

## Prophecy or *Prophecy*? Prophets, Prophetic Punditry and the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria

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### Abstract

*Although the 2015 general elections in Nigeria have come and gone, the marks they left behind are indelible and the lessons, unforgettable. The introduction and use of electronic voting option and Smart Card Readers; the odious and provocative nature of political campaigns and jingles; the triumph of the main opposition party and the defeat of the incumbent party after sixteen years of uninterrupted rule, were prominent events that heralded the exercise and thus made the 2015 elections a watershed in the history of electioneering in Nigeria's democratic experience. The elections which were perhaps the most expensive in the history of Africa also marked the first time an incumbent president has ever lost re-election in Nigeria. Of concern to this work are the roles which prophets, 'prophetic punditry' and 'prophetic theaters' played before and during the elections. Relying on empirical evidence from direct observations and secondary sources, this work established that Nigeria's political landscape was wantonly besieged by a barrage of prophecies, prophetic postulations, predictions and calculations which exacerbated tension within the polity and spread confusion among the populace. While certain prophecies strongly avowed bloody and gloomy electioneering exercise, others predicted free, fair and violence-free elections. While certain prophets contradicted their earlier prophecies, other prophets went totally wrong. Thus, this puts a question mark on the sacredness and divine nature of prophecies and prophets particularly those whose predictions were punctured by the outcome of the elections. The paper concludes that politics and religious faith continue to remain interlocked in an (unholy) matrimony in Nigeria's politics.*

**Keywords:** Prophetic Punditry; Prophetic Postulations; Prophetic Theaters; Prophecy; Nigeria's democratic experience.

### Introduction

The build up to 2015 general elections saw many clergymen, literally abandoning their original business (or calling) to dance in the mud of politics. They threw caution to the wind and made bold declarations as though they just got out of a board meeting with God whose universe they appeared to be shareholders/investors in. There were spiritual endorsements, which eventually had no physical value or manifestations after 28<sup>th</sup> March and 11<sup>th</sup> of April, 2015. Some gambled with their integrity and suffered immeasurable losses along with their anointed candidates. There were so many "God told me" bubbles, prior to the general elections which have since been deflated by reality and left the message bearers in a lonely path of disrepute. Their obvious lack of interest in their original business has earned them funny and uncouth tags and certainly will reflect in their loss of fans and customers.

(Onofua, 2015).

As the 2015 elections approach, the political atmosphere (of Nigeria) becomes tensed and full of uncertainty as some Men of God, as usual, have come out with some prophecies concerning the elections and the outcomes. What is worrisome with these prophecies from these Pastors, who claim to have gotten them from God, is that they are contradictory.

(Naira Land Forum, 2015)

The 2015 general elections were staged at a critical period in the history of Nigeria and amidst rising frustration, despondency and despair. The socio-political climate of the country was laden with insecurity, perpetual fear

and so much uncertainty, orchestrated by the activities of the violent Islamic terror group - *Boko Haram*, especially in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. Beside security fears, the economic fortune of the country had dwindled due to the massive decline in oil prices at the global market and unchecked corruption which characterized virtually all sectors of the economy.

In the political circuits, there were insinuations from some quarters of plots, hatched by the PDP-led Federal government to constitute and hand-over power to an Interim or Unity Government to be headed by a ‘noble Nigerian’ or loyal military commander. Beside such insinuation, a staunch member of the main opposition party had openly and boldly declared that his party would form a parallel government, should the PDP perpetuate itself in power (Aziken, 2014). All these, plus other notable factors including pockets of political violence witnessed across various States, open threats and confrontations within and outside political parties, allegations and counter-allegations of plots to rig, unfettered defections by disgruntled and rent-seeking politicians, blatant assaults on political opponents, odious and provocative campaigns and jingles, heralded the 2015 elections. For these reasons, Hedlund (2015) observed that “the presidential election, in particular, garnered a lot of public interest as voters expressed frustration over their current situation, and looked to political leaders for solutions.” More than other elections that have been held in the purview of Nigeria’s Fourth Republic, the 2015 elections attracted so much attention both from the domestic and international fronts. Meetings were held, consultations were made, and pacts were signed particularly with the top two contenders for the Presidency. This perhaps was to avert possibly post-election crises which have been common features of elections in the country. Those actions were also necessary so as to prevent further aggravation of the already volatile state of the country.

Of interest to this work are the roles which Prophets, ‘Prophetic punditry from various ‘Prophetic Theatres’ played before and during the elections. It is important to note that the voices of Prophets were so loud and activities of Prophetic Pundits prominent over and during the 2015 general elections. All these attracted attention from different people from the both domestic and the international domains (Nwolise, 2015).

Consequently, Nigeria’s political landscape became a veritable ground for displaying prophetic riddles, owing to the barrage of prophecies, prophetic postulations, predictions and calculations that wantonly besieged it. While certain prophecies presented the possibility of military take-over, others rejected such. While certain prophecies strongly avowed bloody and gloomy exercise, others predicted free, fair and violence-free elections. While certain Prophets contradicted their earlier prophesies, other Prophets went totally wrong. Thus, this work aims at examining the 2015 elections in Nigeria through the lens prophetic punditry and with a view to drawing out implications of prophetic punditry on the electoral processes.

#### **Clarifying Concepts: Prophets and Prophetic Punditry**

‘Surely, the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveals His secret unto His servants, the Prophets’ (King James Bible: Amos 3:7).

It is important to commence this discourse by considering the meaning of prophecy. Prophecy is derived from the original Greek word, “Propheteia,” meaning “delivering a message from God by His mouthpiece – Prophets (Nwolise 2015:13). Prophecy as enunciated by Bill Hamon means:

Speaking forth the mind of God! It is the declaration of that which cannot be known but natural means. It is the forth-telling of the will of God, whether with reference to the past, present, or the future (1997: 283).

Nwolise (2015:13), opined that there are three main sources of supernatural communications: occult prediction, false prediction, and prophecy.

On the other hand, a Prophet is regarded as a divine messenger/spokesman of the Divine Being, with the responsibilities of admonishing, warning, directing, encouraging, interceding, teaching and counseling (King Watch, undated). In addition, Nwolise mentioned that Prophets are meant among other things, to provide Strategic Spiritual Intelligence (SSI) on all aspects of an individual or national life (2015: 21). SSI encompasses – defense, internal security, natural disasters, politics, external relations, etc. (Nwolise 2015:12). All these (prophetic responsibilities (and more), place prophets on an enviable stance of prophetic punditry.

Describing a prophet, Gospel Principles (2011: 39-43) explicated that:

A prophet may come from various stations in life. He may be young or old, highly educated or unschooled. He may be a farmer, a lawyer or a teacher. Ancient prophets wore tunics and carry staffs. Modern prophets wear suits and carry suitcases. What then identifies true prophets? A true prophet is always chosen by God and called through proper priesthood authority.

From this foregoing, it is important to say that if prophets are messengers of God and from God; their messages should be corroborative and not contradictory. However, when prophetic postulations and deliveries begin to assume discordant manner, then, something is wrong with either their minds or minds of those they want to please (Nwolise 2015). This may be referred to as *prophelying*. *Prophelying* may be caused, as the case in Nigeria before the 2015 general elections, by the unprecedented and unfettered romance of the “sacred ministry” and their “Prophetic Theatres” with high profiled politicians.

### **Politics and Religious Faith in Nigeria: Any Linkage?**

The debate over the religious status of the Nigerian state remains one of the most passionate and acrimonious. The debate has often been beclouded by belicosity, zealotry, arrogance and prejudices. In the end, there has always been more heat than light. (Kukah, 1999: 102).

Despite this intellectual uncertainty, politics and religion are intricate and inseparable aspects of Nigeria’s political history. Although many scholars and proponents of secularism have argued that politics and religion must be operated separately, the two have remained entangled and (un)equally yoked in a (un)holy matrimony in the Nigerian state. Even though Nigerian constitutions, both past, and present, proclaim the secularity of the Nigerian state loudly, religion and politics remains intertwined and therefore renders the ‘secular posture’ of Nigeria, only theoretical and frivolous (Oshewolo and Maren, 2015). Hence, Enwerem (1995) asserts that “religion remains one of the historical forces that have shape Nigeria’s politics from the colonial era up till contemporary times.”

From the colonial era to the earlier stage of independence, a vivid example was the combined-dominant political and spiritual roles played by Amadu Bello, as the leader of the Northern People’s Congress (NPC), the Premier of Northern Nigeria and the Sultan of Sokoto (an apex spiritual position in Nigeria’s Islamic movement). At the national level, political parties have always subscribed to the convention of pairing politicians from the two dominant religious faiths in the country (Christianity and Islam) to seek elective positions. This they do to appeal to the religious minds of the electorates. The First Republic government was formed by a coalition of a Muslim from the Northern part of the country, Alhaji Tafawa-Balewa and a Christian from the South-Eastern part, Chief Nnamdi Azikwe. The Second Republic assumed a similar dimension, as Alhaji Sheun Shagari (a Muslim) was paired with Chief Alex Ekweme (a Christian) as flag-bearers of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). The aborted Third Republic was dissimilar from the other two preceding republics; as for the first time in Nigeria’s political history, the party that produced a Muslim-Muslim ticket was

believed to have won the presidential election. Observably, since the return to civilian rule in 1999, the political formula has been maintained with virtually all the political parties striking a balance between the two dominant religious faiths. This trend perhaps informed public outcry over the purported Muslim-Muslim political formula of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in the buildup to the 2015 presidential election in the country.

Besides the pairing of Christians and Muslims candidates to contest elections in Nigeria, politicians, and government officials have developed the strategy of mingling with religious outfits and prophetic theaters particularly when elections approach. Both Christian and Muslim politicians are seen reciting religious creeds and chanting spiritual songs during electioneering campaigns. An example was the case of the immediate past Vice President, Namadi Sambo who recited *Al-Fatha*, a *Surah* (prayer) from the Quran during his campaign tours to Zamfara and Kastina states. In the build up to the 2015 presidential election, the two top contenders visited prophets, religious leagues, and associations: one, to fraternize with them in order to correct any seeming misconception; and two, to canvas their votes. This close or rather spontaneous interaction between the Nigerian state and religious faith-based organizations reflects the widespread perception that Nigeria is not a secular state. Hence, religious postulations continue to hold sway in Nigeria's politics particularly among electorates.

The foregoing may have prompted Ayuba (2012) to conclude that:

There are a serious interplay and clear manifestation of religion in Nigeria's politics in the following areas: Appointment and placement; Election and electioneering process (voting behavior; Indigene and settlers factors; and Resource distribution. Although the intermeddling of religion with politics in Nigeria had given birth to negativities, religion is a major stabilizing force in Nigeria's politics.

### Overview of The 2015 General Elections

The 2015 general elections in Nigeria were the fifth set of elections held since Nigeria's return to civilian rule and the official commencement of the Fourth Republic on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1999. It was also the second consecutive elections to be held under Prof. Attahiru Jega as Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Initially, the elections were scheduled to hold on 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2015. However, the electoral Commission postponed the elections by six weeks to 28 March and 11<sup>th</sup> April 2015 mainly due to the poor distribution of Permanent Voter Cards, and also to curb ongoing *Boko Haram* insurgency in certain north-eastern states in the country. It was reported that only 45.1 million of 68.8 million registered voters had received PVC's.

The postponement was however greeted with outrage from various quarters: domestic and international, arguing that such move was a political move on behalf of GEJ/PDP rather than one made in the interest of national security. From the international arena, the United States, through its Secretary of States – John Kerry expressed deep disappointment at the delay and warned the Nigerian government against hiding under the umbrella of security concerns for hindering the electoral process (P.M. News 2015). In addition, the British Secretary of State, Phillip Hammond, expressed his catharsis and vented his spleens at the receipt of the news. In his words:

The security situation should not be used as a reason to deny the Nigerian people from exercising their democratic rights. It is vital that the elections are kept on track and held as soon as possible

(*The Guardian*, 2015).

On the home scene, the postponement was generally perceived, particularly criticized by Civil Society Organizations and members of the opposition as a strategy by the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) to buy time to sway support from the popular main opposition candidate, General Muhammadu Buhari.

Eventually, the Presidential and National Assembly elections were held as re-scheduled on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The Presidential election was contested by twelve nominees across twelve political parties, of which was a woman, Prof. Comfort Oluremimi Sonaiya of the KOWA party. In the end, the candidate of the APC emerged as the winner, with over 2.5 million votes separating him from the incumbent President and candidate of the PDP (INEC 2015).

Below is the breakdown of the names of political parties, presidential candidate, and their vice, and the total number of votes each political party/candidate got:

S/N	Party	Acronym	Presidential Candidate	Running Mate	Total Number of Votes Received	Percentage
1	Peoples Party of Nigeria	PPN	Allagoa Chinedu	Arabamhen Mary	24,475	0.09
2	Hope Party	HOPE	Ambrose Albert Owuru	Haruna Shaba	7,435	0.03
3	African People's Alliance	APA	Adebayo Musa Ayeni	Anthony Ologbosere	53,537	0.19
4	United Progressive Party	UPP	Chekwas Okorie	Bello Umar	18,220	0.06
5	KOWA Party	KOWA	Comfort Oluremi Sonaiya	Seidu Bobboi	13,076	0.05
6	Allied Congress Party of Nigeria	ACP	Ganiyu Galadima	Ojengbede Farida	40,311	0.14
7	United Democratic Party	UDP	Godson Okoye	Haruna Adamu	9,208	0.03
8	People's Democratic Party	PDP	Goodluck Jonathan	Namadi Sambo	12,853,162	44.96
9	African Democratic Congress	ADC	Mani Ahmad	Obianuju Murphy-Uzohue	29,665	0.10
10	National Conscience Party	NCP	Martin Onovo	Ibrahim Mohammed	24,455	0.09
11	All Progressives Congress	APC	Muhammadu Buhari	Yemi Osinbajo	15,424,921	53.96
12	Alliance for Democracy	AD	Rufus Salawu	Akuchie Cliff	30,673	0.11
13	Citizens Popular Party	CPP	Sam Eke	Hassana Hassan	36,300	0.13
14	Accord Alliance	AA	Tunde Anifowose-Kelani	Ishaka Ofemile	22,125	0.08

Invalid/blank votes

844,519

**Total Number of votes cast**

**29,432,083**

**Total number of valid votes**

**28,587,564**

Registered voters/turnout

67,422,005

43.65

Source: INEC 2015. ([www.inecnigeria.org/?page\\_id=31](http://www.inecnigeria.org/?page_id=31))

For the National Assembly elections (Senate and House of Reps.), the All Progress Congress won a total number of 60 seats, while the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) 49 seats (INEC, 2015). For the House of Reps, the APC won 225 seats against PDP’s 125 (INEC 2015). Other political parties won the remaining 10 seats.

### **Prophetic Punditry and the 2015 General Elections**

To start this prophetic discourse with, Pastor Elijah Babatunde, the Primate of INRI Evangelical Church in an interview with *Daily Independent* Correspondent, Michael Abimbola in Lagos, predicted a tight contest between the top two contenders – Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP and Muhammadu Buhari of the APC. According to him, “if Jonathan should win, it would be by a slim margin, and if General Buhari should, it would be by a slim margin” He, however, predicted that Jonathan would be the last PDP president in Nigeria when he expressed that:

No matter what, Jonathan will be the last PDP president in Nigeria. I don’t see a landslide victory in the presidential election. To be frank, either the victory of Jonathan or GMB can guarantee peace except we pray well  
(Abimbola, 2015).

In more complicated manner, the clergy in an interview with *Sunday Tribune* of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2015 stated emphatically that the removal of Professor Jega as INEC Chairman is tantamount to election cancellation. He further expressed that:

If there is an interim government, there will be a coup, and it will be supported by the international community. Nigeria will not stay together in the next 40 years. I don’t see anything coming out of Nigeria in the next 40 years. The election will be free and fair. If PDP wins, there will be acrisis, if APC wins, there will be acrisis. We still need to pray to avert crises  
(Ajibola, 2015)

On the governorship election, the Primate predicted that APC would win in Sokoto, Kano, Kastina, Taraba, and Kwara, while the PDP will find it hard to retain Kaduna State because there will be serious crisis there  
(Abimbola, 015).

Prophet Joshua Iginla, the General Overseer, Champion’s Royal Assembly, predicted that no matter how perfectly conducted the 2015 elections may be, they will be faulted (Global News, 2015). On who will win the presidential election, the Abuja-based Cleric prophesied thus:

I am not a politician or belong to any political party; I am just speaking the mind of God. The person sitting on the Seat might not be perfect, but he will retain the seat.  
(Global News, 2015).

Prophet Iginla further predicted post-election violence.

Apostle Johnson Suleiman in his own ‘prophecy’ claimed that the 2015 elections would be a replica of June 12, 1993, election which ended in a stalemate. The Clergy, however, warned President Jonathan to be careful, because as there were plans to assassinate him (Daily Post, 2015). In the end, he predicted that GEJ would emerge victoriously; He also predicted massive rigging, violence and post-election litigations (Daily Post, 2015).

In a similar vein, the Founder of the Evangelical Church of Yahweh, Primate Theophilus Oluwasaanu Olabayo predicted that:

God has revealed to me that there may not be elections next year because, in 2015, we are going to witness one of the worst political assassinations in Nigeria. God further informed me that the South West geo-political zone should be very careful that the region would not be thrown into another era of Wild West because I saw political assassinations everywhere. God revealed to me that if at all there will be presidential election it will be inconclusive just like the June 12 election. The Primate also firmly stated that the seat of Mr. President was not vacant (The News, 2015).

Lending his voice to the foregoing prophetic postulations, Prophet Odutayo of the World Prophetic Church, Ikeja, Lagos predicted that Dr. Jonathan would have three strong contenders, yet he will emerge victorious (Daily Independent, 2015). This came after forty days fasting exercise.

In addendum with the foregoing prophetic trend, Pastor Chris, the General Overseer of the Mountain of Liberation and Miracle Ministry, also known as Liberation City, in an interview with Daniel Jo, of *Encomium Weekly* predicted that there would bring massive bloodshed after the elections. The ‘Oracle of God’ as he is fondly called stated unequivocally that:

President Jonathan will win the election. If it does not come to pass, I am not called”, He further stated that during President Jonathan second term in office, there should be an unprecedented transformation (Jo, 2015).

However, shortly after the conclusion of the elections, the Pastor Chris Okafor or ‘Oracle of God’ as he is called retracted on his earlier position. In an address to the Church and as reported by *The Nation* of 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015, the Clergy through an aide explained that:

At a point, the man of God did see Jonathan’s victory, but he had since updated that prophecy by insisting that the Lord’s hand had left President Jonathan and that God was no longer with him as was divinely revealed to him in a vision (Lucas, 2015)

In defense of this denial, the Church further strongly expressed that:

We make a bold to say that proofs and witnesses abound to support the fact that the Oracle of God- Pastor Chris had since updated his position on the outcome of the 2015 general election and has finally been vindicated of the outcome (Lucas, 2015)

Still, on contradictory prophecies, Rev. Sam Mbaka, a renowned Catholic Father first in 2014 came out to support and even canvassed vote for President Jonathan but changed his tune few months before the presidential election. Nwolise captured the scenario succinctly and wrote:

Rev. Father Mbaka who claims to have prophetic calling contradicted himself severally on NTA Network, he advocated and prayed for the re-election of President Jonathan praising his government to high heavens and supporting his re-election. This was when the First Lady, Dame Patience Jonathan visited his Ministry at Enugu. However, in December 2014, Rev. Mbaka changed the tune,

opposing President Jonathan's re-election and describing as breeding bad luck! The question here is, which of the two messages is from Rev. Mbaka as a man of God and which is of him as a man?

In a slightly fearful manner, Prophet Gbujie prophesied that there would be an interim government that will be headed by a loyal military commander (Njoku, 2015). He further stated that "Nigeria will disintegrate into three independent countries as God is annoyed with the country and has decreed a blood crisis." The clergy added that:

The nation has been condemned to geopolitical disintegration, and three independent nations shall emerge from her ruins. Biafra shall be re-established, and Oduduwa nation shall emerge while the Northern Nigeria might prefer to answer the Republic of Northern Nigeria at that time.  
(Njoku, 2015).

Prophet Gbujie's prophecy on the constitution of an interim government came against President Jonathan's remarks during the first plenary session of the Catholic Bishop Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, stating that "interim government is treasonable" (Ayansina, 2015; Daily Post, 2015). In a similar vein, the Senate President had expressed earlier that the 1999 Constitution does not in any way support interim government. In his words, Senator Mark expressed that:

I am alarmed that the issue of Interim National Government has been given undeserved prominence in our national discourse. Interim Government is alien to the 1999 Constitution as amended. Therefore, those calling for it are calling for an exercise in futility. This Senate is committed to the provisions of our constitution which we swore to protect, and we will not do anything to sabotage the democratic process  
(Odunusi, 2015)

In a different manner, Dr. Fayemiwo – a quondam Professor of Biblical Exegesis at the Kingdom Bible College and Seminary, Tucson, AZ., and also the CEO of Alternative Lifestyle Communication, DBA, Chicago in an open letter to Dr. Goodluck Jonathan dated 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014 (available on <http://nigeriaworld.com/feature/publication/fayemiwo/121814.html>), and to General Muhammadu Buhari on 29 December 2014 (available on <http://nigeriaworld.com/feature/publication/fayemiwo/122914.html>), explicated that:

Goodluck Ebele Jonathan will lose the election, that God had transferred the baton to General Muhammadu Buhari as far back as twenty months ago in the spirit realm. He affirms that God had revealed the reality of these events in the spirit realm as disclosed in the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter, from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> verse of the Book of Job in the Holy Bible which reads: *Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee that God is greater than man. Why do you strive against him? For he gives not an account of any of his matters. For God speaks once, yea twice, yet man perceive it not, In a dream, in a vision of the night, while deep sleep falls upon men, in slumbering upon the bed, the he (God) opens the ears of men and seal them with instruction, that God may withdraw man from his purposes and hide him from him.*

While others prophesied on who wins the election and the possible aftermath, and 100 years Prophet G.A. Oyelami, fondly called Baba *Alasepe* of the Light in Christ Apostolic Church, in an interview with *Sunday*



*Tribune* of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2015, prophesied that “politics of bitterness and violence are not in God’s plan for Nigeria; and that Nigeria will be great again” He added that:

God told me that Nigeria would be great again. God didn’t tell me when, but He told me about a year ago that all will be well with Nigeria. I want to appeal to Nigerians that violence is not the way forward. Politics of bitterness is not part of God’s plan for the country.

(Adebayo, 2015)

From this foregoing, it is important to state that not only men were active players in this prophetic game rather women (prophetesses) were also partakers. Prophetess Nonnie, the leader of Nigerian Women in Clergy, expressed that President Jonathan will emerge victorious at the polls. This she said in an interview with Azeez Balogun of the *Saturday Independent*. According to her:

I know the President is going to win the Presidential election because I prayed and a lot of others have prayed too. The Sceptre has not been taken away from him, but it is that there will be a lot of bloodsheds

(Balogun, 2015).

### **Implications of Prophecy or Prophelying on the 2015 General Elections**

The prophetic voices that hovered around and dominated Nigeria’s prophetic space before the 2015 general elections were laden with confusion and discord, with direct effects on the prophets themselves, the political class and the electorates. To the prophets, as Onofua (2015) as rightly observed that *prophelying* left prophets “in a lonely path of disrepute and their obvious lack of interest in their original business has earned them funny and uncouth tags and certainly will reflect in their loss of fans and customers” Besides, it puts a question mark of the sacredness of the prophetic ministry and the states of our so-called ‘Messengers of the Divine Being’.

To the prophets, as Onofua (2015) as observed that *prophelying*’ left prophets “in a lonely path of disrepute and their obvious lack of interest in their original business has earned them funny and uncouth tags and certainly will reflect in their loss of fans and customers” Besides, it puts a question mark of the sacredness of the prophetic ministry and the states of our so-called “Messengers of the Divine Being”. This may have prompted Rev. Chris Okotie of the House Hold of God and atwo term Presidential aspirant to allege that President Jonathan was deceived to seek re-election by false prophecies that came from the ‘Prophetic Theatre’ of Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor, the President of the Christian of Nigeria (CAN). Delivering a message on Sunday, October 25, 2015, in his church, the clergy expressed that “Pastor Oritsejafor deceived Jonathan with afalse prophecy from God that he (Jonathan) would win the election convincingly” (Sotubo, 2015).

Afonja (2015) expressed in particular reference to Primate Olabayo’s predictions (and by extension others) that such prophetic postulations are true representations of and are meant to protect the ideologies of the social class which he (Olabayo) belongs to – *the Predatory and Oppressive Class*. Coming at a critical time in the history of the country, one would have rather expected some of these prophets to clearly come up with prophetic roadmaps and specific warnings that may have checked the flamboyance of the political class, rather than giving it a pat on the back. Hence, some prophets manifested politically rather than divine-inspired prophecies (Nwolise, 2015: 8).

Another area is that prophecies which predicted post-election violence, stalemate, assassinations, amilitary coup and the institution of an Interim Unity Government stirred-up tension, suspicion and mistrust in the polity. Besides, some prophecies spread some much confusion in the minds of Nigerians. This point was well captured by Kehinde Aribisala and expressed that:

Prophecies are messages from God revealed to His people through the one He has chosen to reveal it. God is not a God of confusion and does not lie, and thus revelation for His people is certain because He is the only one who knows the end from the beginning. These contradictions have left Nigerians confused on which of these posters is truly speaking the mind of God or are these mere predictions? (Aribisala, 2015)

Nwolise (2015: 8) further highlighted below some implications of the discordant prophecies on the polity, particularly in the wake of the 2015 general elections:

1. Some prophets manifested politically rather than divine-inspired prophecies;
2. Misled the people especially the electorates;
3. Exacerbated political tension and fuelled religious intolerance and crisis;
4. Misled some politicians and encouraged them to go against the will of God;
5. Enriched the bank accounts or elevated the profiles of political prophets, but destroyed them socially and spiritually; and
6. Made it difficult (in the interim) for the people to discern and distinguish between true Messages of God and those on self-missions or propagating the minds of their political financiers.

### **Conclusion**

This work has so far viewed the 2015 general elections in Nigeria through the lens of prophesying and *prophelying*. Various prophetic predictions that came from various prophets who operated from their individual prophetic theaters were as well discussed in an attempt to drawing-out salient implications on the electoral process. Particularly, the age-long (un)holy matrimonial relationship between religious faith and politics in Nigeria was also brought to bear. It was established that religion and religious faith are historical forces that have shape Nigeria's political history since the colonial times. Although not totally new, religious activism and prophetic punditry assumed a different and dramatic dimension in the wake of the 2015 general elections. The voices of prophets (majorly from the Christian faith) were very loud over the elections. This no doubt was prompted by the peculiarity of that election, as one who could either make or mar the destiny of the Nigerian state.

Besides, as a way of contributing their quota to Nigeria's national discourse, some of these prophets sounded notes of caution particularly to the political class to play the game by its rules. However and rather unfortunate, certain prophecies, instead of having positive effects on the electoral process, exacerbated tension in the already heated-up and volatile Nigeria's political landscape. Some prophecies, as it has been discussed in the body of this work, promoted the candidacy of certain political figures as against others. This development thus puts a question mark on the divinity of prophecies and prophets as divine messengers, particularly those whose predictions were punctured by the outcome of the election.

This is indeed is one of the major concerns of this work – the politicization of Nigeria's prophetic class. A class that ought to maintain a high level of political neutrality and promotes "Godly" standards is gradually at the risk of losing its prestige by allowing itself to be dragged into the muddy part of politics in Nigeria. On this note, this paper submits that there is the urgent need for Nigeria's prophetic class to reposition itself in order to remain relevant in Nigeria's quest of seeking a multi-faceted approach to solving her hydra-headed problems.

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