

**Edwin Madunagu:**  
**Political Autobiographical Notes**  
**(Abridged)**  
**May, 2021.**

I was born on May 15, 1946 in Okitipupa, in present-day Ondo State of Nigeria, to Jacob Madunagu and Florence Madunagu (nee Ikechebelu). Both of them, now dead, were natives of Nnobi, in Idemmili South Local Government Area of Anambra State of Nigeria.

My father married several wives including my mother. There were many children in the family, of whom three (all male), including myself, are from my mother. I am the last of the three sons of my mother.

I started my formal education in 1952. I attended five different primary schools: St. Bartholomew's Primary School, Igangan (near Ilesha in Osun State); St. Peter's Primary School, Isona, Ilesha; Anglican Primary School, Ilare, Ile Ife; Holy Trinity Primary School, Omofe, Ilesha; and St. Paul's School, Umuobom in Imo State.

For my secondary education, I attended Okongwu Memorial Grammar School, Nnewi in Anambra State and Obokun High School, Ilesha. I completed my secondary education in 1964. On leaving School, I served as a junior teacher in my Alma Mater,

Obokun High School, Ilesha until I was admitted into the University of Ibadan in September 1966, through examination, to read Mathematics.

After graduating in Mathematics in June 1970, I worked as a Senior Mathematics Teachers in Olivet Baptist High School, Oyo, Oyo State, until I left for the University of Lagos at the end of 1971, to pursue a post-graduate research programme in Mathematics, specifically Differential Equations and Functions of a Complex Variable. I became a revolutionary socialist in 1973.

I was appointed lecturer in the Mathematics Department of the University of Lagos in August 1974. Five months later, in January 1975, I was detained by the military government of General Yakubu Gowon over the national struggle against his dictatorship. I returned to my teaching work on my release at the end of May of the same year. In June 1976 I resigned from the University of Lagos and spent the next 12 months doing revolutionary political work, full time and underground with a peasant community in Ode-Omu in the present Osun State. I lived in, and with, the community. It was during that period that I got married to Benedicta Michael Afangide, whom I had met at the University of Lagos in 1973. Bene, whose parents are from Afaha Essang in Abak Local Government Area of Akwa-Ibom State of Nigeria was, at the time, a postgraduate student of Botany. Bene became a revolutionary socialist soon after we became friends.

After leaving Ode-Omu in May 1977, I joined the University of Calabar in August 1977 as Lecturer in Mathematics. My wife had, a year earlier, transferred her services, as lecturer, in Botany, from the University of Lagos to the University of Calabar. Later, I combined my teaching in the Mathematics Department with being Lecturer and Coordinator of Elements of Scientific Thought section of the University's General Studies Programme (GSS). In August 1978, my wife and I were among the 12 Nigerian University teachers and administrators who were dismissed by General Olusegun Obasanjo's military regime over the popular struggle against arbitrary increases in University school fees. We were recalled in June 1981.

I resigned from the University of Calabar in 1983 and went into full-time journalism. Between 1985 and 1994, I served *The Guardian* newspaper, Lagos, as a member of Editorial Board and briefly as Editorial Page Editor. I ran a Thursday column in the newspaper between 1985 and 1994. I was a member of the 17-member Political Bureau appointed by the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida in January 1986 to prepare a blueprint for a return to civil democratic rule in Nigeria. I was removed from the Bureau in November 1986 for being a "saboteur" and "security risk". But I produced a minority report.

In September 1994, after the *Guardian* newspaper had been proscribed by the military regime of General Sani Abacha, I came

back to Calabar where I am now directing a free research institution and public library called **Calabar International Institute, for Research, Information and Documentation (CIINSTRID)** and a radical anti-sexist educational programme for male adolescents, called **Conscientising Nigerian Male Adolescents (CMA)**. In June 1999, I resumed my Thursday column in **The Guardian** newspaper, carrying out this assignment from my base in Calabar.

I have participated actively and prominently in several revolutionary Marxist and radical political movements, including the Nigerian Youth Action Committee (NYAC), (1973); Society for Progress (1974); Anti-Poverty Movement of Nigeria (APMON) (1974-1977); Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Nigeria (REMLON) (1976-1977); Calabar Group of Communists (since 1977); Revolutionary Directorate (1980-1982); Democratic Action Committee (1980-1984); National Democratic Movement Against Fascism (NDM) (1981-1984); Nigerian Democratic Review Collective (1982-1985); Nigerian Socialist Alliance (NSA) (1989); Provisional Committee of Nigerian Socialists (PCNS) (1994); and Congress of Popular Democracy (CPD) (since 1998). Together with my wife, Bene, I founded in 1977, the Movement for Progressive Nigeria (MPN), a students' revolutionary movement at the University of Calabar.

My travels outside Nigeria have been few and brief: Benin and Togo (1973, for 5 days); Sudan (1978, for one week), Ghana (1982 for about 2 weeks), Britain (1986, for a fortnight), Soviet Union (1990, for 10 days), and New York (1990, for 5 days).

My published works include **The Philosophy of Violence** (1976), **The Tragedy of the Nigerian Socialist Movement** (1980), **Human Progress and Its Enemies** (1982), **Problems of Socialism: The Nigerian Challenge** (1983), **The Political Economy of State Robbery** (1984), **The Making and Unmaking of Nigeria** (2001), **Contradictions of Progress: Critical Essays in Defence of Socialism** (2002); **Radical Politics** (2002); **Understanding Nigeria and the New Imperialism** (2006); **The Nigeria Left: Introduction to History (For Eskor Toyo and Biodun Jeyifo)** (2016); and **The Nigerian Left: Tributes and Criticisms** (2016).

Every passing day convinces me, ever more strongly, of the correctness of the Marxist view of reality including the simple thesis that consciousness is determined by being; that a human being must first eat before he or she can think of politics or the arts; that the way we organize our material life, or the reproduction of our material life, determines the organization of our political and aesthetic life; that human history, by and large, has been the history of struggles between the oppressor and the oppressed, a struggle that cannot end until the abolition of oppression and exploitation; and that the necessary condition for

this to happen is for the oppressed and exploited to come to power and wield that power in the interest of all.

I am a Marxist and a Socialist and have been so since 1973. I am also strongly influenced by anti-sexism, humanism and revolutionary internationalism. I have remained committed to what Karl Marx called the **categorical imperative**, that is, the "struggle to overcome all circumstances in which the human being is humiliated, enslaved, abandoned and despised". I dedicate myself to the struggle for human freedom, social justice, popular power and socialism, and to the struggle to ameliorate the human condition at all times and wherever I may be. As I have said publicly on several occasions, this commitment comes before everything, including family, ethnic group and nationality.

I came upon a piece of advice in 1991. It went like this: "If you see an injustice being done, you must try to stop it; if you don't have the power to stop it, then speak against it; if you cannot even do that, then at least show your anger or displeasure". In other words, never reconcile yourself to injustice. I have taken that simple advice, and have tried to live by it. Consequently I pledge, to the end of my life never, never to reconcile myself to injustice, oppression or exploitation whether in private or in public, and to subject all human relations and actions, whether in private or in public, to radical criticism, fearing no consequences, but guided solely by the demands of socialist humanism and the categorical

imperative of automatic and unconditional solidarity with the oppressed, the exploited, the poor and the wretched of the earth.

My vision of human society is that of a Marxist Communist. I believe in the abolition of private property in the means of production and distribution, that is, I believe that the means of production and distribution should be collectively owned and collectively used for the good of all. I believe that society should be managed according to the communist principle: "from each according to his or her ability; to each according to his or her needs". In particular, I hold that education, whether formal or informal, whether specialized or general, should be FREE. This philosophy has guided the operation of CIINSTRID and CMA which, with the support of some organizations and individuals, offer free services to the public.

My next-of-kin is Bene Edwin Madunagu (nee Afangide), my Friend, Comrade and Wife.

**Edwin Madunagu**  
Calabar, NIGERIA  
March 20, 2016