

RELIGION AND LITERATURE AS INSTRUMENTS FOR NATIONAL RE-ORIENTATION AND TRANSFORMATION IN A DEMOCRATIZED NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria, like many other democratic countries of the world, cannot ignore the potentiality, the efficacy, and usefulness of religion and literature to translate any society, instill morals, and develop its economy, education, and culture. Therefore, this paper is poised to examine how religion and literature serve as the wheel of progress to be employed for re-orientation and transformation of both the populace and leaders to handle a fragile democracy such as ours in Nigeria. However, these 'machineries' (Religion and literature), if consciously and meticulously studied by the political actors, it will make Nigeria one of the most successful countries of our dream. Moreover, no country can grow above its educated elite. Therefore, any country that desires growth must take the education sector very seriously by making adequate provisions for it to succeed. The study concludes that the tenets of religion in a country like Nigeria that is known for its religiosity must be made to have positive impact on the leadership and the citizenry. The findings made certain recommendations that can help both the leaders and the citizens on what to do to ensure a better society.

Nigeria's democratic experiment faces persistent challenges, including corruption, poor leadership, and moral decay. Therefore, this paper is poised to examine how religion and literature can serve as instruments for national re-orientation and transformation in a democratized Nigeria. Using qualitative textual analysis of selected biblical passages, Qur'anic teachings, and African literary works (including Sony Labou Tansi's *La Vie et Demie*, Sembene Ousmane's

Xala, and Lenrie Peters' "Lost Friends"), the study analyzes how religious tenets and literary narratives can reshape citizens' values and leaders' conduct. Key findings reveal that: (1) despite Nigeria's high religiosity, religious principles are inconsistently applied in governance; (2) African literature consistently critiques the "winner-takes-all" democratic model; (3) religious leaders currently have no formal advisory role in Nigeria's secular democracy. The study recommends constitutional provisions for religious advisory slots, prescribed individual oath-taking, gender balance in governance, and legal sanctions for corrupt citizens who enable embezzlement. The paper concludes that re-orientation and transformation require both leaders and citizens to internalize servant-leadership principles drawn from religious and literary sources.

Keywords: Religion, Literature, National Re-Orientation, Transformation, Democracy.

Introduction

For any nation to develop to its full potential, socio-economic, political, and educational stable, the religious aspect is pivotal to this growth. The non-inclusion of religious input in governance is like learning a trade without any need for its practice. It will be a futile effort and a mockery when oath-taking is administered using both the Holy Bible and the Holy Qu'ran for people in authority when they do not know or believe in them. Leaders must not wait till things get out of hand before engaging religious leaders to intervene by preaching tolerance to their followers. They must lead by example: "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Proverbs 14 vs. 34 NIV).

While this paper draws heavily from Judeo-Christian scriptures, the authors acknowledge three limitations: (1) Biblical texts are culturally and historically specific to ancient Near Eastern contexts

and require hermeneutical caution when applied to 21st-century Nigerian governance; (2) Nigeria is religiously plural, with approximately 50% Muslim, 40% Christian, and 10% Traditionalist populations; over-reliance on the Bible risks alienating Muslim and Traditionalist readers; (3) scriptural interpretation is contested—for instance, Romans 13:1-7 ("let every soul be subject to governing authorities") can be read as endorsing state power unconditionally, directly contradicting the paper's emphasis on religious critique of leaders. To address these limitations, this paper treats religious texts as repositories of ethical principles (e.g., justice, compassion, accountability) rather than divine legislation. Where possible, comparable teachings from the Qur'an (e.g., Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:8 on justice; Surah Al-Hadid 57:25 on accountability) and Yoruba traditional ethics (e.g., iwà pẹ̀'le' or gentle character) are noted. Future research should conduct separate, religion-specific analyses.

Nigeria is our own Jerusalem; this is a popular saying that means, your own things must be cherished, as no one can lay claim to whatever does not belong to him/her. However, it is expected that we take good care of our country and should not allow anything to negatively affect it. Therefore, we must give religion the deserved slot in the affairs of governance. May I ask how do the political leaders take oath before assumption of office? Of course, they swear to either the *Holy Bible* or the *Qu'ran*.

According to 2 *Chronicles* 7 vs. 14[NIV]:

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

One of the sicknesses affecting growth and development in our nation is that God has been relegated to the back seat of governance by our political leaders simply because of greed, egocentricism, pride, lack of honesty and "I can do it all alone" syndrome of elected representatives. Meanwhile, either elected, hand-picked or came through the barrel of a gun as Mao said: "Power flows from the barrel of a gun". It should be understood that, only God appoints and deposes Kings. On how God appoints Leaders:

Again I looked throughout the whole earth and saw that swiftest person does not always win the race, nor the strongest man the battle, and that wise men are often poor, and skilful men are not necessarily famous; but it is all by chance, by happening to be at right place at the time. (*Ecclesiastes* 9 vs 11 TLB) pp.88-89.

In one of the sayings of a role model on leadership by example:

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so am I. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you. The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither He that is sent

greater than He that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. John 13vs13-17 KJV.

How many of our leaders see themselves as servants of the people? They are greater than the people who sent them to represent them in positions of authorities. He who serves is a servant of the people, but unfortunately, in this part of the world, they are the Masters. This can be attested to by the affluent life style they exhibit, security vote approved for themselves at the expense of the insecure and impoverished masses, their children attend the best and most expensive schools in the world, the lucky ones among their family members parade the best of outfits of the most expensive boutiques, to mention but a few. Therefore, they are in opposition to Jesus point of view. There is a maxim that; “a great leader is not he who has many servants but he who serves many”.

According to Abina (1998:15-16):

...in the history of leadership, the world has produced quite a number of leaders. While some were eloquent proponents of success principles, they themselves died miserable failures. While some taught happiness they died sad men. While some taught one thing they did another...Jesus is the first leader who actually led by what He taught men.

Leadership has been demonstrated in various ways, and at different times. This has manifested different ideologies but with disappointments at one point or the other. However, with the above statement, the Critic observed that, human efforts cannot bring a perfect leadership to fellow human beings except they all return to God, confess their sins, humble themselves, turn from every form of wickedness, ask for forgiveness and be ready to do that which is right at all times. Moreover, he stresses that a leader is he who practices what he teaches.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, interdisciplinary approach combining content analysis, comparative religious hermeneutics, and literary criticism. Data sources include: (1) selected passages from the Holy Bible (NIV and KJV) and the Holy Qur'an (as referenced indirectly); (2) three purposively selected African literary works—Sony Labou Tansi's *La Vie et Demie* (1979), Sembene Ousmane's *Xala* (1973), and Lenrie Peters' poem "Lost Friends" (2003); (3) scholarly sources on Nigerian politics and African democracy published between 1994 and 2010. The analytical framework integrates Fanon's postcolonial theory (1968) on national bourgeois behavior with Oloso's (2007) concept of religious institutions as economic catalysts. Each source was coded for themes of leadership failure, corruption, moral instruction, and proposed solutions. Findings are presented narratively with direct quotations to preserve contextual meaning. No empirical data (surveys or interviews) was collected; therefore, conclusions are theoretical and prescriptive rather than descriptive.

Theoretical Framework

This paper integrates three complementary theoretical perspectives:

1. **Postcolonial State Theory (Fanon, 1968):** Fanon's critique of the national bourgeoisie—that nationalist elites adopt the

colonial state's extractive apparatus while abandoning liberation promises—explains the "Africanised democracy" pattern observed in the literary works analyzed.

- 2. Servant Leadership Theory (Greenleaf, 1977; Abina, 1998):** Greenleaf's model positions leaders as stewards prioritizing followers' needs, operationalized in this paper through the Jesus-as-servant paradigm (John 13:13-17). This provides a normative standard against which Nigerian leaders are measured.
- 3. Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt, 2012):** The paper implicitly draws on Haidt's claim that moral intuitions (care, fairness, loyalty, authority, sanctity, liberty) precede reasoning; religion and literature work on these intuitions to re-orient behavior.

These frameworks are compatible in their shared assumption that values—whether postcolonial critique, religious ethics, or moral psychology—shape political behavior. The paper does not attempt to reconcile their epistemological differences (e.g., Fanon's materialism vs. Greenleaf's theism) but deploys them pragmatically for analytical and prescriptive purposes.

Language and Politics

According to Konstantinov (1990:6-7) as cited by Oha (1994:30), communication is very important in politics. One of the important (if not the most important of the) systems of communication is language. This importance is underlined by the view of language as an inter-organism activity, and by the two technical perspectives on "politics" as (1) "the inter-relationship between large social groups, whereby these groups determine, formulate, express and uphold their interests"; and (2) "a specific course of action, pursued by a state, party, movement or group, in which goals, strategy and tactics, specific decisions and the

necessary political machinery and instruments can be recognised".

The Role of Religion in the Transformation Process

All religions teach that, fathers should teach their children from generation to generation to follow the teachings and precepts of the Lord.

Olotu (2010:71) quoted Laurence Rockefeller thus:

Father taught us that opportunity and responsibility go hand in hand. I think we will act on that principle; on the basic human impulse that makes a man want to make the best of what's in him and what's been given him. (*The Amazing Power in Fatherhood*)

The upcoming generation is ready to learn from and adhere to fathers (representing leaders) who are ready to teach the young generation. Rhetorically, are our leaders ready to teach any morals? *The Holy Bible* also states categorically that: "Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22 vs. 6 NIV). What then are our leaders teaching the upcoming generation? High level of corruption, "political statements" to score cheap points? We are very sure if these were what most of them learnt from the people they identified as mentors, they would not be bold to come out under their platform.

However, most of these exemplary leaders like: the Sardauna of Sokoto, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe, Tafawa Balewa, J.S. Tarka, Paul Unogwu and most of our nationalist leaders that cannot be mentioned here, did lots of developmental work for their people. Late Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, for his religious piety, made this statement: "*Conscience nurtured by truth*", (This means that only the truth can heal a wounded heart-

Paraphrased), and it became the Motto on the tabloid of *The Guardian Newspaper*.

Again, Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo believed in the betterment of his people, and he achieved that much as the Premier of the Western Region. He knew the religious implications of when the righteous and the wicked are ruling. *The Bible* states: People rejoice when the righteous rule, but people groan when the wicked rule. “Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men”. (Proverbs 22 vs. 29 KJV).

Religion should be a cure for all ills that characterise the political terrain. A man's steps are directed by the Lord. How then can anyone understand his own way? (Proverbs 20 vs.24 NIV). Whoever asks for knowledge from God, he will give and direct his steps toward doing well.

Olosu (2007:75) opined, however, in a secular state like Nigeria, Muslims can still supplement the government's efforts at combating unemployment, through the proceeds of “Zakat”, which can be used to fund small-scale projects or to create other business ventures. He posited further by quoting Zaki Badawi in *Al-Wisam Magazine*, p.15 as follows:

Zakat should be used to fund training schemes to the skills of the poor more marketable and finance projects that give jobs and supply essential goods and services such as textile factories, machine tool manufacturing and cheap housing.

Invariably, this act of goodwill is not the sole duty of a set of religion but what every practicing believer in God is taught to do for his

neighbour. This is because, whatever one does to a neighbour, is equally done to God.

There is a popular maxim that: “You cannot give what you do not have” meaning to say that most of our leaders in Africa are ignorant of this teaching because you must be knowledgeable in an area before you can adequately practice it, and those who know fail to practice it as a result of high level corrupt tendencies. A corrupt person is a self-centered person. The self-centeredness in such an individual will not allow him/her to have consideration for others in need. Similarly, in the *Holy Bible*, the Lord commanded the Israelites that during harvest, the poor should be allowed to glean the remnant and those that fell to the ground that they also might have something to eat. “*And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter*”. (*Ruth 2 verse 2*).

Africanised Democracy: The Literary View

For this paper, the following terms are defined operationally: *National Re-orientation*: A deliberate, sustained process of reshaping citizens' values, attitudes, and behaviors toward civic responsibility, rule of law, and collective welfare, typically through education, media, and religious instruction.

Transformation: Fundamental change in the structure, constitution, or substance of a system—here, moving Nigerian democracy from an elite-captured model to an inclusive, accountable, and service-oriented model (adapted from Bamisaiye, 2007).

Africanised Democracy: This paper uses the term critically to denote democratic systems in postcolonial Africa where electoral processes exist but are undermined by executive overreach, judicial manipulation, security force politicization, and ethnic/regional patronage networks. However, the authors recognize that this is not a uniform phenomenon; Botswana, Ghana, Senegal, and South Africa

have demonstrated more robust democratic institutions. The term is used here to describe the negative pattern documented in the literary works analyzed (Tansi, 1979; Ousmane, 1973), not as an essentialized description of all African democracies. Democracy as we know, is the government of the people, by the people and for the people. These could be through suggestions, opinions, ideas, etc.

Africanised Democracy is therefore a government of the people (average masses) by the people (bourgeois) and for the people (impoverished masses). All of these divisions are done to favour some classes and denying others. This type of democracy is rampant in the third world countries of Africa, Asia and the Caribbeans. In Sony Labou Tansi's *La Vie et Demie* (1979). It is demonstrated how the Congolese political leaders looted their treasury and assassinated key opposition figures. This is typical of Africanised democracy. He a Tyrant's confession thus: "*Oui, mon cher. Je suis fatigué de tuer. J'ai déjà des millions de corps en mon corps. Il faut me comprendre: fatigué* (1979:81) [Yes, my dear. I am tired of killing. I am responsible for millions of death. You need to understand me: tired]. (Our translation).

Moreover, this attitude has in recent past faced stiff protest across Africa and the Arab world of Ivory Coast, Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Syria and where there were no protest, there were seizure of power through Coup-d'états.

Alfa-Olasunkade and Fasinu (2009:249) quoted Fanon (1968: 15-16) thus:

Ce comportement révèle que, plus ou moins consciemment, La bourgeoisie nationale joue pendant a long terme. Elle devine que cette situation ne durera pas indéfiniment mais elle entend en profite au maximum. Cependant

une telle exploitation et une telle méfiance a l'égard de l'Etat déclenchent inévitablement le mécontentement au niveau des masses (*Les Damnés de la terre. pp.15-16*)

This attitude shows that, more or less, national bourgeois may tarry for long; it is divine that such will not last indefinitely but will stay t h e m a x i m u m . H o w e v e r, exploitation and a kind of horror toward the state will be inevitable.

Again, this form of democracy is preferred to the African leaders because it will afford them too much power to trample on rights. They have the court, the police, the army and all other government agencies under their armpits at the detriment of the powerless and voiceless masses. This is observed in Sembene Ousmane's *Xala* (1973) where a government official forcefully used those aforementioned state machineries to take away a beggar's inherited landed property and also went ahead to jail him. This is the comment of the poor beggar after nemesis has caught up with El Hadji kader:

Ce que je suis maintenant est de ta faut... Te rappelles – tu avoir vendu un grand terrain situé à Dièko (Jeko), appartenant à notre clan?...Malgré nos 'doléances' nos preuves de propriété de clan,

devant les tribunaux nous fumes déboutés, Non content de l'être approprié notre bien, tu me fis arrêter et jeter en prison (p. 165).

What I am now is your fault... Do you remember you sold a vast land at Dieko (Leko) belonging to our tribe? Despite our grief, our evidence of ownership. We were unhappily ignored and disgraced before the tribunal, you made me arrested and jailed (our translation).

Umukoro (2007:115) opined thus:

However, in the average African society where nothing hardly ever works- where water scarcely runs through the pipes and darkness is generated in place of light, where the roads are in an awful state of disrepair, where the transportation system is rough, inadequate and chaotic, where food security and the security of lives and property remain a pipe dream and where massive unemployment promotes criminality.

Criminality and insecurity seem to be like "Twin sisters" as a result of leadership loopholes in Africa. This makes it look like nothing works. However, wherever there is insecurity, there cannot be food security and lives will be constantly in danger. Furthermore, this trend has been on for decades. Unless leaders have the fear of God in them, things may continue unabated.

Meanwhile, democracy could be adjudged to be the best form of government if properly executed which is a blessing but most African leaders turn it to mean a curse to their citizenry by their style of leadership. The kind of leadership style exhibited by former President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Nelson Mandela of South Africa could be exemplary as: "It is a wonderful joy to become a leader but it is far more wonderful joy to help others become leaders" – Anonymous. (2010:45. *587 Inspirational quotes of all time*). This kind of attitude by our leaders is an invitation to conflict.

Conflict and National Re-orientation

Adesina (2002), cited by Agun (2005:53), in Nigerian communities, conflicts arise where there is a difference of opinion between group leaders or in situations where one group tends to be exploiting the other. Conflict between personalities may lead to group quarrel and the division of a village or town into several factions. An environment where disturbances, fights, hostilities, discord and the like occur could be easily neglected in terms of development.

The re-orientation process will be done to all the parties in the conflict that has arisen as a result of bad governance. Thorough education must be given to leaders through the Electoral College as well as the governed so that each of them might exercise restraint in the face of provocation.

Acknowledging Potential Pitfalls of Religious Governance

Critics of religious involvement in politics raise valid concerns that this paper must address. First, Nigeria has experienced religiously motivated violence (e.g., the Maitatsine uprising, 1980-1985; Boko Haram insurgency post-2009), suggesting that religion can divide rather than unite. Second, a theocratic model conflicts with Nigeria's constitutional secularity (Section 10, 1999 Constitution: "The Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as State Religion"). Third, religious leaders themselves are not immune to corruption or partisanship.

This paper does not advocate theocracy. Rather, it proposes that religious *ethical principles*—accountability, compassion, justice—be integrated into democratic governance without establishing institutional religious authority. This is consistent with "ethical secularism" (Modood, 2019) where religious voices enter public discourse without coercion. The recommendation for elected religious leaders in advisory (not legislative) roles parallels existing Chaplaincy services in the Nigerian National Assembly. The paper acknowledges that religious leaders must be accountable and transparent, not merely granted automatic moral authority.

Religion: Best guide to successful democracy

Any government who acknowledges religion as a leading light will make headway as peace and progress will breed the envisaged stability and development.

Many human governments, even those with good democracies, have failed to satisfy the real needs of people. None have solved the problems of crime and tribal hatred or have provided the needed amenities of life like: proper food and housing for all their people. Over the years, all we have been having are promises of housing for all by year so and so, education for all by the year so and so and food for all by the year so and so. To worsen these propagandist promises, some of our leaders even vowed that, on assumption of office if given the mandate that no one will go to bed hungry. All of these were only nothing but a ruse.

It is pertinent to say here that, whenever our leaders submit to the leadership of God by allowing men of God to search the scriptures and tell them the mind of God in the scriptures, our God will do according to *Psalms* 85 verse 12 (KJV): *Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good; And our land shall yield her increase.* But how many of them fear the God or even have the love of the nation and its citizens at heart? The earlier they allow God in the affairs of this nation the better for them and the needed peace.

Transformation in a democratised Nigeria

After the re-orientation process, our leaders should change their attitude of "winner takes all" and Lenrie Peters' poem; *Lost Friends* demonstrated their attitude thus:

They are imprisoned
In dark suits and air-conditioned offices
Alsations ready at the door
On the saliva carpeted floor

5 They spend their nights
In jet airlines –
Would change them in the mid-air
To show how much they dare

Drunk from the vertigo
10 Of never catching their tails
They never seem to know
When not to bite their nails

Their new addiction
Fortifies their livers
15 They are getting there
While the going's good
They have no time for dreamers.

These are the people some electorate died for while electing them into position of power. After electing these leaders, the electorates became dreamers who lack reason faculties. This is true because the electorates forget easily the evils committed against them after each term the political office holders spent in office. Definitely they both need re-orientation and transformation.

Bamisaiye (2007:45) opined that, the concept of transformation is not new to humanistic studies or to education in the humanities. Plato's education programme was designed to transform his society from one in which ochlocracy held sway, into an ideal state of social harmony where every individual was socially functional in his area of best ability. Many literary works aim at transforming society by either painting a picture of a Utopia or by making an existing one appear intolerable.

In the cosmic set-up, transformation is the reality of existence of both organic and non-organic entity. *The Chambers 20th Century Dictionary* according to Bamisaiye (2007:45) explains transformation as 'change of form, constitution or substance; metamorphosis, transmutation.' Transformation can be effected, as a carving of an image out of a block of marble, or it can be an inexorable process of life, like maturational transformation from infancy to senescence.

According to Oloso (2007:70), he rightly opined that:

Youths are the acknowledged leaders of tomorrow. Societies in all human cultures give a great deal of attention and importance to their young ones. Enormous sums of money and resources are often allocated and spent by governments, state institutions and other bodies for the training,

education and preparation of the youth, in order to channel their great energies and potentials for their future responsibilities. Adults rightly believe that the huge amounts of efforts and material resources devoted to the training of the young are worthwhile investments which often pay off in the end, considering their strategic roles in the future development of the society.

However, if these observations and many others are taken serious, then, our economy will blossom, our youth well educated, our political life will flourish, our social life shall be according to God's desire and the needed peace shall fall in place in all ramifications of our life as a nation.

Conclusion

Democracy can and will be entrenched in Nigeria if our leaders have the fear of God. This is the beginning of wisdom and right mental attitude not of coming to power to loot. Thomas Jefferson opined: "Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with wrong mental attitude". The wrong mental attitude has been the bane of peaceful democratic rule in Nigeria and Africa over decades. Right mental and Godly attitude are required by all political office holders to succeed. This is why we all need to be re-oriented and transformed, so that, not when subsidy is being removed from essential commodities that our government will be telling us they were acting in the steps of

advanced countries. Meanwhile, they are paying salary neither equating the hikes nor putting infrastructures in place for the betterment of the society. Honestly, we cannot have a government of peace in any so-called Africanised democracy except, we all come under the umbrella of God by reverencing Him. Finally, African and most importantly Nigerian leaders must learn to think like King Solomon in *Proverbs* 30 verses 7 – 8 (NIV), if only they have truly sought positions of power to serve their fellow countrymen and women.

“Two things I ask of you, O Lord; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread”. Meanwhile, as Africans who recognizes the presence of traditional worshipers, they should be allowed to swear oaths accordingly. With this mindset in our re-oriented and transformed leaders, democracy in Nigeria will be a reference point in Africa and Africa will be a developed nation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following actionable recommendations are proposed:

Advisory Religious Council (not legislative slots): Amend the 1999 Constitution to establish a non-voting National Advisory Council on Ethics and Morality, comprising representatives from the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC)—6 Christians, 6 Muslims, and 3 Traditionalists—to issue non-binding opinions on legislation affecting moral issues. Implementation pathway: Constitutional amendment via National Assembly (Section 9) or Presidential Executive Order if defined as a federal agency.

Individualized Oath Protocol: Prescribe that each elected official, at inauguration, publicly reads and signs a personalized oath derived from their chosen scripture (Bible, Qur'an, or traditional text) in the presence of their religious leader, with failure to recuse from

corrupt acts constituting perjury. Implementation pathway: Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to enforce perjury provisions under Section 115 of the Criminal Code Act.

Gender Balance Provision: Adopt a temporary special measure requiring that political parties present gender-balanced candidate lists (at least 40% women) for elective positions, as already practiced in Rwanda (Article 9, Rwandan Constitution) and Senegal (Gender Parity Law, 2010). Implementation pathway: INEC to deny registration to non-compliant parties under Section 223 of the 1999 Constitution.

Citizen Complicity Law: Amend the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act to criminalize the act of pressuring elected officials to divert public funds (e.g., constituency project kickbacks), with penalties including fines of 100% of embezzled amounts and community service. Implementation pathway: Bill sponsored by any Senator or Representative; public hearings involving civil society organizations.

Traditional Oath Recognition: Through a Supreme Court test case or legislative clarification, recognize Traditional Religion oath-taking (e.g., swearing by Ogun, Sango, or Amadioha) as legally binding, provided the ritual involves clearly defined sanctions for perjury (e.g., forfeiture of chieftaincy titles). Implementation pathway: Legal action by the National Council of Traditional Rulers or constitutional amendment clarifying "oath" under Section 7 of the Seventh Schedule.

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