

MATERIAL RELIGION

*The object messiah, The modern predicament*

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The material religion functions as the reigning zeitgeist, the very distortion within language itself that pronounces the judgment of what is taken to be the universal spirit. Humanity's persistent cultivation of avarice has elevated objects and currency to positions of reverence, enthroning what may be termed the capitalist deity. This constructed divinity now governs the operative systems of contemporary society, particularly those mechanisms of authority and control that form the central focus of this discussion within the Nigerian state. Its influence has extended insidiously into established religious traditions, shaping not only institutional structures but also the very consciousness with which each new day begins.

Drawing on *Greed and Corruption in Nigeria: A Morpho-Syntactic Analysis through the Lens of Volpone* by C. A. Onuegwunwoke and G. U. Amadi, the denouement of Volpone which culminates in a form of poetic justice, stands in stark contrast to the condition of justice within the Nigerian state, where such moral resolution appears conspicuously absent. The morpho-syntactic examination of the ritualistic and repetitive sloganic rhetoric employed by the current head of state, particularly the persistent framing of governance as "presidential leadership," reveals a structural and ideological dissonance. Rather than signifying substantive transformation, this discourse suggests the cyclical reappearance of symbolic and imagistic figures at the helm of power.

The Yoruba expression roughly translated as "It is my turn" or "I am next" functions as a linguistic marker of succession politics, embedding entitlement within political narrative. Reiterated as a quasi-mantric declaration, the emergence of a new messianic figure, ostensibly ordained to rescue the polity yet often entrenching the souls of the people of the land into deeper layers of turmoil. In this sense, the rhetoric of redemption becomes subsumed under a broader materialist ethos, wherein the so-called saviour figure consolidates authority while perpetuating systems of confusion, extraction, and symbolic domination as the messiah of the material religion spreads his wings and ascends to remove the very sun from the skies and sell it to lands abroad.

The preceding assertion exemplifies the operative logic of what may be termed the "Material Religion." This discourse therefore aims to illuminate the psychospiritual consequences of its evangelistic diffusion and its calculated infiltration of social structures, processes that collectively reinforce its perceived supremacy. The conduct of its messiahs and priests demonstrates that unrestrained consumption and acquisitive desire are valorised as the principal manifestations of this ethos, with visible rewards serving to legitimise and perpetuate its expansion.

Consequently, analytical attention is disproportionately directed toward the material, the corporeal, and the objectified, while introspective engagement with the ethical and purposive dimensions of

leadership and responsibility towards self and humanity is increasingly marginalised. In its ideological operation, the material religion tends to estrange the individual from communal consciousness; yet paradoxically, its messianic agents remain strategically embedded within collective structures of their influence and power.

Over time, this psychospiritual condition permeates the broader populace, particularly within a society marked by prolonged turmoil. Observing the conspicuous benefits accrued through allegiance to this all-consuming doctrine, the people of the land internalise its value system, thereby normalising avarice and deepening its psychological entrenchment within the social fabric.

This condition engenders an unceasing pursuit—an iterative and monotonous cycle of perpetually activated greed. Within this dynamic, the martyrs may be understood as those psychologically and ethically sensitive individuals whose dispositions are incapable of accommodating, or reproducing, such thresholds of moral depravity.

The compulsive chase for material validation consequently precipitates forms of social and communal dislocation, often culminating in estrangement across unfamiliar sociocultural terrains. In adapting to these new environments, individuals may inadvertently adopt the very discursive and value-laden frameworks that sustain the pathology they ostensibly flee, thereby constructing existential and social structures upon a linguistic and ideological foundation that is itself corrosive, the modern three-bedroom of diseased bricklaying.

The Nigerian body, historically constituted through precolonial spiritual practices and the communal traditions of its now amalgamated people, is fundamentally grounded in collective consciousness and relational identity. As processes of fragmentation become increasingly entrenched, this communal foundation is progressively displaced, resulting in a symbolic expulsion of the cohesive Nigerian body from its own epistemic and cultural grounding.

Such disruption precipitates a profound psychosocial disorientation, the body is thrust into states of shock, confusion, and instability. This condition manifests in a spectrum of complex and often inarticulate emotional responses, most recognisably anger, while simultaneously expanding the moral threshold of depravity, a new material khadim.

The Nigerian body is stressed.

An ecological analogue to this conceptual framework may be discerned in the correlation between environmental degradation and the proliferation of corrupted ideological constructs propagated by the

messianic authority, as well as internalised by those subsumed within the turbulence of its mission. In this sense, pollution operates not merely as a material phenomenon but as a reflective index of broader epistemic and moral contamination within the sociopolitical order.

As the collective body attempts to recalibrate in response to sustained disruption, an incipient reawakening of the original spirit consciousness may be theorised. The true spirit awakens and the body is forced to engage in a *Nawm Al-Islah* [Sleep Of Repair].. Within this framework, a significant portion of the Nigerian social body appears to exist in such a suspended condition of recuperative latency, awaiting a transformative moment of ethical and spiritual rearticulation symbolically framed as the emergence of the voice of God.

In the hopes that this new *'ilah kadhib* of the material religion does not bring about the death of love, we must unite and engage the voice of God.