuse of security outfit.

Recommendations

- (1) Offenders, culprits or even criminals should not be brutalized, tortured, or humiliated even by the law enforcement agents before authorized judicial hearing as that would be equivalent to jungle justice.
- (2) The law enforcement agents should be equipped with the wherewithal to effectively combat those who still indulge in these menaces. They should adopt strategies to arrest specific people who perpetrate and sustain jungle justice in cities and the sub-orbs. These should be punished as subverting government's norms and directives.
- (3) The government should publicly enact a law banning the public from participating in any act of jungle-justice. This law should also restrict any must be so because the silence of any government bodies means a direct consent to the evil.
- (4) The government should do all it takes to restore credibility to the nation's police force and judicial system, much as jungle justice is barbaric, illegal, wicked, uncivilized and unacceptable.

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