



**Usmanu Danfodiyo University,
Sokoto**

THE 31ST INAUGURAL LECTURE

TOPIC:

**How Variants of Political Banditry have Impacted
Adversely on the Development and Consolidation of
Democracy in Nigeria**

BY

Nuhu O Yaqub

OFR, FSSAN, FNIIA, FSPSP, FDMSS, FNIM, FCILG, WWCCA

Department Of Political Science,
Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto

nuhuomeizayaqub@gmail.com; nuhuoyaqub@gmail.com

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How Variants of Political Banditry have Impacted Adversely on the Development and Consolidation of Democracy in Nigeria

**Delivered under the Chairmanship of
The Vice-Chancellor**

Professor Lawal Sulaiman Bilbis

B.Sc, Ph.D, FSAN, FNSBMB, FSESN, FASI

BY

Nuhu O. Yaqub

OFR, FSSAN, FNIIA, FSPSP, FDMSS, FNIM, FCILG, WWCCA

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,

USMANU DANFODIYO UNIVERSITY,

nuhuomeizayaqub@gmail.com; nuhuoyaqub@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION: JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHOICE OF THE TOPIC FOR THIS INAUGURAL LECTURE

It is axiomatic to begin this Lecture by asserting that it surely will beat the imagination of the reader of the text of as well as the listener to the presentation that the average Nigerian can't appreciate the fact that the system of governance that has been adopted or by which Nigerians were coerced to adopt as the preferred system of governance by the colonial hegemony has been accompanied and afflicted by costs due to inherent absurdities. This is because, if testimonies, confessions or reflections were required to be made, it would be discovered that the system has not been calibrated properly, one by the hegemony in reference; the serially failed and incompetent leadership successions/ styles; and the largely ignored, traumatized, and dejected followership both in the colonial era and since independence. Indeed, it speaks volumes that, having preferred, chosen and/or accepted the path of democratic governance (whether imposed or not) from a menu of governance systems known to the humankind,¹ both the Nigerian people and the leadership cadres, particularly after independence, should have been operating on the same wave length, the same page, etc., by now, with regard to the general cum absolute acceptance of both the components of the concept – that is, the ideals and proper practice of such governance system – but, most unfortunately, it is the toxic components – referred to in the title of the Lecture as “the variants of political banditry” which have been the orders of the day, with their consequential costs.

The questions that should naturally follow from these opening statements should also include: Where and how did both the leadership and followership miss the road by failing to grab and understand the variables mentioned above, i.e., the concept as well as the ideals and the proper practice of democracy? Has this outcome been a result of the inability of both the leadership and the followership to learn necessarily useful lessons from the system of democracy? Since the principal investigation in this Inaugural Lecture is to analyze

1 The systems of government that the humankind has either known and/or operated include the following: aristocracy; colonialism; communism; democracy; dictatorship (civilian or military); monarchy (constitutional or dictatorial); oligarchy; socialism; theocracy; and totalitarianism. Some of these disparate typologies could be related, one way or the other, despite apparent conceptual and terminological differences. For example, aristocracy, colonialism, military dictatorship, monarchy, oligarchy, and totalitarianism could complement one another in particular instances or circumstances; while communism, democracy, and socialism could also be resorted to, depending on exigencies. See clarification of the concepts via thebestschools.org/magazine/common-forms-of-government-study-starters/.

Downloaded on Sunday, June 27th, 2021 at 23.00 Hours. See also Table 1 below.

the inevitable and consequential costs of the inability and unwillingness of the two critical stakeholders to understand, digest, and absorb (or, most probably, they have made a choice not to understand, digest, and absorb) the meaning and lessons of democratic practice, we are good at going ahead to diligently interrogate the costs of the triad – namely, corruption, political violence, and serial military dictatorships – responsible for the inability as well as the unwillingness to institutionalize democracy in the polity.

If the opposite of this statement were correct, i.e., that the stakeholders understood the meanings, ideals, and, therefore, the practice of democracy, there would not have been any need to undertake this journey of why, after more than 40 years of teaching students the theory and practice of democracy (I am happy to report that some of the students taught by other political scientists and my humble self in the Department of Political Science of this University have gone ahead to play active politics, one way or the other),² one would still have to come back to look at why both the leaders and the led have not been able to get it right democratically.³ Put differently, could it be that democracy is inherently problematic, given that even in the developed democratic settings, the system undergoes one stress or the other, here and there? (See the Concluding Remarks below.) Or are we to accept the viewpoint of Alexander Pope that: “For Forms of Government let fools contest; whatever is best administered is best.”⁴ It is most probably correct to say that this kind of misguided statement is what the average Nigerian leaders latch on to proclaim their best is what Nigerians should accept as the best for the country. Without doubt, the worst example of this level of narcissism is what Muhammadu Buhari said, in the twilight of leaving office ,about his humongous under-performance in governance, coupled by what his

2 A one-time Deputy Governor of Niger State – Ahmed Ibeto – was my student and a graduate of Political Science of this University. He was a one-time Deputy Governor of Niger State and had also served as an Ambassador and Plenipotentiary of Nigeria to the Republic of South Africa. There is also Hon. Mohammed Shehu, a current member of the National Assembly, representing a Federal Constituency in Kebbi State. I am sure there would be other graduates of the discipline in some of the other states who could also have ventured into active politics that I do not know and/or that did not come into political prominence to be mentioned here.

3 Since the system of governance is still both theoretically and practically being contested between the civilians and the military autocrats, perhaps a referendum (which is a democratic format) should be held to resolve the matter, once and for all. The outcome of the referendum shall now be the sacrosanct decisional act (to be enshrined in the subsequent constitution) to guide the political behaviour of all and sundry.

4 brainquote.com/quotes/alexander_pope_159987. Downloaded on Sunday, February 5th, 2023 at 05.00 Hours.

aides and handlers were naturally prepared to regurgitate after what their principal had routinely uttered. But, in the eyes of other non-plussed and fazed Nigerians, their rantings would and should be regarded as mere humbug. For instance, on the 80th birthday celebrations, Femi Adesina would celebrate with his boss as follows: Buhari "...has no malicious bone in his body....He's the man God has shown mercy [*sic.*]"⁵ "Malicious bone?" If his bone could not be used maliciously since he was not in a soccerfield, what about the malicious heart – the engine room of malice (and also missing good behaviours that his governance style lacked) – that he deployed mercilessly in appointments that were generally described by Nigerians and even some geopolitical zones as skewed, nepotistic and unpatriotic? For Garba Shehu:

Muhammadu Buhari, as a young officer had already been gifted with "wisdom and strength for the future;" President Buhari is one of the most popular politicians that this country has ever produced....He holds the record of being the first candidate to defeat an incumbent in an election to take office as President of Nigeria. He is the only non-PDP President to win two consecutive terms of four years. He is a charismatic leader with capacity to sway the masses. In all five elections he ran as president, three of which were recorded as losses, there was none in which he got less than 12 million votes.⁶

This spate of adulations for Buhari should be considered unwarranted because, one, Buhari, as president, was generally considered by the citizens to have performed so poorly to the extent that history and future generation shall never forgive him for squandering the golden opportunities fate thrust on him. Two, he himself publicly admitted his awful performance such that, before he stepped down, he begged Nigerians to forgive him. One is not too sure that given the travails Nigerian went through during the eight years of administrative wilderness and executive blunders, the consequent lack-lustre handling

5 Adesina, F., "Buhari At 80: No Maliciousness In His Bone," *Leadership Weekend*, 17.12.22, p.56.

6 The Buhari regime (2015-2023) in its twilight phase of leaving office, conducted elections that have generally been considered to be very controversial and are still in court because of the challenges raised by the opponents of the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), to whom he handed over on May 29th, 2023. Apart from the adulation over his "achievements" in office, his errand and attack dogs such as the Minister of Information and Culture and the Special Advisers on Media Matters are ever ready to lambast those they thought were not fair to their principal, just as much as they would want to rate Buhari beyond his capacity. Shehu Garba, "Buhari At 80: 12 Things Nigerians Need to Know," *ThisDay*, Saturday, December 17, 2022, p.56.

of the affairs of the state, methinks, shall always draw to him umbrage, either here or in the hereafter. (Islamic clerics and even ordinary Nigerians have also said as much!)

Coming back to the reference to teaching the discipline of Political Science for more than 40 years, I do not imply that I had taught a critical mass of students in the field; but some of my writings/publications on democracy, as well as my multifarious engagements that were accentuated in democracy projects,⁷ which could or should have created such critical mass as to witness a change of approach by politicians, is what is being emphasized. That change of approach or heart, to use a better concept word, especially when seeking for a political office and/or seeking to play such a role that could also have gone a long way to enhance democratic sanitization and consolidation, is the desideratum of responsible democratic politics.⁸ Beyond this point, one could also argue that, with so many universities in the country, and with the bulk of them teaching and researching in Political Science, the combined efforts of the departments in such sister institutions, the political culture of tolerance; of playing the game of politics by the rules; of the defence of the

7 I had had the good fortune and opportunity to be nominated to participate in two projects associated with and/or aimed at advancing the prospects of both democratic development and consolidation in the country. The first of this was when the Babangida Administration transition programme committee (which I thought was a genuine at the height of its implementation) requested the leadership of the Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA) to choose two senior political scientists from two universities to serve, respectively, as National Interim Secretaries of the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). This took place between October 1992 and March 1993. Without doubt, the good efforts made by the two interim committees of the parties then were rendered otiose, as the resultant elections that were highly adjudged the most credible elections in the annals of elections in the country. (The cost of the annulment to the democratization process shall be looked at later in this Lecturer.) The second practical involvement in ensuring that credible democratic politics is domesticated in the country was my nomination and inclusion as a member of a team of economists, political scientists, and sociologists who participated in a number of workshops organized and sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to go to at least two of the states in the country (I was posted to both Enugu and Cross River States together with highly cerebral Professor Omafume. Onoge of blessed memory), to conduct pre-inauguration awareness or sensitization "Workshops on Nigeria's Transition to Democracy," to the newly elected members into the National Assembly in March 1999.

8 Given that Political Science, along with its coordinate disciplines/courses in the Social Sciences, such as Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, and Psychology, is very popular and attracts quite a number of students in the Nigerian universities, a critical mass of democracy-adherents as well as practising Nigerians ought to have been produced for the sustenance of democratic rule.

institutions of democracy by a significant segment of the politicians;⁹ and the effectiveness of those institutions (i.e., the judiciary and the other branches of government); the political parties; the mass media; the non-governmental organizations); etc.; constitute the costs to democratization which we are compelled to examine in this Lecture.

Considering the fact that the entire country has been tied down to or held hostage by the phenomena of banditry; terrorism; Boko Haramism; etc.; there is no harm in appropriating one of the terminologies of the debilitating phenomena – such as banditry – to define both the cost and the title of the Inaugural Lecture. The key sections of Lecture are corruption; political violence; and military dictatorship; by their nature, are monumental costs to the democratic development and its consolidation. There are therefore no apologies for equating or analogizing the state of democratic process of the country to banditry, which if the state officials rightly think that the criminal activities of the bandits are anathematic to peaceful existence of law-abiding citizens and, consequently, the bandits, terrorists and the Boko Haramists in our midst should be challenged to a standstill, the discipline of Political Science should also be given the right, respect, and the professional obligation and grit to not only analyze political process, but also be allowed to provide vistas through this Lecture, at least, to tackle political banditry in the polity, on the basis of the phenomenal costs of the type of politics that the people can no longer bear. Given this reality, we are constrained to, before going any further, examine the cosmology of the average Nigerian *vis-à-vis* the ideals and notion of democracy. This content of such cosmology may also provide an insight to understanding why we in the field of Political Science are likely to develop Angst against the toxic democratic politics that has pervaded the country's politics from the period of decolonization politics to the contemporary times.

Democracy from the Point of View of the Average Nigerian

Democracy is, to the average Nigerians – be they politicians, military autocrats, educated elite, and voters as well as adult citizens in general – an item of fashion. As an item of fashion in the most popular and generic meaning of the word “fashion,” it is eventful the day or the season when the fashionable piece of adornment is worn for the public (in this particular instance for the world) to see, view and admire,

9 Peter P. Ekeh has, in my view, correctly articulated the characteristics of the political culture of Nigerians and these include the amorality of the state; political corruption and official conduct (see below); political violence and governance; and trust deficit leading to mistrust of those in governance. See P. P. Ekeh, “Nigeria's Emergent Political Culture,” *Nigeria Since Independence: Politics and Constitutions*, Volume V, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Ltd., 1989, pp.3-7.

whether satisfactorily affordable or not. And because fashion is largely ephemeral, the moment it has been displayed for everyone to see and, after they have seen it, the fashion quickly fades into oblivion or disuse until a new item of fashion appears in the horizon. This is why, in Nigeria, democracy is either interpreted to mean holding elections as and when due; if and when a political party has or political parties have taken over power; or when a day is set aside to be celebrated as a “Democracy Day.” The various forms of fashion-related display mentioned herein are what, unwittingly, deemed by the gatekeepers as well as the stakeholders of the process, to be democracy. Without any iota of doubt, election, its existence/scheduling, and involvement of parties in political activities/competitions are vital ingredients of democracy; but a “Democracy Day”¹⁰ is not such a vital ingredient because, if truly there is democracy that has been consolidated in a polity, there should be no such shenanigan as “Democracy Day Celebrations.”

Fundamentally speaking, democracy in its elemental nature, is as much a behavioral trait as a process that encompasses other very important elements – such as democracy for the material development of the polity and the stakeholders, i.e., the entire citizenry. In other words, democracy, particularly its practice, suffuses the entire political entity in which it is already or can be a way of life and, to that extent, it becomes the culture or, in the minimalist sense, a part of the people’s culture and a call by the operators to improve the material needs and conditions of the people. Democracy is also about inclusiveness, transparency and accountability of governance. Democracy, in its pristine innateness is, therefore, not just for its sake; it is much more than that. It is a reason why a study of its costs can give us an insight also into its benefits that qualify its practice even though with some reservations in ancient Greece, from where it was supposed to have originated (See Footnote 34 below) but now a global cultural artefact for governance. (See, among others, the two major works of some of the numerous political scientists who have researched and written extensively on the subject-matter of political culture as both the

10 I am quite conversant with the fact that there is the annual “Democracy Day” that is observed globally on September 15th of every year. The celebration of the Day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly on November 8th, 2007. However, the strictures against the celebration of the “Day” do not extend to the global genre because out there at the (global level) one is definitely going to come off with good examples of countries that are faithful to and are practicing democracy. The Nigerian version cannot be so described – hence the strictures above.

derivative of and trigger for democracy, as much as the desirables of the governance system.¹¹⁾

The delusory fanfare annually witnessed in Nigeria on the 12th of June,¹² including the holiday to celebrate what obviously is an elusive democracy, being the creation by the fashion designers who have given birth to and brought the hollow democracy into existence to lull the voters and the larger members of the polity into embracing hallucinational event as democracy, the citizenry have never had its essence interrogated. Our quarrel with this blatant shenanigan and utter disregard for the lives (welfare and security) of human beings and their hard-earned properties stems from the fact that these crudities are being taken for granted; that the waste of lives and the clearly anti-democratic behavioural traits and tendencies are considered normal; that electoral officers could and, indeed, should be bribed in order to declare false results and carry out other inimical felonies to debase democracy for a prize; etc.; etc.; in order to have what, in essence, can only be a fluke and fake democracy or, put more concisely and more accurately, an anti-democratic governance system which is put in place and is accepted by all because everyone involved in it are actually involved in a game whose spirit is that of the “survival of the fittest!!!” It can now be appreciated why we have come to the conclusion that the declaration of or the setting aside of a day for the celebration of “Democracy Day” as inanity combined with vanity. Indeed, what goes on as democratic process in the country is an ideological blinker used to lure the unwary and the democratically famished public into a trap without any hope of disentanglement. It is such a pity that even political scientists who have made their career marks in the discipline enthusiastically parrot the shenanigans going on in the country as democracy.

11 See, among others, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1963; and Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach*, Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1966.

12 Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, as elected and sworn-in president on May 29th, 1999, declared subsequent May 29th as “Democracy Day.” President Muhammadu Buhari, on June 4th, 2018, decided to change the date from 29th May of every year to June 12th subsequently, as “Democracy Day.” As stated in the main body of this Lecture, the hallowed nature of democracy is devoid of substance because the two leaders (whether in office or out of it) are perpetual autocrats who, despite the fact that they came to office through elections that in themselves were devoid of credibility, can never understand and translate a good idea into its sublime essence. In other words, whether or not there is a “Democracy Day,” it is just a festival of ridiculousness; its substance of possible alignment with and creation of democratic political culture is denuded *ab initio*, not only because of the toxic bases of its origin and creation, but their regimes have been shown to be diametrically and patently opposed to democracy and its standard practice.

This Lecture therefore demurs very seriously to the fashion item called “Democracy Day;” not only because, as already defined, it is a mere fashion display, lacking in substance, etc., but because of its inherent costly nature expressed variously in the declaration and observance of holiday. To give an example of how this particular cost is being incurred, on the day it is held in the year of celebration, whether that day falls on a week day or on a weekend, it is described as a public holiday.¹³ Cost, in this instance, shall be incurred through the humongous sums that shall also be voted to “celebrate a non-event,” in the first instance. Secondly, the fact that the day shall be a work-free day makes the cost really unbearable for an economy that is more often than not beset by inflation, leakages in revenues, pilferage of the meagre resources that may be generated through inefficient and dismal productivity, etc. Thirdly, which is also most unfortunate, is the fact that the event of the day shall be converted into one of the personal appropriations and self-aggrandizement of the officials assigned to organize or supervise its organization. Fourthly, a lot of money is wasted on advertisements that are normally placed in various newspapers by both government officials and private individuals who are either using such gestures to attract favours from invariably a non-performing governmental machinery; and the excessive amounts usually wasted by state officials to prove that such superficial gestures would mean loyalty that, more often than not, in reality amounts to a mere eye service. Fifthly, it is apposite to point out that, while the cost mentioned here can also be calculated along with the main costs that have been burdensome to the democratization process of the country (we shall comprehensively look at these later), the actual and more appropriate time that should be used to celebrate democracy should have been the election day – a day that every stakeholder should be delighted to be a part of those freely casting their votes in an atmosphere of tranquility, conviviality and full of expectation of better policies for existential advancement; a day when the electoral officers shall be allowed as well as are instinctively determined to discharge their responsibilities without let and hindrance; a day in which the authentic winners will regard the result as a call to duty and, in earnest, they will commence putting on their thinking caps to develop and consolidate those strategies for delivering the electoral promises.

13 If and when the day for its celebration falls on a weekend – Saturday or Sunday – the Nigerian state will make sure that wastage is sustained by the declaration of the Friday preceding the Saturday a public holiday; and if it falls on a Sunday, the succeeding Monday shall be similarly declared as a public holiday. The impact of such unnecessary holiday on the economy is never countenanced. It is thus a wasteful preoccupation.

Alas, all these celebratory instances will not be allowed to be because the very contestants to various electoral offices, among others, would have supplied and armed to the teeth hoodlums who are specifically tutored by their principals to shoot, kill, disorganize the polling venues, steal the ballot boxes with and/or without the votes cast and, depending on the prior arrangements made with the election body's officials, take the stolen ballot boxes to sinecure places to tabulate the votes and declare themselves the winners!!! Both honestly and historically speaking, this practice may not have occurred in every polling booth, but when this nefarious activity occurs even in one booth, it is enough to conclude that there is a rape of democracy in general.¹⁴

The unnecessary as well as the hidden costs analyzed above are actually incurred by members of the political class and even bureaucrats in the ludicrous celebrations of a "Democracy Day" that can lead to the chain events of political violence and military dictatorship that can, in turn, combine together to scuttle the democratization process. How can this happen or what is the likelihood that this can happen in reality? In the first place, there is the inherent nature of incurring costs that are not accountable to anybody and/or of willfully diverting public funds (among the bureaucrats) to self as well as to irrelevant pastimes. This is capable of encouraging such individuals, as a way of protecting self or deflecting any efforts at probing the shenanigans, to resort to empowering thugs for any eventuality. Secondly, depending on how the malfeasance is handled at the policy (executive) level, chances are that a blind eye is turned to the sordid affair in the spirit of solidarity; this may turn out to be an alibi for the military sector of the factors that traduce democracy, although, putting the concatenation of the matters in their proper perspectives, the putschism by the military sector of the traducers is more often than not undertaken for their selfish interest that would be portrayed or dressed as a patriotic act to save a polity that is mired in democratic miasma. This Lecture therefore sets out to analyze the likelihood of the symbiotic relationship among the variables of corruption, political violence, and military dictatorship and how their combination has contributed, very deleteriously, to the absence of democracy in Nigeria.

The Godfather Phenomenon in Nigerian Politics

The phenomenon of the godfather in Nigerian politics is not only pervasive but is quite costly to democratic politics. There are two

14 The recently enacted electoral law to checkmate these sordid happenings may come handy as an antidote; this will be everyone's expectation. But the ingenuity of the average Nigerian for mischief and exploiting loopholes should, as a caution, temper such wish.

meanings of godfather in a dictionary: the first one refers to it as follows: “a man who sponsors a person at baptism;” and, secondly, it is defined as “the leader of an organized crime syndicate.”¹⁵ While the first meaning is welcome because of its spiritual essence, particularly in a Christian setting, this second meaning is so despicable and quite disorienting as it involves actions and behaviours that are antithetical to the way democratic politics is supposed to be played and, particularly, with a view to nurturing/driving and developing the process. In spite of the negative connotation of the concept’s second meaning, it intrigues a democracy scholar to see or hear that many Nigerian stakeholders in politics want to be identified as “godfathers.” Why should this be the case? It is important that this question is raised; the simple answer to it is that, in the Nigerian political setting particularly, there are putative honours to be earned, whether financially or otherwise, in being a recognized/celebrated godfather. A godfather in Nigerian politics is like an oracle who aspirants come or go to see for divination, consultation, forging and/or negotiating connections with other relevant political big-wigs for advice and strategic supports. Thus, because the average Nigerian politician has no gravitas to operate independently, they invariably are forced to seek such charlatans who exist basically as “leaders of an organized crime syndicate,” as defined above.

The Nigerian godfathers fit this bill perfectly well because, as we are going to argue when we establish the linkages among the three variables that constitute the kernels of this Lecture’s discourse on costs (see the theoretical analysis of cost below), they are truly crooks who are sought after to pollute the politics of democracy and, most importantly, its development and consolidation. The rank of political godfathers has swollen, especially since the commencement of the Second Republic in 1979, because money politics (which in so many instances the godfathers can also offer to give to their cronies/sponsored candidates, whom the latter shall have to settle heavily with money and/or contract awards, when they have been delivered to the office) assumed dominant importance since that period coincided with the huge revenue of “Petro-Dollars” accruing to government that was being stolen, left, right and centre; after General Yakubu Gowon had declared (a statement this Lecture considers to be the impetus to humongous corruption in the polity) that “the country had money and how to spend it was the problem!!!” (See the analysis on Yakubu Gowon under military dictatorship section below.) For the records, it must be mentioned that certain individuals actually played this godfather role and, among them, first, we had had late Alhaji

15 *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus*, Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2006, p.464.

Lamidi Adedibu, alias, “the strong man of Ibadan politics” (a semi-illiterate political wizard, one should mention) who it would be in the interest of any political upstarts and even the veteran political *mafiosi* to enlist as a mentor if they would want to succeed within Oyo State politics; late Adegoke Adelabu; and late Chief Adelakun (alias Eruobodo). A candidate, indeed, could only avoid his “contribution” of the godfather at their political peril.¹⁶ Second, the most prominent “kingpin” of the godfather syndrome in the Second Republic was the late Senator (Dr. Abubakar Olusola Saraki – also known as the strong man of Kwara State – who enthroned and dethroned candidates at will, such as the likes of late Alhaji Adamu Atta; late Rear Admiral Mohammed Lawal; and the unsuccessful manipulation of his son – Senator Dr. Bukola Saraki – in favour of his daughter – Gbemi Saraki, etc. Thirdly, there was the highly celebrated/publicized drama of the godfather syndrome that pitted Dr. Chris Ngige and a political trader – Chris Uba – who made the former, despite his apparent educational advantage over the latter, to accompany him to the shrine to swear before a spiritual totem on how much of the state financial resources Ngige would be paying to offset the sponsorship indebtedness. The fourth category of godfathers of note is constituted by the retired heads of state, especially the military cadre and some retinue of retired generals such as Theophilus Yakubu Danjuma. As for some of the former heads of state, their places of abode have become “Mecca of sorts,” where aspirants of various hues will repair to for the roles already ascribed to them above. In some cases, the retired military dictators make pronouncements about those who the Economic and Financial Corruption Commission (EFCC) should probe, prosecute in court in order to be sentenced to jail, should the Commission find them culpable; or had this state agency been effective and efficient.¹⁷ There

16 See A. Abdullahi and R. F. Sakariyau, “Democracy and Politics of Godfatherism[sic.] in Nigeria: The Effects and Way Forward,” *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance*, Volume 4, No. 4.2 Quarter II, 2013, pp.1-21.

17 During the 85th birthday ceremony of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo on March 5th, 2022, he had the unguarded temerity that always baffles me indescribably when he asserted as follows: “I cast a cursory look at some of the people running around and those for whom people are running around. If [the] EFCC [Economic and Financial Crimes Commission] and ICPC [Independent Corrupt Practices Commission] [had] done their jobs properly and [were] supported adequately by the judiciary, most of them would be in jail. **Any person who has no integrity in small things cannot have integrity in big things....**” [Quoted in *The Guardian*, March 6, 2022, p.2. Emphasis mine.] This quoted statement from Obasanjo is a testimonial of his innate hypocrisy as a leader who should have had integrity in both small and big things, too, but failed woefully because of his own innate foibles. If some of the people running around to contest in 2023 should be prosecuted and jailed, why should he have cast only “a cursory look?” His subjectivity and the total lack of moral seriousness in serious matters, such as this, is what again is at play. Furthermore,

was also the one-man squad played by Olusegun Obasanjo – two-time head of state – who arrogated to himself the “oracular power” to choose for the Nigerian electorates Peter Obi of the Labour Party as the best presidential candidate among the 18 contestants for the office in the 2023 General Elections. The poor and ethnicized performance of his chosen candidate in the said General Elections did not only put a lie on his oracular powers, but had also exposed his irrelevance in national affairs, particularly where they would matter.

As for General Danjuma, he is enmeshed in a combination of religio-political battle of a sort in his Taraba State, in order to ensure that every governor of the state should always be a Christian, no matter what!!! Such pettiness is unbecoming of someone who fought in the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-70, in favour of the territorial integrity of the country that definitely shall compose the various populations of the Christians, Muslims, and Pagans. The questions to ask General Danjuma – going by this unfortunate reality are – why was it logical then to fight against the Igbos and other ethnic groups in the former Eastern Region who were and still are largely Christians today and most likely to eternity -fellow Christians like himself and why has the logic of defending the entity called Nigeria is no more tenable now? Is it because Taraba State, which is also largely a Christian sub-national

why did he not mention names of those who should not partake in the electioneering processes, in 2023, if he was such a patriotic avatar that would want to help the country by ridding her of the toxic political elements that would and/or are definitely likely to render the polity's democratic politics otiose? His playing to the gallery and being a=the consummate devil incarnate would never allow to courageously pinpoint the problem and likely solution. His Machiavellian antics of waiting for another human being to fall into the pit of destruction would never allow him to be so graceful. Thus, it is not just age that would disqualify Obasanjo from coming out again to contest for the presidency of the country; rather his lackluster performance, particularly in the realm of integrity, accountability, and, most importantly, value addition to democracy as well as in some tangible development during his tenure from 1999-2007, etc., would constitute the albatross of another shot at the presidency – otherwise, he covets power a great deal as well as other pleasures of life!!! These foibles as well as sins of Obasanjo in the democratic political circuit permanently make him ineligible to pontificate for other Nigerians regarding the non-suitable candidates of the 2023 General Elections whom he refused to name. All in all, General Obasanjo is the least qualified Nigerian to make this kind of scandalous statement, especially, when he had had several unique opportunities (twice at least) to fix the country but, in both, he failed woefully. He can hardly therefore be the one to climb the Olympian height to excoriate others. He does not have the moral standing to do so. Unfortunately, a number of Nigerians adulate him beyond what can be considered sensible. They even go farther to anoint him as a godfather from whom they would have to gain some support and approval, in their political aspirations. What a shame!!! Obasanjo is a mere mortal whose weakness is his inability to accept his limitations that are more legendary than those he excoriates. See also I. Akinlotan, “Obasanjo on jailing of presidential aspirants,” *The Nation*, Sunday, March 13, 2022, p.40.

state cannot be allowed to be led by non-Christians? Is this not a case of a double standard politics, which goes further to undermine the whole essence of democracy that citizens should be allowed to freely chose who their leaders should be? If the tussle for political leadership turns negative leading to the violent killings of innocent people in the state (which is likely to be), isn't this one of the unnecessary costs that this Lecture seeks to deprecate? Indeed, democracy does not and cannot thrive where its substance is subjugated at the altar of micro-nationalism, especially, where subjugation is also underscored by religious undertones.

The fifth category of individuals who play the godfather role are the state governors who also double as the party leaders in the various states. They exercise extreme influence if not in the realm of choosing who shall or should succeed them, but who they could nominate and sponsor to contest at the other levels of political appointment. They exercise and/or influence the democratic process in this manner in order to cover up what may constitute their maleficence cum malfeasance and, at the same time, avoid accountability and transparency – hallmarks of democratic politics. The sixth category of these godfathers are the regional mafias exemplified by such organizations as the *Afenifere* Group (located in the Yoruba ethnic enclave); the *Ohanaeze Ndigbo* Group (located in the Igbo ethnic enclave) and *Arewa Consultative Forum* nourished by the famed *Kaduna Mafia*¹⁸(domiciled in the northern part of the country and embracing a coterie of sub-ethnic mafiosi in that region. The “famed” Kaduna Mafia appears to be quiet in contemporary political discourse in the North.) As a matter of fact, the godfather syndrome has constituted, somehow, a big cost to the process of democratization in Nigerian politics in the way it has led to the creation of a political culture that is fanning ethnic solidarity rather nation building; by promoting corruption, political violence that manifests in intra- and inter-ethnic dimensions, which has the capacity to instigate or eventuate in military intervention in politics – very unfortunately, at such time when broadminded people should be thinking of how to take the country forward, the culture of militarism and the numbness of the catastrophe that the military phenomenon in politics was and will ever be, make such people to think that the first choice and, consequentially, the first

18 See, among others, the brilliant piece on the mafia and the politics of the Second Republic by Shehu Othman, “Classes, Crises and Coup: The Demise of Shagari’s Regime,” *African Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 333 (1984), pp.441-461; and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaduna_Mafia. Downloaded on Sunday, March 13th, 2022 at 03.15 Hours.

solution to the debacles of the country's democracy is the military take-over of power.

THE CONCEPT OF COST: GAINING SOME INSIGHTS FROM ECONOMICS SCIENCE IN A BID TO UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF COSTS IN POLITICS

In the Political Science discipline, rigorous analysis of costs of the various political variables in democratization are not usually undertaken, especially where it is assumed that the democratic system is functional and is meeting the major concerns of many a democracy as well as many in the organized (and, in some cases and these can be very pivotal, the disorganized) practice of the democratic process. The major concerns of a democracy include whether or not elections are being held as and when due; whether or not when the elections are eventually held (assuming they are delayed for one reason or the other), they are credible and can therefore be defined to have met the international standard of freeness and fairness; whether or not the regime that is inaugurated as a result of successful elections observe or protect the fundamental human rights of the citizenry as well as ensure the supremacy of the rule of law; and so on and so forth. As the process of democracy is anchored on whether or not human freedom of choice is enthroned and protected; it does not as much make enquiries about the cost of losing such freedom when fundamental human rights in generic terms or in their entirety are compromised and trampled upon. It is not that the inherent costs in the denial of human rights are not perceived or felt as worrisome; rather, fundamental human rights are one of the cornerstones of the constitutions of the modern democratic state; and their rigorous observance and protection are therefore regarded as sacrosanct, non-negotiable, and non-compromizable, even if what this may amount to is the denunciation of, for instance, the house arrest and/or incarceration of political stalwarts.

But, does it appear that the discipline of Political Science simply assumes that an enquiry about the denial of the freedoms of a citizen may be better handled by the field economics? If, by any means, this is achieved, this Lecture begins the process of charting a new path in political analysis. Or, could the discipline of economics directly (or even tangentially) be bothered about this line of scholarly enquiry when it is not likely to be defined, *strictus sensus*, as profits or deficits in any unit of currencies? Indeed, going beyond the balance sheet that is the main concern of Economics Discipline to a balance sheet of safety from harms' ways; to ensuring the greater protection of citizens' fundamental human rights; and to the guarantee of lives outside their being snuffed out through violence; etc., are the sublime alternatives that are also the

likely routes that will engender and enhance the new way to contribute to the development and consolidation of democracy.

Whatever is the case, as a moral issue, the denial of the rights of any individual is *normally* taken up by a state operating the rule of law, in the most likely sense that it is, first and foremost, a legal (criminal) issue before taking it to the forte of a scholarly pursuit. The objective of this Lecture, however, is to bring it to the front burner of Political Science. Consequently, an examination of the cost of either the violent waste of the life of a political stalwart and/or the quest for the release of an incarcerated politician should, *mutatis mutandis*, be so conceived. As much as possible, we shall be interested in seeing what could have been the cost of denying the freedom of the individual to vote in the candidate of their choice and to participate concretely or as a free agent in the democratization process, even at a theoretical level; while, at the empirical level, practical steps shall have to be taken by the democratic state and the other stakeholders in the democratic process. This should be the forte of the local civil society organizations as well as interested international organizations. Also, it is necessary to find out what should be the consequences of allowing the electorate to vote or to count without let and hinderance or, at the same time, find out what could render such votes otiose because someone had corrupted the electoral process, with a view towards its amelioration – after all, the democratization process, like any human contrivance, is always a work in progress.

These somehow theoretical as well as empirical issues, as interesting as they are, have not usually been the subject that concerns the economics discipline in one very important cognitive and processual sense: there is nowhere in the Political Science literature where a definite number of votes are considered crucial to win or to lose an election. The most probable reasons why the Political Science literature could not come up with such an optimal number are: in the first instance, all the countries in our planetary system do not have the same population; therefore, an optimal figure could not have been declared by the discipline for victory and/or to be used by each country, as a criterion to constitute a democratic government and/or as a parameter for comparative political analysis. The second reason why the discipline could not so rule is based on the fact that even in the so-called democratic countries, individuals may decide that non-participation in the democratic process, whether as a voter or as a candidate seeking to be elected, is also a fundamental right that cannot be alienated. This fluidity is so natural that it cannot be wished away and/or brought to the front burner by any legion of regulations, as guardrail of acceptable democratic politics or guiding the electoral

system. While Political Science is urged to make this a researchable piece of study, it is likely to be constrained just like the field of Economics, certainly not because there is no profit that is derivable or desirable by the latter discipline, but because of the natural limitation in any human field of study as well.

Thus, and as noted earlier, the Economics literature is the better social science discipline that has theorized consistently, comprehensively and rigorously on the many costs involved in the production process, especially. Just as it has already been mentioned that any value has to have its corresponding cost, so also is the production process which is basically embarked upon for some utilitarian but, definitely also, for commercial (profit) purpose. It is therefore bound to have costs and these are varied. We shall look critically at what some of these are, as they may be relevant to the Lecture. Among other things, the types of cost identified in Economics include the following: total, marginal, opportunity, and average costs. Other costs are current, economic, fixed, variable, historical, and replacement. We would offer brief explanations of each of these costs and in the end choose the ones that would be central to our concern or be of use to us in this work. Precisely because these costs are most relevant to economic science, their relevance to this study would have to be conceived and even applied metaphorically; or as a surrogate tool. Let it be stressed that although we shall try to use the conceptual tools of economics to explain certain political variables in the Nigerian social formation, we are not likely to be fascinated or carried away by its technical sophistications. Indeed, our efforts in this regard are tangential to the extent that what we shall use the economist's conceptualization of cost to explain is not in the technician's approach as, for instance, we cannot measure how the death of a voter or an aspirant can assist us to come to the conclusion that the death has had this quantum of impact (in statistical terms) on the politics of democratization, except through deduction (which may not be too scientific to the "technician") and definitely by the appropriation of the economist's notion of "opportunity cost," which we shall look at more comprehensively in due course.

In the interim, opportunity cost can be a pointer to what is lost politically, but not in precise quantum of the magnitude of such losses. This is because, in the first instance, death generally signals also the end of the dead person's estimated or assumed potentiality, calculated shortly or at the point of joining or becoming a member of the political party. This potentiality would merely and consequently be presumed; not that it is quantifiable and/or fungible in financial terms. In the second place, the lifespan of any particular individual is not anything any economist and/or any scientist can determine precisely as anyone

of these experts is wont to be able to determine with respect to equipment such as engines, raw materials, and other inanimate inputs that are produced by man as inputs in the circle of production. **Opportunity cost analysis with respect to death is not a continuum but a destination; because this is what death is in all human endeavours.** In other words, the lifespan of humans can only be estimated broadly rather than for every specific human being. For instance, the lifespan of women is different than that of men and this can only be calculated broadly in a particular country or setting; certainly, such calculation would not be accurate for one man or one woman in such a country/setting, at any point in time. Furthermore, when an individual human being is going to be borne by a particular couple the lifespan of that individual can only be calculated when the wife is seen to be pregnant and not before by either the parents to be, the doctor and/or science generally and cognitively. It is even more difficult to specify the lifespan of that child at birth; its longevity is only known by the unseen Being – God!!! Thus, questions such as: “Is it feasible to factor in opportunity cost framework into political calculations if, for instance, a “political heavyweight” decamps from one political party to another?” “To what extent could such a change be possible?” These are not the questions that should be asked at this point in time. But, asking them at this point, all the same, may have to be left hanging until we get to the point at which we need to apply the explanatory potential of this kind of cost in economics science to the analysis of the extent of its efficacy as well as relevancy in tracing one or a few of the likely costs to the project of democratization of Nigeria!

Further, before looking at the individual characteristics of these different costs, it may be pertinent to start by defining what each of these costs is, one after the other. The *Oxford Dictionary of Business and Management*¹⁹ (2006:137) defines cost as an expenditure, usually expressed in monetary terms, on items of consumption, whether these are goods or services. Different goods and services normally have different prices affixed to them; these are to signify the inherent values and/or quality of the commodities and/or services. It would appear that there is no such thing, natural or man-made, that has no price tag. Even air that used to be assumed to be a gift of nature is increasingly becoming prohibitively expensive because of the externalities being created by man, manifested very dramatically by climate change. As a result, our environment is constantly under threat these days, essentially because of the destructive impact of the depletion of the ozone layer. It is in the economics science, to reiterate, that cost

19 *Oxford Dictionary of Business and Management*, 2006, p.137.

consciousness is at its most significance as well as in its most developed form. This is not surprising as, with the advent of the capitalist mode of production, exchange value rather than use value has come to replace the latter in serious (capitalist) production process.

Consequently, every bit of cost has to be taken into consideration as the capitalist goes into production because they do not produce for charity but for profit, in its sublime form; but, when it migrates from its good nature of producing goods and services that are good for humans to use for their ennoblement to producing sub-standard and injurious goods and services that are most likely to debase consumers' humanity, cost then assumes a negative nature that is untamable, just as unmitigable political cost resulting in violence, destructions and the decapitation of democracy – the bedrock of polities anchored on a “rule of law” mantra. In addition, because a typical capitalist is in dire competition always with other capitalists (except in situations where monopoly could be or has been established and pampered by state), they have to strive at all times to reduce the cost of production through efficiency gains over those of other competitors. Such efficiency gains could be expressed in the concept of profit that is defined as “the difference between the total revenue [the producer] receives from selling [their] output and the total cost incurred in producing that output.”²⁰ It can also be simply defined as: “working with lower costs to make profit.”²¹ We will now proceed to explain the different types of cost in economics science.

The Different Shades of Cost in Economics Science

In analyzing the various costs involved in the production process, we would like to start with the concept of total cost. This cost type represents the lowest aggregate sum of money required to produce each level of output; it equally comes into play when total cost rises and the quantity produced also rises.²² Total cost could be sub-divided into fixed and variable costs. Fixed cost is an item of expenditure that remains unchanged, irrespective of the changes that may have taken place in the levels of production or sales.²³ Another name for fixed cost

20 Samuelson, 1973, p.453.

21 <https://www.google.com/search?sa=X&sxsrf=ALeKk01aEml-aloa3UdavP1IsCSi-QeSJg:1623816338804&q=What+are+efficiency+gains%3F&ved=2ahUKEWjuw7eg o5vxAhVQ6RoKHT8TBDQQzmd6BAGFEAU&biw=1440&bih=789>. Downloaded on Wednesday, June 16th, 2021, at 06.15 Hours.

22 *Ibid.*, p.465.

23 *Oxford Dictionary of Business Management, op. cit.*, p.222. See also Lipsey, R. G., *An Introduction to Positive Economics*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1983 Edition, pp.215-216.

is overhead cost.²⁴ Variable cost, on the other hand, is that component of cost that grows with output and this is accounted for by the purchase of raw materials, fuels, equipment; payment of wages, rents, etc.²⁵

We have pointed out that costs in economics such as total, fixed, and variable are likely to be tangentially relevant to this Lecture in the sense that, even though the attempt to democratize the Nigerian polity previously necessitated and shall continue to necessitate the commitment of resources to kick-start as well as sustain the process, this would still not make their uncritical central usage – in such realms as the setting up of the institutions of democracy that should include the consolidation of the nation-state in the first instance; expenditures on personnel, whether such resources are or would be meant for their training and retraining as well as serve as their emoluments; for the effective administration of the state since democracy can only thrive successfully in an atmosphere of peace; for the extraction of resources from the people through, for instance, the payment of taxes in lieu of guaranteeing security; payment of emoluments; and other services the state, traditionally, has to render. (In passing, let it be noted at this juncture that the enemies of the democratic process are many, legendary and powerful – a point we shall return to later). In Nigeria and in the course of time, especially since the modern state system was created by colonialism, it began to introduce policies that could lead to the production of these “democratic goods and services.” The beginning of this process of the spread of the “democratic goods and services” was, of course, the introduction of colonial constitutions, which in turn led to further development in the democracy trajectory, which was expressed by the staging of elections; the setting up of political parties; electoral contests; assumption of executive as well as legislative responsibilities by the emergent nationalists; etc.; etc. However, it is generally agreed that decolonization was pursued as a largely discredited process. (We shall also be bringing this out as we analyze aspects of these relevant issues in democratic politics.) It would therefore be pertinent to know the quantitative sizes of the costs: whether total, fixed or variable, from the beginning and in the course of time.

Marginal cost, in economics science, is defined as the additional cost incurred as a result of production of one additional unit of production. Marginal cost is very critical to the real production process as it is the measure or indicator of the likelihood of the continuation of profitability of a firm. As Samuelson has put it:

24 Samuelson, *op. cit.*, p.464.

25 *Ibid.*, p.465.

Beyond its importance for describing and explaining *competitive supply*, the concept of Marginal Cost has great importance for *welfare economics*. The problem of how goods are to be produced is being solved most efficiently only if every source of production for a good is being utilized up to the same *MC* [Marginal Cost] level – an optimal result that is achievable when P [Price] = MC everywhere.²⁶

The concept of marginal cost would have to be adapted in order to become relevant, like the other cost categories, to the study. In addition, we intend to combine it with the adoption of the concept of marginal utility. Marginal utility is that extra utility a consumer would enjoy from consuming one more unit of a commodity. For Samuelson,²⁷ to get this extra satisfaction, particularly for the broader community, each industry must achieve a balance of marginal utility (MU) and marginal cost (MC). In relation to our focus, the various incremental measures to democratize the Nigerian polity, either through constitutional pathways or the dubiously elaborate transitional programmes (normally engineered, fostered, and promoted with all manner of shenanigans by the fraudulent and rapacious military regimes) shall be examined to see the extent to which the marginal cost of the exercises might have translated to marginal utility (in the form of democratic consolidation, for instance). But can it be logically argued that there is an element of utility (be it marginal or what have you) in the political sphere of competition when someone is killed and/or their property destroyed? Marginal cost may be more meaningful in the context of loss that may be sustained through violence to the person and property, on the one hand, and corrupt practices, on the other, as we shall equally see below.

The substitution (or rather the combination) of the concept of marginal cost with that of marginal utility could only be appropriately suitable to our study **if it is put in the context of the consequence of military intervention in the democratic development of Nigeria**. If, in the interim, we regard democracy as a means to an end, the very act of the military sacking a regime that is, putatively put, on the path to democratic development implies that there is no marginal utility in the very act of intervention, which is better seen as and agreed to be a treasonable felony. Most unfortunately, because punishment for treasonable felony has never been effectuated by any succeeding civilian regime in the Nigerian setting, i.e., coup planners have never been brought to book after a programme of democratic restitution

26 *Ibid.*, pp.461-462.

27 *Ibid.*, p.457.

because of the selfish maneuvers of the civilians through struggling and plotting by compromise, to succeed the departing military autocrats. They do all this, usually, done in the most ignoble ways. It is most ignoble because the civilian successors have always acquiesced with the conditions put down by the military junta that ultimately would lead to the election of the “anointed candidates” who would not nurse or have the nerve to open up the Augean stable of, first, the decapitation of a civilian administration trying to nurture democracy, however disjointed that could have been; and, second, the imposition of military dictatorship that further sets back democracy traction.²⁸ Be that as it may, an examination of even the policies of the military regimes from 1966 up to 1979, in the first instance, and from 1983 to 1999, secondly, should be able to come up with findings that, if governance is generally instituted in a political community to improve the welfare of the people being governed, the long spells of military rule have amounted to huge marginal disutility for the country. The concept of marginal utility will therefore not help us to understand this underbelly of Nigeria’s economic and, particularly, political development.

Opportunity cost is the next concept in the field of economics that we turn our searchlight on. It is defined as the assessment of the **“problem of choice by measuring the cost of obtaining a quantity of one commodity in terms of the quantity of other commodities that could have been obtained instead.”**²⁹[Emphasis in the original.]The first observation to be made about this definition is, because the phrase – “opportunity cost” – is concerned with the behaviour of consumers when it comes to the cost of a commodity is the serious consideration of what is the quantum of consumables/commodities that could be purchased with the amount of money in the purse. To this extent, if what the consumer could buy with the amount of money in the purse is the major – which is a rational step or decision to take, the consumer is also rational by jettisoning quality of the products being bought so long as it the quantities could ensure the family’s survival before the next pay day! Can this rationality apply with regard to the development of democracy in a polity? While it could be taken for granted that, invariably, the civilian regime in a competitive and genuinely democratic election would amount to a conscious effort made by the electorate to constitute or institute a governance system, imposed

28 Atrocities of the military junta, more often than not, would force the departing junta to craft the transition programme to suit a candidate earmarked for winning who is not likely to humiliate them after surrendering power. Obasanjo’s succession to the Abdulsalami Abubakar’s buccaneer dictatorship testifies poignantly to this assertion.

29 Lipsey, *op. cit.*, p.53.

military regimes are not the choice of the electorates. Indeed, it is a reversal of the gains of democracy, no matter the justification for the military putschism. In short, it is not a rational choice by the people, as seen in the behaviour of the average consumer.

All the same, because a military junta would normally include the aspirational strategy of “democratizing the polity, both in policy enunciation and implementation,” there is the need to examine their level of performance and relevance in such programmes of democratization. Besides, opportunity cost can also be defined as the cost of an action measured in terms of the benefit foregone by not pursuing the “best or the worst” (because either good or bad could be inherent in the) alternative course of action embarked upon or the choice made. It is argued that although opportunity cost is very important in decision making, it represents costs that are not normally recorded in the accounts of the relevant organization.³⁰ (See further analysis below.) This second definition somehow fits in very well with the general issue of governance – whether civilian or military. While a military regime, *ab initio*, is not qualified to be considered a positive force in democratizing a polity (regardless of intentions and outcomes of such intentions), a polity may witness the emergence of a democratic (or electoral) regime brought in by a transparent, free and fair election only to turn round to be a dictatorship of its own variety – jailing the citizens; muzzling the judiciary; visiting violence on the people; violating the spirit and letters of the constitution; demonstrable incompetence; state failure; the existence of the reign of terror and the breakdown of law and order; etc.; etc. Under this scenario, there is no longer any question of a rational choice – the installation of a democratic governance system in the polity. From this analysis, what has equally emerged is the point that any use of the theory of opportunity cost should incorporate the aspects of the choice made and the consequence of the choice made. **This analysis is the more reason why the concept of opportunity cost shall have to be used as an analytic tool precisely because the costs and impact of the involvement of the military in democratic consolidation and governance must be reckoned with, just as the monstrosity of a civilian regime purportedly brought to office through the democratic process turning into a dictatorship upon its consolidation of power.** Both of them should be examined to the extent that Nigeria’s march to democracy might have been shortchanged or in order not to allow such a march for progress to democracy being shortchanged.

30 *Oxford Dictionary....., Op. cit., p.379.*

For this Lecture, therefore, this type of cost is very central. This is in the sense that the country has for a very long period of time been very politically and economically unstable. The basis of the twin instabilities is not unconnected to the fact that the decision by the military to overthrow the civilian regimes in 1966 and 1983 and subsequently and intermittently against fellow military regimes signified, in the first place, taking very important decisions; and, secondly, based on what probably should be a cost-benefit analysis, they would have convinced themselves that the course they were embarking upon would be or, after being embarked upon, was much better than the programme of the regime(s) they intended to overthrow and/or they actually overthrew. An opportunity cost approach would enable us to subject intentions with the concrete result emanating from the pursuit of the “best alternative course of action” by foregoing the benefits of other course(s) of action that may be considered marginal or, simply, negative.

In this regard, the direction of Lecture would be to look at some of the on-going as well as intentioned programmes/projects of the displaced regimes and compare them with the programmes of those that came to replace them. In addition, there should a rigorous analysis of the outcomes of the military's quest for a corruption-free administrative system as well as instilling discipline for sanity in the society, in its entirety. But the key questions to ask in this regard would include: how did the military fare in the corruption eradication crusades, as avowed statements of intent that would be carried out practically and sincerely? Were they actually and eventually carried out? Adequate evidence has been provided not only in the Lecture to both prove an intent and to debunk any Messianic role that any of the military dictators might ever have left as proof of, for instance, “positive opportunity cost” in the involvement of the military governance of the polity. In addition, how could we also account for the “benefit attained,” through military putschism, by the physical elimination of civilian leaders *vis-à-vis* the wise counsel and administrative adroitness of the military that could be considered to be a “badge of honour” (if there was any in this instance) of the military over such assassinated leaders and/or the latter's displaced regimes? In other words, were the displaced civilians to be alive, wouldn't they have contributed or been contributing one idea or the other or one policy or the other that could probably have added value to the nature of the democratic development of the country? This line of argument is being made because this Lecture believes that, in spite of the violent aspects of the civilian regimes in the First Republic, the level of their democratic credence would still be considered more robust than what the militarists ever accomplished, despite what

citizens would initially accept as effusive “patriotic” enunciations as the motive force for the sacking of either a civilian regime masquerading as a democratic regime or a military dictatorship of the same hue and colours.

Furthermore, on a comparative scale of analysis of the programmes of the displaced regimes with the military regime that overthrew the civilian constituted governments and/or another or other military regimes, whose regime’s programme of “democratic transition and/or consolidation” could be considered to be more beneficial to the process of democratization? As a matter of fact, each military transition to democracy has historically and factually ended in failure in Nigeria!!! The very fact that the civilian regimes that have succeeded the departing military dictators have not had the “magic wand” to institutionalize substantive democracy does not only confirm our case (as we shall see below) of the non-existence of democracy in the polity a truism, but makes every genuine democrat more and more remorseful and despondent. Indeed, the fact that the Nigerian entity cannot be called a nation in the rigorous conceptual sense, at least, it should come up as a state that can carry out what other real states in the global setting are doing or are capable of doing. The shenanigans the country has been having since 1999 when the Fourth Republic was birthed are a testimony of the absence of substantive democracy and the lack of any serious commitment to having a state system that can function effectively, with corruption and insecurity looking uncontainable, as well as with the erosion of state responsibilities as the contemporary rulers of the country, without doubt, lack vision and incapable of learning on the job. Opportunity cost, to reiterate, provides us with the best tool of analysis to understand what is missing in state formation that also impacts most dramatically on the non-democratic development of the Nigerian nation-state.

It is instructive that the last question that seeks to define the trajectory of how the analysis of the Lecture shall proceed has raised the point about looking for not only the benefits that could accrue from the costs of and/or to the democratization process in the Nigerian social formation, but there should also be a need to examine the motive behind the putative or imagined benefit of the cost. Stated differently, it has raised for us the necessity of actually disclosing or understanding in the course of the presentation, which cost would be considered really a cost (i.e., without benefit(s)) and which one was or could have created a benefit(s) to democratic consolidation. This is one dimension of the use of the conceptual framework of opportunity cost that the economics literature has not or never analyzed very satisfactorily. The manufacturer of the commodity may calculate how much **profit is to**

be garnered, as their principal motive when introducing a product/commodity into the market. It is also the motive of the consumer to obtain and enjoy the best quality of what comes to the market. The catch in the on-going analysis of the level of the satisfaction of consumer is to remark that, once in a while, the consumer may be saddled with poorly produced commodity, except if they are lucky that the producer of the product discovers that the poorly produced commodity is in a batch that calls for a recall (of such a batch) for replacement. The concept of opportunity cost thus requires a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the various dimensions of cost with a slice of the likely benefits accruing from the “democratizing product” in the Nigerian political space,

The other dimension in applying the theory of opportunity cost to our analysis is with regard to the motive of either truncating a civilian regime that may be fitfully be working towards the “consolidation of democracy” in the polity. And because it is fitful, it is not likely to eventuate into or deliver on the object of democratization – hence the inclination of the Lecture to routinely question the “democratic content” of the governance system that has been foisted on the Nigerian people since independence. This is the point at which we shall have to interrogate what may actually be reason for the failure of or, perhaps more importantly, the **more than the** “...quantity of other commodities that could have been obtained instead.” The crux of the matter when the theory of opportunity cost is used to explain a political category, we have to look at not just “the quantity,” but, as already defined, the more important “quality” of the opportunity cost. Yes, the electorate would want to consume the real and more nutritious “democratic diet” not by only the quantity of the diet brought to the table or the quantity that they are going to take home from the market. In point of fact, the Nigerian stakeholders in the democratic process/journey certainly want not dictatorship that is likely to be instituted by the military; or the inadvertently as well as capriciously hatched by its civilian counterpart that has been brought about through violence, maiming, and the destruction of life and property. Motive is critical to the analysis in our use of the theory of opportunity cost because **choice** is involved and it is most important to the electorate and the other stakeholders at the international community level.

In summary, the costs that have affected the process of democratization in the Nigerian polity include corruption; political violence; military interregna; the ineffective electoral administration agencies with the unprofessional behaviours of their staff over time; and individuals of various grades or shades (stylistically but ominously called the “godfathers.”) The major areas of the focus of the Lecture to

which the theory of opportunity cost shall be applied are going to be the three variables of corruption; political violence in electoral democracy; and the military misadventure in the Nigerian politics. Other listed costs of and assaults on democracy in the polity shall be considered only in analyses that seek to illuminate the discussions (of their costs) on the primary variables as isolated herein. Before that is done, let us familiarize ourselves comprehensively with the concept of democracy and its accoutrements.

How and When Do Costs Creep into the Discourse on Democracy?

In spite of what has been said in the foregoing paragraph, costs can still be calculated in their monetary and also non-monetary manifestations. These costs are expected to be what they are, should be and, indeed, do become crucial in setting and settling or defining the values, especially when the members of political parties have decided that they would like the costs to become so, by discharging their financial obligations (payment of membership dues, for instance) to ensure the proper financial and effective running of their political parties; and/or by charging specific amounts to the politicians aspiring for the various levels of political offices that the contestants may wish to compete. In short, values can be calculated using any criteria we may consider relevant and/or feasible.

On the other hand, we can simply say that the offices the politicians would like to contest for do attract costs, invariably by fixing the price of the commodity, which in this instance should be the cherished office. We shouldn't bother, too, if the fixing of the price was somehow done arbitrarily. We have used the word "arbitrarily" deliberately because, one, sometimes objects of sale in the normal market situation of the third world are, more often than not, priced exorbitantly by the seller, which makes it essential for the buyer to strenuously bargain for what they may also consider should be a fair price before payment is made. In the specific situation of political contest, the offices being sought for by the contestants are mostly considered to be objects of value, which shall have to cost a fortune, especially during the times of contest, as a result of what they are deemed to be used for and/or aimed at achieving. Aside from this, values are simply and inherently attributes embodied in either persons, products or in a process. And because they are so valuable, it may not be out of place to argue that values are costly items and costly items are also defined by their values, except the typology that can be handled rather arbitrarily in a political contest situation and, in real market situation, if the "commodity" has been affected in an inflationary spiral. Furthermore, what is meant by this notion of arbitrariness in this context is explainable by the manner in

which decisions taken at all levels of party activities are invariably not guided by logic and/or science. The concepts of values and costs may have to be used, in other words, interchangeably, since value in particular is defined as “a fair return or [an] equivalent in money, goods or services for something exchanged.”³¹ But for analytical purposes, we may need to separate them in this work wherever and whenever necessary as well as whenever and wherever possible.

The concept of logic that has been mentioned equally needs some explanation. In the general situation of the market that we mentioned above, the seller is hinging their logic on the fact that their pricing strategy may or may not deter a serious buyer not to bargain or buy the product if it is an object of value. And even in the situation that they do not want to buy, another buyer is likely to come along, afterwards. The ordinary market can therefore be described as a continuum, especially if the object for sale is not perishable after a while. In short, the marketing strategy is stuck to by the seller. But, in the case of the market for political contest, the lack of logic in how prices are fixed comes out in bold relief considering, first, the limited duration of time for bargaining and resolution of prices that are often fixed and are unalterable. The period of bargaining and resolution is short because, unlike in the real market place, in politics, the period is limited to when political campaigns are permitted to commence for nomination; the period set aside by the parties to call for the purchase of nomination forms; the contestants’ efforts to mobilize and convince the supporters/delegates to party conventions/congresses to vote for them, after their nomination may have been accepted; and the period set aside for or when the eventual elections are held. Second and more ominously, we should not fail to take into consideration the calculations of the political party *apparatchik*, who may be bent on fixing exorbitant prices not necessarily because of the nature or value of the object in demand by the contestants, but in the usually well-choreographed grand strategy to create better chances of success for candidates that “godfathers” had already penciled down for some of or for all the offices! This is the recurrent scenario in the political merchandizing that also costs and/or affects dramatically the process of democratic development and consolidation in Nigeria. (More of the aspects of this cost scenario shall be discussed in the Lecture, as we proceed.)

As an addendum to the foregoing analysis, it is pertinent to stress that the marketing situation in the political realm is not a continuum as such or because of the periodic nature of the “buying and selling,” as explained already. Consequently, while the buyer of a commodity in the

31 *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus*, op. cit., p.1150.

real market situation can be isolated from the object they have purchased because making use of it or not making use of it does not affect the seller, the situation of the favoured and anointed candidate who may not be qualified for endorsement at a party's convention level may still be defined as strong enough to win and to occupy the office being sought for. This is the first strategic thinking; therefore, chances of the candidate not winning the election is, from the word go, ruled out since the handlers are determined to make the electoral process toxic, in order to ensure such victory, right from the point of the collection of the form up to the period of nomination and the conduct of the election. (See the discussion below on the issue of God-father phenomenon in Nigerian politics.)

In some of its concrete forms (without minimizing the salience of its costs as will be seen in due course), the democratic process could be evaluated through its institutions such as political parties; parliamentary activism or otherwise of the legislative branch; independent and fearless courts of law, the bureaucracy that must be highly professional, etc.; the magnificent roles of campaigns and rallies in clarifying the political issues at stake as well as providing veritable opportunities to the electorate to assess and size up the candidates for leadership selections; pedagogic institutions, such as those that may take place in a place like the Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), which are set up, among other things, to promote civic education of the citizens and help also to clarify the political issues in a more professional fashion for the electorate to comprehend before making their choices; proper legislative practices and responsible oversight functions; the promotion of the ideals of democracy; the academic and refresher courses that may be mounted for the bureaucrats of the National Assembly for the better performance of their duties in aiding better legislative practices; and such other practical things that are the accoutrements of the modern democratic process. Where these institutions function efficiently and effectively, all things being equal, democratization, which we have mentioned is a process can be realized, on the one hand, or, on the other, can be seen to be, naturally, on a path to its development and eventual consolidation, of course, in its bits and pieces (because democratization, for the umpteenth time, is defined as a process).

However, in its non-material aspects, one could mention the sentiments and aspirations of those who want to ensure that a democratic system of governance is enthroned, especially in a political entity that has been characterized and traumatized by instability and militarization, whether by the militarily-inclined politicians or the military dictators themselves, as the Nigerian case has been for just one year

less than the number of years civilian rule has been in power since Nigeria's existence as a sovereign nation-state. Other aspects of the non-material expression of democracy are those costs that, in themselves, are aspirational in order for systems of justice, equity, and of having credible elections; of ensuring that governance is based on the principles of transparency and accountability, which may still be largely elusive and illusionary, except where institutions of enforcement are in existence to ensure compliance. For the material/practical expression of the variant costs of democracy to be stymied from functioning and becoming realities, as defined, these normative ideals of the democratic process are crucial and should be present at all times. Their absence, as much as they can be documented, should also be calculated and reported. (This point certainly requires more empirical research, after this Lecture.)

Equally important for democratic politics to be regarded as a value to be hankered after is to assess how the material and non-material components could or should as well be complemented with monetary and non-monetary forms. In a purely theoretical exposition in economics (or in a real market situation), products are evaluated in monetary terms, i.e., what is the price of this commodity and/or what is the price of that commodity? Why is this commodity more costly than that other one, despite the fact that they look or may look alike, etc., etc.? The latter may actually not express themselves as complements and substitutions in the exact meanings of the words, but as epiphenomena of the other related components and not, in this instance, substitution of democracy. (Substitution of democracy is an anathema, considering what alternatives are there, as listed above.) In other words, and as has been stressed above, democracy, too, involves the spending of money, whether this would be on the setting up of political parties and running their secretariats; expenditures incurred in holding executive meetings, conventions and other sundry engagements of democratically organized and led by political *apparatchiks* of parties espousing democratic credentials. In this regard, the engagements could be in the realm of providing civic education to members and even non-members (of the political parties), etc.; etc. But, how does one calculate the value of the dead through political violence? Well, opponents who caused the killing of the dead might negatively and without remorse consider their triumph as a "valued achievement," especially if the eliminated person was such a formidable opponent that their elimination would create a serious void that could not be easily filled by the losing political party. Furthermore, for the political party that lost such a formidable political activist and

strategist, could their loss be explained by the economics theory of “opportunity cost?” (See below.)

At this point, let us also introduce aspects of cost that are simply defined as “correct” and “incorrect,” which we shall have to analyze in the Lecture. A concrete example of a correct expenditure on democracy, in historic as well as historical terms, was during the constitutional conferences held in London; Ibadan; etc., during the struggle to win independence for the country. At that point in time, both the British colonial masters and the Nigerian officials seeking to replace them could hardly be accused of reckless spending or kleptomaniac tendencies/cultures that have become the hallmark of governance today in the country. We shall later look at both the genesis and trajectory of this malady in efforts that were purportedly embarked upon to “democratize” the Nigerian polity.

Similarly, the democratic state itself is involved in spending a lot of money to maintain the institutions of democracy such as the parliament, the judiciary, and, of course, the executive branch. Particularly in the executive branch, funds spent judiciously and transparently in pursuit of policy enunciations and implementations, to ensure the security of life as well as the healthy functioning of the state constituted in a democratic mode are ultimately well spent to ensure the survival of the extant mode of governance, especially in polities that have been and/or are being challenged by traumas of military truncation of the democratization process and the other anti-democratic forces from within and without the political entity. This point needs to be emphasized because so much money is routinely spent in the pursuit of setting up the ideals of the democratic state that, without due attention being paid to how it is spent, may not often be spent towards the fundamental purpose for which it is meant and/or sought. Put differently and as a matter of fact, such expenditures normally should be regarded as routine expenditures, and they have to be incurred, come rain, come sunshine. (In parenthesis, whatever money spent on the so-called “Democracy Day” celebrations cannot be justified. This is because this is no ideal of democracy that can be justified the way it is being done in Nigeria, given the explanations we hitherto offered.)

But, on the other hand, the contemporary challenges being faced by the Nigerian state with respect to insecurity, with the need to checkmate Boko Haram terrorism, armed banditry, kidnapping, and the other modes of insurgency, would, perforce, justify whatever appropriate and sanctioned expenditures made for the procurement of security equipment, to respond adequately and militarily to the activities of nefarious and marauding groups. On the whole, however, the fundamental purpose for spending such monies in a democracy, like in

any governance system for that matter, is system maintenance or for the preservation of the social order, i.e., putting it in the larger ecumenical context of a political system that is a living organism or a going concern.

Cost could be more prohibitive in a state that is in transition to democracy; this is not in any sense a justificatory statement since, by definition, most of the institutions in transitional societies to democracy may have to be built from the scratch or may have to be replaced after the original ones might have been vandalized as a result of the unstable politics being played therein. It may also be that since the democratization process in transitional societies is usually carried out are replete with a lack of accountability as well as transparency, *ab initio*, chances are that these costs are likely to be higher and/or misapplied therein also.(See Tables 15 to 19 below, under the sub-heading that deals with transition programme during the Babangida dictatorship.) These monetary costs have not been systematically and holistically studied/analyzed in the various attempts to institutionalize democracy in Nigeria, with relevant lessons drawn therefrom; and this is one intention of this Lecture to address.³² But, as will be manifest in this Lecture, we are not only looking at monetary cost, our searchlight shall also embrace the human and governance genre costs and some other types shenanigans that have created toxic atmosphere to the process of democratization.

Beyond the monetary costs of democratizing Nigeria, there is also the non-monetary aspect. These are the types that have occurred from political violence in which scores of lives had been and/or are still being lost and properties going into millions or billions of naira were and/or that will still be destroyed, as well, in electioneering process. Without doubt, lives of human beings are not values that can be costed monetarily and adequately. The nature and more so the impact of death is such that its cost can only be imagined by families that have lost dear ones. Indeed, how do you estimate the loss of a breadwinner, whose death immediately translates to salary payments which are automatically stopped because the deceased has ceased to contribute their quota at the working place? It is not even the stopped salary (income) up to the point of retirement that actually would be the subject of mathematical calculations (which may not even be accurate given

32 See below in the section of this Lecture that analyzes the cost of corruption on democratization in the Nigerian polity. The apparently only monetary components of cost to democratization in the polity from another study has been carried out by J. N. Ojo, "Looting the Looters: the Paradox of Anti-Corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-2004)," *Canadian Social Science*, Vol.12, No.9, 2016, pp.1-20.

the ways records are kept in the country), but how do loved ones calculate the psychological loss? This latter loss is the one that cannot be calculated up to eternity. The pain of the loss of dear ones through violence is not likely to be healed by time, as we often are wont to assume.

On the other hand, the death of human beings – through premeditated and willful callousness (on the part of an assailant) or through carelessness (either because the vehicle for political campaigns were not properly taken care of before embarking on the journey or because an on-coming vehicle (from the opposite direction) or any other causative factor that would be due to negligence) – can never be brought back to life just like any type of certified death. Hence the issue of costing it is more often difficult to fathom statistically as mentioned earlier. Consequently, preventing deaths while at the same time ensuring keen but violence-free political competition is the only way through which cost in this realm can be calculated. In other words, negatively induced political deaths as a guise “to democratize the Nigerian polity” are not the proper yardsticks to evaluate the trajectory and/or the perfidy of the process. All the same, what is the opportunity cost of the lives lost through political assassinations and similar wastage of human lives?

Even if we cannot account for the cost of human lives lost (because, as we have said earlier, that those whose lives have been wasted cannot be brought back to partake in politics and, indeed, in any other human vocations), it is still imperative to take stock of properties that were usually destroyed either separately or along with the destruction of lives in the melee that would have taken place, as it is wont to happen so frequently in Nigerian politics, especially in situations where this aspect of politicking is possible. (In some instances, the attempt to waste lives and/or destroy properties may not be possible because the opposing combatants are balanced, violence-wise. This point is already showing that the dimensions to political violence are and/or can take several dimensions.) Although some studies (see below) have looked into this aspect of the costs of democratizing the country, they have not been systematic and/or have not assumed a national outlook as this current Lecture intends to do and/or aspires to be.

One would also like to add that the historical approach that the current study has adopted makes it different than the other ones that virtually looked at single events or a combination that may not have gotten the breadth of this Lecture. This means that the present work is, like democracy, process-informed. It is intended to look at the various costs of democratizing the country with a view to establishing patterns in terms of causes and effects. Ultimately, the emerging patterns shall

enable us to develop generalizable (law-like) statements; i.e., to theorize.³³ In addition, other than probably the work by Anifowose, which reflects on the political violence in Tiv and Yoruba parts of the country, this study aims to add to political violence variables of corruption and military dictatorship and their collective impacts on democratic development of the Nigerian polity. As much as possible, the work endeavours to be both empirical and archival, as sources for data.

In view of the ecumenical nature of the Lecture, which is its focus or objective in any case, we shall specifically look at corruption cost that has significant relevance to issues of democracy that are also issues of concern to the polity. For instance, the cost of delayed and/or unimplemented decisions that have had negative repercussions on the democratization process; and, most importantly, the patterns of “practising” democratization, such as the resort to the use of the instruments of impeachment and oversight functions, as well as the debilitating and larger-than-life presence and utilization of the phenomenon called “godfather;” with the former, apparently, aimed at bringing back “democracy to the correct or desired form;” while the latter has been introduced to the political landscape of the country to add humongous costs to the process of democratization (as has been analyzed above). We shall equally be concerned with the cost of military adventurism on democracy in the country; not only because the institution has had much impact on the typology of politics that the country has had to witness during the debacle of the rule of the military autocrats, but, also, because of the lingering long-term effect on electoral rather than democratic politics currently and in the years ahead. Indeed, all of these shenanigans add to the cost, in real time and terms, of the actual monetary costs of democratization. This is simply so as a result of the toxic political culture that has been introduced through the various military interregna.

The rest of this Lecture is structured as follows: in the next section, it will be concerned with conceptual and theoretical clarifications. The concepts and theories that shall be looked into include an analysis of the history of the development of democracy and cost (monetary and non-monetary). The next section shall concern itself with a historical

33 See, among others, R. Anifowose, *Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience*, New York and Lagos, Nok Publishers International, 1982; B. A. Olasupo, ed., *Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Issues & Perspectives*, Lagos: Frankad Publishers for Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2003; and M. T. Ladan, “Enforcement of Electoral Law and Electoral Violence in Nigeria,” N. Malu and O. N. Ogbu, eds., *Enforcement and Electoral Law and Reduction of Electoral Violence in Nigeria*, Abeokuta: Pan-African Strategic & Policy Research Group (PANATSTRAG-NIG) and IDASA Publications, 2007.

overview of Nigeria, particularly with respect to the various efforts, conjunctures, and hiccups in its democratization process. Specifically, we shall also be concerned with the institutions of democracy; quality of decision-making and its pact on the cost of democratization, especially during the serial regimes of both the civilian and military dictatorships; the misfortune of the centrality of violence in competitive politics in the country; etc. The subsequent section shall detail the empirical (evidential) and/or substantive issues involved in the costs of the democratization process as may have been induced by corruption; electoral violence in democracy; and military interregna in the Nigerian polity. This is where the analysis of types of cost that have been made in the foregoing theoretical section shall be brought to bear on the democratization process. Finally, the last section shall provide concluding remarks, particularly by offering recommendations on what should constitute the sublime points and the footprints to follow in regard to democratization in the country. It shall also contain the debts of gratitude that I have to pay to the Almighty, Omnipotent and Omniscient Creator, Who has designed and directed my life from birth to date; numerous individuals and institutions whose interventions in my life's trajectory might have been blessing and/or made pivotal as regents sent by Allah, too, to impact on my life.

DEMOCRACY IN GENERAL: CONCEPTUAL, HISTORICAL AND SPECIFIC PERSPECTIVES

The literature on democracy, democratic politics and the democratization process is indeed one dense piece of scholarly endeavours.³⁴ This literature may have to be divided into two parts: there are books and/or articles that have analyzed the democratic process in the advanced capitalist countries, the social formations that

34 For a sample, see the following: J. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, 2nd edition, New York and London, 1947; C. B. MacPherson, *Democratic Theory, Essays in Retrieval*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973; S. Decalo, *The Stable Minority: Civilian Rule in Africa, 1969-1990*, Gainesville and London: Florida Academic Press, 1998; L. Diamond and M. F. Plattner, eds., *Democratization in Africa*, Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999; L. Diamond, A. Kirk-Green, and O. Oyediran, eds., *Transition Without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society Under Babangida*, Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1997; S. N. Ndegwa, ed., *A Decade of Democracy in Africa*, Leiden, Boston and Koln: Brill, 2001; V. O. Okafor, ed., *Nigeria's Stumbling Democracy and its Implications for Africa's Democratic Movement*, Westport, Connecticut and London: Praegar Security International, 2008; P. A. Beckett and C. Young, eds., *Dilemmas of Democracy in Nigeria*, Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1997; R. Sandbrook, *Closing the Circle: Democratization and Development in Africa*, Toronto, New York and London: Between the Lines and Zed Books Ltd., 2000; and J. O. Ihonvbere, "Where is the Third Wave? A Critical Evaluation of Africa's Non-Transition to Democracy," *Africa Today*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 1996, pp.343-368.

are also referred to as mature democracies. There are also those literary materials that have analyzed democratic governance of various shades in especially underdeveloped countries. The latter literature (in this genre) has churned out phrases such as “democracy in transition;” “process of consolidating democracy;” “averting regression in transition to democracy;” etc. To be included in the genres of the literature on democracy, one can also mention that there is the socialist literature. This is largely based on the works of Karl Heinrich Marx, Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov Lenin, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, Antonio Francesco Gramsci, Mao Tse Tung, Enver Halil Hoxha and the other disciples. Because of the waning influence of the Marxist-Leninist state formation, less importance is attached to the genre in contemporary socialist cum communist scholarship. (Without bothering ourselves to delve into the deepest interstices between the western and the communist notions of democracy, we will still later make some explanations of the nature of the latter’s major theoretical standpoint *vis-à-vis* democracy and democratic politics.) Indeed, because we have “ideologically been involved” in some of our scholarly works in this genre of the literature on democracy, there shall be more than a reasonable passing attention to it in this Lecture as well. Thus, we shall come back to look more critically at these typologies of democracy in the course of the Lecture. In the meantime, we shall commence our analysis with the historical and conceptual development of democracy – the main liberal democracy of the capitalist West.

Democracy in both the Formal and Substantive Senses

Democracy is much more than all of the shenanigans earlier referred to. Democracy is a processual or a procedural and also a substantive phenomenon. It is procedural when it embodies what are usually regarded as the qualities of competitive elections; openness of access to public office as much as ensuring that (public) office holders are transparent, accountable, just, observers and defenders of rule of law, and responsible; while also ensuring that voter turnout is appreciable. On the other hand, democracy is substantive when it enhances personal liberty and respects the rule of law.³⁵ It therefore has an inherent set of valued procedures and costs that most people, in many cases unfortunately, take for granted as mentioned also above. In the case of the former, i.e., the inherent valued procedures, they can be expressed in non-material terms, but they are highly relevant and cherished human codes of behaviour and associational

35 See, among others, M. Chege, “Democratic Governance in Africa at the Start of the Twenty-first Century: Lessons of Experience,” in L. A. Villalon and P. VonDoepp, eds., *The Fate of Africa’s Democratic Experiments: Elites and institutions*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005, p.267.

mutualisms, especially, the types that should bind candidates and voters together; and those that should define the subsidiarity principle of federalism in the relationships of all the three branches of government – the executive; the legislature; and the judiciary – and, more fundamentally, in maintaining a balance between “shared rules” and “home rules” of the central government and the lower tiers of government, such as the component states.

In both forms of relationship, sticking to constitutional provisions in political activities of democratic nature; respect for the rule of law; learning to accept results of electoral contest on the basis of their transparency and credibility; avoiding and/or openly abhorring violence, political assassination; etc., in political contests; are the universally acclaimed as a well-cultivated political culture of contemporary mature political communities. A political community, indeed, is not expected to be economically developed as much as contemporary Western capitalist countries are, to learn these rudiments of democracy – although capitalist development of the political entity is more often than not seen as a correlate or conducive to democratic development and vice versa. Be that as it may, these aforementioned values of the democratic system are universal human values which must not be allowed to be compromised. As a matter of fact, they are like that regardless of the dominant symbiotic relationship between the economic and the political realms in the or in any political community.

Democracy in General: Developments of a Historic Phenomenon Whose Ideas as well as Interpretations and Practices Have Shaped the World in Unique Manners That Have Never Been Fully Explained

The word “democracy” is derived from the Greek work, *demokratia*. Even though the Greeks are generally assumed to have invented it some 2,600 years ago, it probably existed as a system of organizing societies in other climes such as Syria, Iran, Iraq, and parts of India by 1500 before the Christian Era (BCE). In these other ancient civilizations, there were evident signs that “popular assemblies” dedicated to the formulation of general laws to guide the conduct of the affairs of the people living in such communities existed. And because of the universal claim in the literature that the practice of democracy has been an invention of the Greeks and having examined other pieces of historical evidence, Keane is convinced that there has been “...**the Greek plagiarism of [the word]: “democracy.”**”³⁶ This might signify a learning process, somewhat and somehow (as far as this Lecture is

36 Keane, J., *The Life and Death of Democracy*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009, see pp.x-xi. [Emphasis mine.]

concerned). This probably was made possible through migration or the movement of people from one location to another before the Christian Era.

This process should not also be considered a unique historical phenomenon because migration has indeed contributed significantly to the entire historical development of the human race. More often than not, migrants to new locations have either brought capital, skills and/or new ideas that have contributed to, among others, the improvement of the lifestyle of the aborigines and the development of the country at large.³⁷ Whatever may be its origins, the “invention of democracy” ranks in historical importance, secularly, alongside other significant and revolutionary achievements of the humankind. Democracy, indeed, stands tall, both in historical and thoughtful (ideational) terms, as “...the [inventions of the] wheel, the printing press, the steam engine and the cloning of stem cells [as well as in the ever-impactful revolutions in the information and communication technologies].”³⁸

Democracy, as a process and also as a historical product, is a struggle of sorts. When it was invented, especially in the Greek society and going by the popular narrative, it was not an invention that everybody looked at with the same telescope, as the society was one that was already divided into social classes. Gitonga is therefore correct in seeing democracy as:

...“rule of and by the people”, has had its enemies [just as it still is in contemporary times]. The democratic idea and movement were mercilessly combated[*sic.*] and denounced by the feudal order. They were seen, correctly, as subversive of the rule by God’s vicars and representatives who ruled by “divine right” in aristocratic and absolutist monarchies. Elitist ideologies such as those espoused by the Nazi and other fascist regimes have also combated[*sic.*] the idea, denouncing democracy as “massocracy”, “mediocracy”, and “anarchy”.³⁹

Keane, both historically and conceptually, has, on the other hand, defined democracy more comprehensively and we quote *in extenso*:

Democracy required that people see through [the] talk of gods and nature and [the] claims to privilege based on superiority of brain or blood. Democracy meant the denaturing of power. It

37 See Migration Observatory of the University of Oxford, “Migration and Development,” Downloaded on July 18, 2018 @ 18.00 hours Nigerian Time.

38 *Ibid.*, p.ix.

39 Gitonga, A. K., “The Meaning and Foundations of Democracy,” in W. O. Oyugi and A. K. Gitonga, (eds.), *Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa*, Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd., 1995 Reprint, p.5.

implied that the most important political problem is how to prevent rule by the few, or by the rich or powerful who claim to be supermen. Democracy solved the old problem by standing up for a political order that ensured that the matter of who gets what, when and how should be permanently an open question. Democracy recognized that although people were not angels or gods or goddesses, they were at least good enough to prevent some humans from thinking they were. **Democracy was to be government of the humble, by the humble, for the humble** [probably, an attempt to re-interpret and re-word Abraham Lincoln's cliché description of the concept]. It meant self-government among equals [would this still be feasible where it is generally acknowledged that there are those who think of themselves as supermen in such polarized societies?], the lawful rule of the assembly of people whose sovereign power to decide things was no longer to be given over to imaginary gods, the stentorian voices of tradition, to despots, to those in the know, or simply handed over to the everyday habit of laziness, unthinkingly allowing others to decide matters of importance.⁴⁰ [Emphasis mine.]

This quotation aptly defines what a democracy is or, better still, should be, as the process, which does not appear to have developed to its zenith. Events in recent times even in the developed capitalist countries does not appear to convince scholars and even the politicians everywhere that democracy is a product that has fully matured; indeed, it is still a work in progress. It is probably not the process, *per se*, that has to prove itself, but the very politicians that seek to manipulate it to suit their base selfish interests.⁴¹ Democracy, as a system, is supposed to institutionalize a governance system in which freedoms, to the extent that these are to be guaranteed by the constitution, are to be enjoyed by everyone, including those who have been adjudged to be opposed to it (see above). Even though the original Greek practice of democracy discriminated against slaves, women and foreigners, the extent to which what is contained in the above definition and description of democracy was being observed, practiced, and respected by those who were qualified to be members of the assembly in that period means that the democratic system of governance is centred around man and woman. As we shall also see below, when compared to what we have in Nigeria at the moment, it

40 Keane, *op. cit.*, p. xii.

41 Compare this statement with what in the 2020 Presidential Elections in the United States when Donald Trump made a mockery of the entire system with its institutional ramparts!

can be argued that the political system we are concerned with in this Lecture is simply a parody of a veritable governance system that has somehow stood the test of time, in some clime.

While it may be difficult to practice direct democracy anywhere in the contemporary world,⁴² Nigeria's so-called representative democracy is not representative or liberal enough. The so-called Nigerian democrats are not even ashamed to indulgently say it to the face of those that they manipulated to give them the mandate that they (the latter) had become irrelevant as soon as the mandate had been handed over by instituting impunity; the ever pervasive struggles and manipulations to subvert the electoral system as well as denigrating all the ingredients of democratic choice; and, ominously including, as much as, willfully, desecrating the constitution and other acts put in place to ensure democratic governance. Among the instances that could be cited to support these assertions include the ugly scenes in the National Assembly in which members would shamelessly fight in the full glare by viewers of prime-time transmission of television programmes, sometimes with the combatants coming from the platform of the same party that had sponsored them into the hallowed chamber, tearing their garments in the process as well as injuring themselves, over who should be the Speaker of the House of Representatives and/or why the Speaker should or should not be impeached. (This most shameful incident happened during the tenure of Speaker Madam Eteh.)

There was another scenario when the leaderships of the two chambers of the National Assembly had been agreed to, at the commencement of the 8th Assembly by the leadership of the All Progressives Congress (APC), only for the (Party) leadership to be challenged successfully by unsuspected rebel groups that went into the two Chambers to install the candidates of their choices. (This was the scenario when the tenures of both Abubakar Saraki and Yakubu Dogara bulldozed their ways to the presidency and speakership of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively, in 2015. Both of whom later decamped from the APC to join the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), thereby reversing the pecking order that is historically observed in, particularly, the United States of America.) What was most surprising in the whole saga was that the Senate Presidency and the Deputy Presidency slots were shared by a candidate from the ruling party (APC) and the latter by a candidate from an opposition party (PDP)!

42 MacPherson has argued that with the level of technological innovation during the time of his work, which was not as sophisticated as we now know it, direct democracy, through teleconferencing, could be possible in our contemporary world. It would still be difficult, in my view, nonetheless. See C. B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

This development could be described as akin to a coup d'état in a presidential system of government where the majority party in most cases would accumulate the primary positions in the chambers, especially where the majority seats are likely to reflect the majority seats that would have been won by a dominant (ruling) party. The inanities of what is erroneously referred to as democracy in Nigeria know not, any limits. Yet, the Nigerian legislators are regarded as the most highly remunerated in the world, despite their less than average performance not only in the pursuit of democratic ideals and principles, but also in the less than tangible deliveries of the fruits of democracy qua the quality-of-life index; provisions of educational facilities; health amenities; infrastructural development and legislative enactments – through effective and meaningful legislative activism. The Ninth Senate would appear to put this position of the Lecture to lie, as the *Legacy Report of the 9th Senate [National Assembly] (June 2010-June 2023)* has argued a much better performance than Nigerians are prepared to ascribe to it. All in all, the 9th Senate passed a total of 131 bills and they were signed into law by the president as follows: in 2019, 17 Acts; 2020, 11; 2021, 21; 2022, 37; and in 2023, 45 Acts. According to the Legacy Report: “The 9th Senate presented a total of 951 Bills as of May 9th, 2023. Out of the total number of Bills presented, the 9th Senate passed 217 Bills, making it the second most performing Senate since 1999[,] in terms of the Bill passage.”⁴³

The beginning of what is now regarded as a democratic process, through the creation and diffusion of public institutions, according to Keane, went back to around 2500 BCE:

...in the geographic area that is today commonly known as the Middle East. It stretched through classical Greece and Rome to include the world of early Islam before 950 CE; it came to an end with the spread of rural assemblies (called *tings*, *loegthingi*, and *althingi*) to Iceland, the Faroe Islands and offshore havens of what later came to be called Europe. Except for the bright moments associated with Scandinavia and classical Athens and republican Rome, this whole period is usually seen as a dark era of undemocratic degeneracy.⁴⁴

As time went on (a long time frame, it must be stressed), the mode of practice of democracy changed, not so dramatically but fitfully, one must say, not only in the Greek city-state of Athens, but also in many

43 A Publication of the 9th Senate Facilitated by the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies, *Legacy Report of the 9th Senate (June 2019-June 2023)*, pp.15-19.

44 Keane, *op. cit.*, pp.xv-xvi.

different soils and climes, through accretions that comprised the Indian sub continent; the prosperous Phoenician empire to the western shores of provincial Europe; and in the Islamic world.⁴⁵ Perhaps, we could follow this trajectory of the development of democracy by gleaning at Keane's delineation as follows:

[The] perception, steeped in modern Western prejudice, is piteously false. The truth is that during the first phase of democracy the seeds of its basic institution – self-government through an assembly of equals – were scattered....These popular assemblies took root, accompanied by various ancillary institutional rules and customs, like written constitutions, the payment of jurors and elected officials, the freedom to speak in public, voting machines, voting by lot and trial before elected or selected juries. There were efforts as well to stop bossy leaders in their tracks, using such methods as the mandatory election of kings, limited terms of office and – in an age as yet without political parties, or recall and impeachment procedures – the peaceful, if usually rowdy, ostracism of demagogues from the assembly, by majority vote.

Many of these procedures played a vital role in the famous city of Athens, where, through the course of the fifth century BCE, democracy came to mean the lawful rule of assembly of adult male citizens. Women, slaves and foreigners were normally excluded. The rest gathered regularly, not far from the main public square, at a spot called the *panyx*, for the purpose of discussing some matter or other, putting different opinions to the vote and deciding, often by a majority of raised hands, or by chunks of pottery or metal cast by hand into a pot, what was to be done. This first phase of democracy saw the earliest experiments in creating second chambers (called *damiorgoi* in some Greek citizen-states) and federated alliances or consortia of democratic governments coordinated through a joint assembly known as a *myriot*, as happened among Greek-speaking Arcadians during the 360s BCE. This period also witnessed important efforts to create ways of being that would later be regarded as vital components of a democratic way of life. Many of these innovations happened in the Islamic world. They included a culture of printing and efforts to cultivate self-governing associations, such as endowment societies (called the *waqf*) and the mosque and, in the field of economic life, partnerships that were legally independent of rulers. Islam

45 Keane, *op. cit.*, p. xvi.

poured scorn on kinships, and triggered unending public disputes about the authority of rulers. Towards the end of this period, around 950CE, its scholars even revived the old language of democracy. The world of early Islam emphasized as well the importance of shared virtues such as tolerance and mutual respect among skeptics and believers in the sacred, and the duty of rulers to respect others' interpretation of life. During this phase[,] Muslims' belief that human beings were bound to treat nature with compassionate regard, as if it was their equal, because both were divine creations, also surfaced. That imperative would later come to trouble all democracies.⁴⁶

The Contribution of Islam to Democracy in Theory and in Practice

It is pertinent, even if it is in passing, to observe that the point Keane wants to stress is in the emphasis on the contribution of Islam to the concept of democracy, and it is very correct. Islam, on the basis of one of the Traditions of the Prophet of Islam (May the Blessings of Allah be Upon Him), has enjoined on the Islamic political community that any Muslim who hankers after a political office; or has demonstrated inordinate ambition to occupy a political office; or play a leadership role; should be prevented from acquiring that power as they may not be suitable to assume such a role. Leadership, rather, should only be entrusted to the one whom the community, by consensus, may have chosen. (See below on this point of consensus on leadership choice.)

The other point that needs to be stressed from this quotation is the foresight that Islam has shown when Keane stresses the fact that Islam has not just made some contribution to an idea that has shaped the democratic governance system; but he has mentioned that Islam has, or the adherents of the religion are urged to demonstrate compassionate treatment of nature, a divine creation, which now comes "to trouble all democracies." One of such major troubles is, without doubt, the climate change, i.e., how policies of a democratic state can be articulated in such a manner as to challenge or mitigate the harmful effects of the changes occasioned therefrom. Put in other words, governance of both the humankind and the natural resources should be handled in such a manner that the community being governed is not abused and/or shortchanged.

Another important point that needs to be analyzed from the long quotation is the fact that there is an indication, contrary to popular notion in the general western literature, and other narratives that

46 *Ibid.*, pp.xvi-xvii.

Islam or its theocratic aspects are “authoritarian and undemocratic,” especially giving the fact that many leading Muslim states are not themselves democratic as they are headed by monarchies that are not in the least or rigorously following the Islamic constitutional injunctions; and/or that where, in few cases they are headed by non-monarchies, democratic politics is merely a dress rehearsal; it is not the “real drama,” or the actual process of governance system that has universally been so described/defined and/or prescribed.

Furthermore, and contrary to these narratives, Keane is able to demonstrate historically and textually that Islam has made fundamental contributions to democratic politics in, among other places, Spain, Turkey, etc., before its consolidation with the passage of time in other climes. It is also pertinent to highlight a few examples of such contributions by Islam, as explained in the book, to underscore the point that both historically and textually there are traditions of democratic governance, now practised extensively in as many countries as we possibly can mention (see below). Because such examples exist, it is hereby suggested that Nigerian politicians could have copied and practised in order to deepen the effervescence rather than the cost of democratic politics that has been the unfortunate outcome in the country, both in the periods of the anti-colonial and post-colonial attempts at democratization.

The essence of making this recommendation can be captured from two perspectives: firstly, that democratic politics and the democratization processes are, without doubt, cultural products whose accretions up to what they have come to be in the contemporary times have benefited from diverse sources; and, secondly as well as pertinently, that what have been their general practices could easily have been acculturated by the diverse communities in Nigeria, considering the fact that most of the societies, historically and in contemporary settings, practice shades of democratic ethos such as consultation and representation before they were brought in through the introduction of Islam to some parts of the country (which have been acculturated in at least the northern part of the country), and, latterly, the introduction of aspects of western pattern of democratic politics by colonialism to the entire country.

Still talking about Islamic influence on democratic practice found expression, according to Keane, in the following patterns:

Apocryphal or not, the foundational story resonated with the widespread use, especially from the fifteenth century onwards, of consultative assemblies throughout the Ottoman Empire,

which at its zenith spanned three continents. The rules of open deliberation were practised in many institutions, normally without the running sultan being present. There were plenty of records of *meshwerets* held in the city of Istanbul to discuss and to resolve a wide of local problems, as and when they arose. Military commanders often resorted to consultation in the field. Government at the highest levels of the empire was conducted according to the same procedure: presided over in earlier times by the sultan, in later times by the Grand Vizier, a body with prescribed membership called the high council (*diwan-i humayun*) that met at regular intervals, at fixed times, to review the condition of the empire, to address its problems as they emerged, and to find solutions. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, with the Ottoman Empire feeling the pressure of rising great powers, Russia included, such meetings grew in frequency. A major historical turning was reached in May 1789, a few weeks before the outbreak of the French Revolution, when Sultan Selim III, at the start of his reign, convened a consultative assembly of leading officials to discuss the main problems of the empire, and how they could be remedied by that body, which had become a parliament in all but name.⁴⁷

Another instance where the contribution of Islam to democratic politics was manifest long before it became a standard mode of governance in Western Europe and other countries has also been highlighted by Keane as follows:

Islam played a fundamental role in the renaissance and redefinition of democracy in another, less obvious but more long-lasting way. By demonstrating, across great swathes of territory, that it could organise dynamic political communities that frowned on extreme disparities of wealth and power, Islam proved to be an attractive way of life, one that was capable of making real gains, certainly at the expense of other types of economy, society and governance that seemed backward.⁴⁸

Since Keane would regard the foregoing contribution of Islam to the evolution of democracy to be less obvious in some areas in Europe, a point that is philosophically, logically as well as plausibly admitted by fair-minded analysts could be the following findings presented in this seminal book depict ultimately the fundamental contributions by Islam

47 *Ibid.*, p.152.

48 *Ibid.*, p.154.

to the democratic idea and, contingently, to its processes and practices.

Medieval Christians on the front lines of contact with Muslim traders and invaders...[were convinced] ...to change their ways [of living], by defecting into the arms of Islam as happened in cities like Cordoba and Granada, whose Christians were so profoundly transformed by Muslim culture, in everything except their religion, that they were known as Mozarabs, or 'Arabisers'. At other times, the charms of Islam steeled the determination of Christians to build new lines of military defence and new means of political resistance, in the hope that the power of Muslims could be rolled back permanently or crushed outright under hoof and sword and cross.

We are about to see that this life-and-death dynamic of cooperation, confrontation and resistance had many strange and ironic consequences. **Easily the most remarkable was the birth, on the front line of European opposition to Islam, of a new institution never before seen on the face of the earth: a parliament of representatives of diverse social interests. The newcomer was a gift of Islam to the modern world, and it was to force a fundamental redefinition of democracy.** It appeared suddenly during the twelfth century, at a moment when Christian communities in the northern reaches of the Iberian [P]eninsula realized that they were trapped in the jaws of a crisis that might swallow them whole. That sudden realization, among dominant groups like the nobility and the Church and urban traders, made them pull together, suspend their rivalries, agree to disagree, and come, side by side, to the negotiating table. Acutely conscious of their political weakness, they invented a new way of banding together to reach agreement by mutual consent.

The result was of great historical consequence. For the institution that was born on Iberian soil of mixed Muslim-Christian parentage bore more than a passing resemblance, in all but name, to the much older Islamic custom of consultation and the defining principle buried within it: **the principle that government is only ever legitimate when it has been sanctioned by the active consent of the representatives chosen by the governed themselves.**⁴⁹[Emphases mine.]

49 *Ibid.*, pp.154-155.

To reiterate, the extensive evidence provided in these quotations strengthens the argument this Lecture wants to make that democracy has both its history and culture and, more importantly, it is not rocket science that cannot be understood or easily understandable, which therefore may mean, contrary to the view of those who think that it is rocket science, that it cannot be practised or easily made practicable as such. It can, to clear any foggy speculation, be practised without the consequential costs that shall be highlighted and explained in the Lecture as the presentation proceeds. Let it be stated that it is not that costs are not inherent in the politics of democracy; it is the consequential costs that we deprecate. What are consequential costs in the politics of democracy?

Consequential costs manifest themselves when the normal costs – such as those incurred based on rational budgetary provisions that can be defended logically, morally, necessarily, and justifiably – are set aside and what is not patently stated in such budgetary provisions are carried out – such as killings, destructions of property, balloting stuffing and stealing, deliberate corruption of electoral officers are embarked upon with impunity, etc., because there are allocations of funds in miscellany!!! We can only, therefore, emphasize at this point that since democracy can be practised, it should never be allowed to degenerate into its numerous costly manifestations in the Nigerian polity, as it will be made much clearer from this Lecture.

Still on the history of the development of democracy, by the 10th century in the Christian Era (CE), the system was regarded to have entered its second historical phase of development, with territorial expansion that covered the Atlantic region, which stretched, at various times, from the shores of Europe across to Baltimore and New York down to Caracas, Montevideo and Buenos Aires.⁵⁰ The changes that took place at this point in time brought about the following features, which included: written constitutions; independent judiciaries; habeas corpus (prohibitions on torture and imprisonment, i.e., to ensure the supremacy of the rule of law); periodic election of candidates to legislative and other elective offices; limits on duration for holding political offices, which would normally be fixed by the (written) constitution; voting by secret ballot; referendum and recall; the existence of electoral colleges; competitive political parties; an ombudsman system; civil society; and civil liberties such as the right to assemble in public; and the freedom of the press. All of these features equally came with their dynamics, which we shall closely look at when we analyze the features of the so-called representative democracy that

50 *Ibid.*, p.xvii.

is being practised in Nigeria. It must, however, be stressed that representative democracy did not just come into being without some form of struggle, as it was also the case with popular democracy. One significant outcome of its coming into being was that it "...came to be housed within territorial states protected by standing armies and equipped with powers to make and enforce laws and to extract taxes from their subject populations. These states were typically much bigger and more populous than the political units of ancient democracy."⁵¹

In addition, there has been the quantum leap in the development trajectory of electoral democracy globally. Keane's specifics on this indicate that by 1941, there were only 11 democracies existing globally; and by 1950, there were 22 democracies. But, by the end of the 20th century, out of a total of 192 countries in the world then, 119 of them could be described to be under "electoral democracies," "with eighty-five of them – 38 per cent of the world's inhabitants – enjoying forms of democracy that are 'respectful of basic human rights and the rule of law'."⁵²

This second phase of the reinvention of democracy has also brought about some variants. In other words, representative democracy has spurned such variants or terminologies as "aristocratic democracy," now probably referred to as "constitutional monarchy," whereby the King or the Queen merely reigns and does not rule; "republican democracy," i.e., a democracy which takes place in other than kingdoms and imperial settings; and "liberal democracy," is the type of democracy that takes place in capitalist societies; while "socialist democracy" is the type that is practised in a few existing socialist societies, which, in the literature, is regarded to be in transition to the communist society.⁵³ The other typologies that have been analyzed in the literature concerned with democracy include radical democracy; guided democracy; liberal democracy; socialist democracy; and consociational democracy. These are ideal constructs; in reality, the differences, especially in each democratic system's effective delivery of their individual promises, may turn out to be a mirage. This could be the case where the leadership under which system is being operated leaves much to be desired. (See the Table 1 below.)

51 *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.

52 Keane, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

53 See N. Yaqub, "A Critical Assessment of the Operation of the Presidential Model of Democracy in Nigeria: From Inception to the End of the Obasanjo Administration Years (1979-2007), *Forthcoming*."

Table 1: Types of Democracy

| Some Values vis-à-vis Real Governance | Radical Democracy | Guided Democracy | Liberal Democracy | Socialist Democracy | Consociational Democracy |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| Objectives | Enabling undifferentiated individuals to exercise their rights and protect their interests | Achievement of the general will | Representation and protection of diverse interests | Equality; social justice | Consensus between diverse groups |
| Perception of society | Aggregation of individuals | Organic whole with common interests | Aggregation of diverse individuals and groups autonomous from the state | Potentially organic whole but requiring transformation through state action | Aggregation of diverse groups autonomous from the state |
| Role of the state | Executor of the will of the majority | Executor of the general will | Referee | Redistribution of resources and guide to action | Referee |
| Political Process | Provision of arena for pursuit of individual interests | Unchecked pursuit of objectives proclaimed by the ruling elite | Checks and balances to prevent tyranny of the majority, or its representatives, or of powerful minorities | All citizens given an equal voice by reducing inequality of wealth and resources | Recognition of the diversity of interests and identities by bringing leaders of all major groups into the governmental process. |
| Citizen participation | Active participation is encouraged; electoral contestation | Mobilization by ruling elite; no elections to key institutions, or only noncontested elections | Permitted but not actively encouraged; electoral contestation | Popular participation to offset elite power; may involve mobilization or coercion, electoral contestation possible, sometimes only intraparty | Participation within constituent groups and by group leaders in the allocation of resources; electoral contestation. |

| Some Values vis-à-vis Real Governance | Radical Democracy | Guided Democracy | Liberal Democracy | Socialist Democracy | Consociational Democracy |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| Citizens' rights | Individual interests are subordinate to the interests of the majority but are protected by equality before the law | Individual interests are seen as synonymous with state interest; rulers decided on the extent of equality | Constitutional safeguards of individual rights; equality before the law | Attitudes to civil rights ambiguous; objective of social equality | Variable; may be safeguarded by state or within constituent groups |
| Actual and potential problems | Tyranny of the majority | Tyranny of the elite | Elite domination on account of unequal distribution of resources | Extent of coercion required to achieve objectives | Reinforcement of social divisions; immobilism |

Source: Copied and Adopted from R. Pinkney, *Democracy in the Third World*, New Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited, Second Edition, 2004, pp.8-9.

All of these varieties are not only about the historical trajectory of an idea and its practice; they signify the important but the assumed as well as the claimed point about the democratic system of governance: it is indeed both a contested idea of and a difficult tool for governance, as we have been saying and as recent examples of democracy's exposure to attacks in the United States might have demonstrated. In spite and/or as a result of the resilience of its form, democracy is ideationally, at least, ceaselessly being renewed. Keane has come up with what he calls "monitory democracy," as an example of the journey so far of this mode of governance. We briefly examine this "new accretion" of this system.

Monitory Democracy: Is This a New and Specific Phase in the Development of Democratic Theory?

It must, however, be emphasized that it is not just in the number of countries that embraced democracy that is calling for a reinvention of the system, but certain developments such as the emergence of regional economic cum political groupings as embodied, among others, in the European Union (EU), which Keane refers to as a “cross-border democratic structure;” the reinvigoration of civil society organizations; the setting up of public integrity commissions; judicial activism; local courts; workplace tribunals; consensus conferences; parliaments for minorities; public interest litigation; citizens’ juries; citizens’ assemblies; independent public inquiries; think-tanks; experts’ reports; participatory budgeting; vigils; ‘blogging’; and other novel forms of media scrutiny,⁵⁴ that have had their impacts on the notion of “monitory democracy.” The unique quality of these bodies inheres in the renewed zeal in their demand for accountability and transparency, as well as the fact they are working assiduously against concentration of so much power on few individuals and institutions (with the obnoxious effects associated therewith) from standard representative institutions. Furthermore, these non-state bodies are noted to be contributing to and fostering civic works among the larger population.

Keane refers to this phase that democracy has entered as “monitory democracy,” which is defined as a process by which:

...power-monitoring and power-controlling devices have begun to extend sideways and downwards through the political order. They penetrate the corridors of government and occupy the nooks and crannies of civil society, and in so doing they greatly complicate, and sometimes wrong-foot, the lives of politicians, parties, legislatures and governments.⁵⁵

As much as one would agree that attention should be focused on the representative institution (see its fuller discussion below) more than any other arm of government on the strong argument that members of the parliament are, firstly, more in number; secondly, because of the fact that they are also closer to the grassroots; and, thirdly, because their actions and/or inactions in their legislative role have greater impact on the governance system in any democracy, the absurdities of the Nigerian political (representative) system are pervasive and have become so widespread that the extra-parliamentary bodies that Keane has suggested shall have to extend their searchlights and oversight functions to them all, much more than in other climes. I have, in view of the inanities of the representative system come to the conclusion that the Abraham Lincolnian definition of democracy as “government of the

54 *op.cit.*, p. xxvii.

55 *Ibid.*

people, by the people, and for the people,” should be cast aside as it has become inadequate and inappropriate to properly define democracy. In most “democratic climes,” democracy is now a government of the people, but not by the people, nor for the people!

Consequent upon this need to re-define democracy is the other issue that should make the monitory role of the extra-parliamentary bodies very crucial in the Nigerian situation; and this is the gluttonous behaviour of legislators, especially when based on their amoral humongous perquisites that they allocate to themselves, to which the cries of the Nigerian public have amounted to nothing, in their estimation. The executive branch is also not immune to some absurd practices, whose nauseous expression is manifested in equally humongous retirement benefits the governors cause and arm twist the state assemblies to grant to them for life; as well as ensuring that their post-gubernatorial retirement political lives are spent as senators representing their states! Indeed, the impunity of some of the serial regimes at the executive branch should not escape critical attention – as such misdemeanors clearly portray that branch as a putrid carcass of feudalistic or autocratic governance inanities. Even, the judiciary in Nigeria has, on a number of occasions, demonstrated its lack of courage and moral firmament of what it takes to be a temple of justice as recent events brought to the fore the extent of unconscionable corruption and lucre in that branch of government also.⁵⁶

Furthermore, the answer to the question raised in and as the title in this sub-section can be stated thus: since “monitory democracy” is meant to indicate the increasing salience of the work of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs); other regional bodies that may be regarded as quasi-governmental organizations – such as the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), other sundry bodies all over the globe, etc. – is “monitory democracy” with its litany of non-governmental bodies indicative enough that the future of democracy in Nigeria is assured if these bodies can be proactive enough and can be glimpsed in the horizon, even if remotely.⁵⁷

56 The “monitory roles” of the civil society organizations in Nigeria are responsible to a certain extent in the ongoing review of the humongous pension schemes of the retiring governors in some of the states (of the federation). The Lagos State Government has now come out to cancel such unconscionable awards to the latest form of thievery by the so-called representatives of the people.

57 One is particularly impressed by the recent principled opposition of the ECOWAS member states in standing up against and to reverse the forceful change by unconstitutional means of governments in The Gambia and Guinea Conakry as well as attempting to resolve the political crises in Mali Burkina Faso. See also Footnote 52 above.

In spite of the efforts to promote democracy in Nigeria, why is it that residues of autocracy are still part of the governance system and why are they easily resorted to by the ruling elements and their supporters? We have tried to address this concern in the preceding paragraphs and we may also need to look at some of the causative factors later in the Lecture. Before this is done, we need to contextualize the phenomenon of autocracy that is a residue and/or an accompaniment of the rather unsuccessful attempts to democratize the Nigerian polity from colonial era.⁵⁸ Meanwhile we shall turn attention to the related twin concepts of government and governance in the following sub-section.

Representative Democracy

Mature democratic politics is found in Western Europe as was understood in the Cold War Era conceptualization; North America; Japan; Australia; New Zealand; Botswana; India; and Mauritius.⁵⁹ In this group of countries, both the spirit and the letter of democracy are well entrenched and democracy seems to have been consolidated, with allowances made here and there for the display of idiosyncrasies and variations that, in certain cases, may have been perfected by individuals. Donald Trump is a classic contemporary example to cite, in this group of countries. Democratic consolidation could come from the existence of constitution or a convention whose content and context are well understood and imbibed by the citizenry. There must be in existence multi-party system that engenders a competitive struggle for the available elective offices in the polity, at regular intervals. It does not matter so much if in some of these countries there is always one dominant party that wins at the polls. What is more important is the freedom of the parties to be in competition for the selection of the political leaders.

Other features include the observation of the rule of law along with the existence of an independent judiciary that may, among other things, be required to adjudicate in case of electoral controversies. There is also the need to establish an independent electoral body that fearlessly conducts elections as and when due. Other critical features of the democratic system in the mature democracies include the effective functioning of the civil society organizations and, most importantly, the operation of a private (capitalist) economy. In the contemporary era, democracy in the West is ideally cherished if it is operated as a small government and it is less obtrusive or encroaching in the ordinary lifestyles of the citizens.

58 This crucial point is discussed comprehensively in my Inaugural Lecture that is forthcoming.

59 Botswana, India and Mauritius are included not because their democracies have reached a high degree of sophistication as found in the other listed regions, but, as a rule of the thumb, because the change of governments in these ex-colonies have not been through the barrel of a gun.

This kind of democracy whether in the advanced capitalist countries or as it has been practised in Botswana, India and Mauritius is labeled “liberal democracy,” which is conceived as governance system “...marked not only by free and fair elections but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property,”⁶⁰ of the citizenry. While this type of democracy may also be referred to as “procedural democracy,”⁶¹ Zakaria has observed that:

...this bundle of freedoms – what might be termed “constitutional liberalism” – has nothing intrinsically to do with democracy and the two have not always gone together, even in the West. After all, Adolf Hitler became [C]hancellor of Germany via free elections. Over the last half-century in the West, democracy and liberty have merged. But today the two strands of liberal democracy, interwoven in the Western political fabric, are coming apart across the globe. Democracy is flourishing; liberty is not.⁶²

Although the illiberality that he has observed is less evident in the West (lest we may be making any mistake, the tendency is creeping into a number of European countries and the US) than in the examples he has given from the non-Western societies. The fact that elections take place in the Arab world at all does not, according to Zakaria, guarantee greater freedom to the citizens in those countries; rather, he argues that what come out are caricatures of democratic governance: “...regimes that are more intolerant, reactionary, anti-Western, and anti-Semitic than the dictatorships currently in place.”⁶³ The other work of such ideological blinkers, which is critical of non-Western societies and uncritical apologia for the West is most probably found in the work of Fukuyama.⁶⁴

Without pretending to hold brief for the people in the Arab world, there has been unambiguous evidence of the unjust interventions (even if they be indirectly and surreptitiously) by the West in the very democratic attempts made by some of the Arab people to institute governments of their choice. A case in point was the scuttling of the imminent victory of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria in the

60 Zakaria, F., *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004 Edition, p.17.

61 We shall come later to explain this type of democracy properly against its apparent antinomy - “substantive democracy.”

62 Zakaria, *op. cit.*, p.19.

63 Zakaria, *ibid.*, p.18.

64 Fukuyama, F., *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: The Free Press, 1992. See a critical review of the book by Nuhu Yaqub, “Marxism and the *End of History and the Last Man* Ideology: A Critical Review,” *Annals of the Social Science Academy of Nigeria*, No. 12 (January-December 2000), pp.86-104.

December 1991 National Assembly Elections in which FIS was poised to win, having won 188 of the 231 seats contested in that round. The West was similarly irked by the triumph of the Hamas in the West Bank in January in 2006.⁶⁵ In addition to this blatant subversion of the aspirations of a people, it is the West that has given protection to the most corrupt, venal and totally inept monarchies and/or other gerontocratic leaderships in the Arab world. The logic for such protection is simple to understand: in the absence of Cold War, the monarchs have continued to guarantee Western access to the huge oil resources in the Middle East, which access is allegedly not on equitable terms.⁶⁶ Generally speaking, the Western countries and Japan (nay, largely the capitalist countries) do not seem to care a hoot about the obnoxiously asymmetrical global system that they have been presiding over and also profiting from, since the end of the Second World War; and, it appears also that they expect those at the receiving end to meekly accept the inherent injustice and *status quo*.

Despite the foregoing, the pertinent question that still needs to be asked in respect of the evolution of democracy is: why is the West always afraid of “radical solution” to the pattern of the Third World democratization process? After all, liberal democracy, historically speaking, was a radical development of monumental significance. Discounting for the time being the classical notion of democracy as the rule of the mob (*a la* the Athenians, particularly, Aristotle), the democratization process has historically been a radical process pitting the majority against the minority that always possess power and privilege. In the classic bourgeois revolution, in particular, the emergent capitalist class had to struggle to wrest power from the feudal lords. As the capitalist class was battling the upper (feudal) class so also was the proletarian class below it was raising the banner for democratic inclusiveness. The incremental extension of democracy went on and on to the point when franchise and suffrage were granted and universal adult suffrage became the norm in a number of countries in the West at the beginning of the 20th century. This was what made it possible for the participation of women as well as the other minorities in the Western societies. As a specific example, it is not in a place such as

65 It is on account of the US's most times unwarranted interventions in a number of countries that N. Chomsky has written what I regard as a masterpiece: *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy*, New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company LLC, 2006.

66 Indeed, put in its proper perspectives, one of the reasons why *al-Qaeda* is said to have declared war on Western economic interests and values is the determination of the organization to reclaim the oil resources of the region from the near absolute control and thus its unrequited exploitation by Western multinational corporations. See M. A. El-Gamal and A. M. Jaffe, *Oil, Dollars, Debts, and Crises: The Global Curse of Black Gold*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, especially pages 65-70.

the United States that one would forget the enormous struggles that were waged to bring the black race, especially, into the political fold of democracy. The integrative and inclusive role and nature of the democratic system cannot be denied; but it has had to develop incrementally, as shown above; and, as an idea, it has not historically been embraced by all of the people in all of the societies at all of the time.

MacPherson, who has studied the developmental trajectory of liberal democracy, for instance, has provided the basis for one to deduce that Western societies were first democratic before they became liberal.⁶⁷ It would then appear that, with democratization process in motion at particular conjunctures, history kept repeating itself: democracy came first and liberalism later. Again, we have to stress that as the history of liberal democracy also repeats itself in different societies, it is not going to follow the same pattern. Why, then, should some analysts of the political system of democracy sometimes gloss over the inherent tension within the concept and simply come to the conclusion that democracy has been unproblematic? As Roniger has put the issue from a comparative perspective:

The confrontation of models of democracy is related to the fact that democracy is a multi-vocal and highly contested concept, entailing institutional and normative tensions. It entails core tension between rule-oriented normative universalization of political rights and a goal-oriented stress on the extension of economic, social and cultural rights.⁶⁸

Viewed heuristically, one would like to argue that some non-Western societies may be intolerant of the West because it is, in a fundamental sense, their rights not to, democratically and liberally speaking, accept, hook, line, and sinker, the package of values that may be very dear to the West, no matter how universal such values could be. Saying this does not mean one is justifying human rights violations by motley governments in the non-Western countries; nor any system that is built on discrimination in whatever guise; nor, furthermore, to justify a resort to terroristic pastimes; nor the banditry form that democracy has become in the Nigerian setting. One wholeheartedly concedes that there is no room for violence in a properly functioning democracy; but a democratic country should also not visit violence against another country, whether the latter is aspiring to be a democracy or, failing,

67 MacPherson, *op. cit.*

68 Roniger, L., "Democratization," in M. Sasaki, E. Zimmermann, and J. Goldstone (eds.), *Concise Encyclopedia of Comparative Sociology*, Leiden: Brill, Forthcoming.

especially if it is degenerating into a dictatorship.⁶⁹ It is furthermore pertinent to stress that mature democracies should always serve as role models for dictatorships to emulate, by approaching failing democratization process in non-Western societies by means other than arm-twisting tactics.

As a further effort to clarify the concept of democracy, it is correct to argue that democracy, in its liberal form, varies from one Western country to another. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the Scandinavian countries minus Iceland, in Spain, Belgium, etc., liberal democracy has taken the form of constitutional monarchies, while the United States has adopted the presidential system with its strong republican features. Yet, some other countries operate the liberal democratic system within a presidential system that gives room for the existence of the office of the prime minister who serves as the head of government.

Perhaps and from another expositional perspective, democracy should be seen not as an end in itself, but a means to an end or, like what was argued at the beginning of this Lecture, it must not be seen as a “fashion item.” As a means to an end, different countries should be expected to utilize democracy as an instrument in such a manner that the objectives of, for instance, “the extension of economic, social and cultural rights” could be realized (by those practicing it). In addition, as already hinted, it should be underscored that democracy, in its highest development so far as “liberal democracy” is not also a *finished product*. Apart from saying that the “social democracy” variant or, put differently, the welfare state component of liberal democracy, has been an attempt to also blunt the rough edges of the capitalist system (which gains have been under attack in various monetarist, neo-liberal and extremely conservative countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, etc., in the economic realm especially, and in the wake of capitalist triumph over communism). Liberal democracy is certainly a living organism, subject to mutations, accretions, and even atrophy! Whether or not the social democrats in the various Western countries will regain the upper hand in the course of time and similarly use the powers of the state to reverse the current (upper) edge being enjoyed by the extremely conservative forces is not even a matter of conjecture as such, because history definitely repeats itself as we argued earlier. In any case, values of whatever hue are always measured on a spectrum scale or basis. Therefore, the swing of opinion about certain features of liberal democracy should be anticipated given the inevitable societal dynamics and the inexorable impact of time.

69 The role of the various administrations in the United States and also the other Western countries in a number of the Third World, especially at the height of the Cold War, left much to be desired.

The Place of Civil Society in the Democratization Process

In the literature on the democratization process and especially given its developmental trajectory from the West, the role of civil society in its consolidation has been harped upon. Civil society refers to the social space occupied by organizations that are not operating under the ambit of the state nor located in the household. Rather, it occupies the intermediate space between the two polar social institutions of the state and the household. Civil society organizations promote the common interest of their members and, generally, are democratically led. In the advanced capitalist countries, such organizations, particularly those canvassing for political and economic programmes, contribute immensely to the development and consolidation of democracy through advocacy and clarification of issues or political enlightenment; the setting of agenda for the state as well as organs that aspire to mediate in state functions, especially the political parties; and the mobilization of all and sundry around such programmes.

The resilience of the civil society organizations (in terms of both organizational competence and effectiveness in the attainment of set objectives) is underscored, principally, by the inherent independence it is expected to strenuously strive to protect from invasion by the state. Its integrity is equally assured and boosted if the middle class is well developed in the society and the mass of its members play the central role expected of the class therein. The middle class does not only play an important role in civil society organizations, but also in the capitalist system in its entirety. The middle class is the stabilizing force, indeed the engine house, of the capitalist system. This is because its buoyancy is facilitated by the robust way members contribute through production, consumption of goods and services as well as in the payment of taxes and the discharge of sundry patriotic and civic responsibilities. Wherever or whenever the existence or economic viability of this class is threatened, even in the fully developed capitalistic system, the entire social formation is seen to be equally threatened.⁷⁰

The analysis of civil society in the context of the Third World countries, especially those in transition to democracy, has covered such motley issues as its nature, democratic credentials, relations with the state, resilience, etc. Given that the bulk of the countries in the Third World are not capitalistically industrialized, the type of civil society

70 Whether or not the alleged destruction of the middle class in the society is a statement of fact during the 2010 mid-term elections in the United States remained to be seen; but that it even featured at all among the campaign issues underscored the relevance or the important role that such a social category could play in a mature capitalist society and, by extension, in all modern societies. Indeed, since those mid-term elections in 2010, the role of the middle class in American politics has not, by any measure, been diminished.

organizations found therein are not as equally developed as in the advanced capitalist economies. What has generally been researched into, in the former group of countries is adjudged ill-suited to the pristine roles of similar bodies in the capitalist social formations. The categories that are predominant in the underdeveloped countries are located, in terms of primary preoccupations, in ethnic and religious fields. The arguments against their civil society organizations' credentials and statuses are based on their want of democracy and transparency, as well as the fact that in some cases such associations are not broad based and, simply put, not civil. Why they are also likely to suffer from problems of internal democracy is because, the organizations, more often than not, are bankrolled by external foundations, in which the leadership is normally a one-man entity that is not open to accountability. Both the dependence and the likelihood of a lack of democratic credentials will not only lend the civil society organizations to harassment by the state in which they exist (especially if they are daggers-drawn with their states that are controlled by military autocrats over democratic transition agendas), they are likely also to be beset by intrigues that may eventually make them ineffectual in carrying out their mandate and can become bankrupt, if and when external funding stops flowing in.⁷¹

Those criticizing the ethnically and religiously based civil society organizations may be making a point in terms of wanting to both have standard normative as well as measurable criteria to assess their performance across time and space. But a critical look at the antecedents of civil society organizations (before the western type CSOs sprang up in the wake of the democratization process in the 80's and 90's in Africa) would indicate the very useful advocacy roles some of them had carried out, which they have continued to undertake in, for instance, the education and health sectors. In comparative terms, they were and still are more grassroots based and tend to identify more fully with the community than their modern counterparts that are largely urban based. Furthermore, they were/are more self-reliant and, obviously, less dependent on external sources of funding. Sometimes, they also dabbled into the political space to carry out advocacy activities in or for certain political parties. The Ibo State Union, for example, was very helpful in the recruitment of members who lived outside their ancestral homesteads for the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) during the anti-colonial struggles in Nigeria. Similarly, the *Jam'iyar Mutanen Arewa* and the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* were two cultural associations (read civil society organizations) that transformed

71 See Kasfir's useful summary of the criticisms of the conventional view of African civil society organizations in N. Kasfir, (ed.), *Civil Society and Democracy in Africa: Critical Perspectives*, London and Portland: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1998, pp.1-20.

themselves into political parties as the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the Action Group (AG), respectively, during the anti-colonial struggles. Thus, the misgivings about the NGOs should be more empirically based than a blanket condemnation of otherwise useful organs that, in time and space, might have contributed their quotas (however miniscule) to the democratization process.

The phrase "democratization process" is used in this Lecture to define the attempt(s) at democratizing societies that either have never democratized before or have had to alternate (invariably) between authoritarianism and democratic (or simply and purely civilian) governance/rule system. It may be the case that, as a result of the deep-seated nature of authoritarianism, democratic governance cannot easily be instituted. In a highly nuanced distinction, Marina Ottaway has argued that:

Democracy...is a highly disruptive process in itself: it encourages the conflicts that exist in a collapsing state to manifest themselves freely, but without the restraint of the checks and balances, and of the agreement on the basic rules, that regulate conflict...in a well-established democratic system. Democracy as a stable state is highly desirable, but democratization, or the process of getting to such stable democracy, can trigger highly undesirable side effects.⁷²

What countries that are confronted with the challenges of democratization may at best hope for is what is referred to in the literature as "electoral democracy." According to Freedom House, an electoral democracy could still be considered to be a democracy, but it would not be rated as free.⁷³ It may not be rated as free if, as the Nigerian example is going to prove subsequently, scheduled elections are totally emptied of their democratic essence, since they would have been so massively rigged that the results are also so visibly distorted and unacceptable. It is not only the rigging that is the assault of what we consider to be the essence of democracy, but also the scale of violence inherent in the elections and, even if rigging and violence were absent, how could one account for humongous corruption that is brought in by a winning party to arrest the development of the socio-economic and socio-political edifices of the democratic state? These variables are so inherent in the so-called democratic politics in the

72 Ottaway, M., "Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa: Faltering Prospects, New Hopes," in I. W. Zartman, ed., *Collapsed States: Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner, 1995. Quoted in R. Sandbrook, *Closing the Circle: Democratization and Development in Africa*, Toronto, London and New York: Between the Lines and Zed Books Ltd., 2000, p.8.

73 Cited in L. Diamond, "Introduction," in L. Diamond and M. F. Plattner (eds.), *Democratization in Africa*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p.x.

Nigerian polity to warrant the attention of this Lecture to these crucial variables, i.e., electoral riggings, violence and corruption, in order to proffer solutions or see what can be done to avoid the emptiness of democracy, going forward, and the assault by military interlopers.

It is pertinent that, at this point of analyzing the concept of “electoral democracy,” we also bring relevant perspectives that Diamond has brought to the concept of democracy. He argues that democracy, as a political system, can vary in depth and may exist above two distinct thresholds:

At the minimal level, if a people can choose and replace their leaders in regular, free, and fair elections, there is an *electoral democracy*. Calling a political system a democracy doesn't mean it is a good or admirable system or that we needn't worry much about improving it further. It simply means that if a majority of the people want a change in leaders and policies and are able to organize effectively within the rules, they can get change.

But electoral democracies vary enormously in their quality. Competitive and uncertain elections, even frequent alternation of parties in power, can coexist with serious abuses of human rights, significant constraints on freedom in many areas of life, discrimination against minorities, a weak rule of law, a compromised or ineffectual judiciary, rampant corruption, gerrymandered electoral districts, unresponsive government, state domination of the mass media, and widespread crime and violence. Genuine competition to determine who rules does not ensure high levels of freedom, equality, transparency, social justice, or other liberal values. Electoral democracy helps to make these other values more achievable, but it does not by any means ensure them.

When we speak of democracy, then, we should aspire to its realization at a higher plane, [by] the achievement of the ten “thick” dimensions, which are as follows:

- Substantial individual freedom of belief, opinion, discussion, speech, publication, broadcast, assembly, demonstration, petition, and (why not) the Internet.
- Freedom of ethnic, religious, racial, and other minority groups (as well as historically excluded majorities) to practice their religion and culture and to participate equally in political and social life.
- The right of all adult citizens to vote and to run for office (if they meet certain minimum age and competency requirements).

- Genuine openness and competition in the electoral arena, enabling any group that adheres to constitutional principles to form a party and contest for office,
- Legal equality of all citizens under a rule of law, in which the laws are clear, publicly known, universal, stable, and nonretroactive.
- An independent judiciary to neutrally and consistently apply the law and protect individual and group rights.
- Thus, due process of law and freedom of individuals from torture, terror, and unjustified detention, exile, or interference in their personal lives – by the state or nonstate actors.
- Institutional checks on the power of elected officials, by an independent legislature, court system, and other autonomous agencies.
- Real pluralism in sources of information and forms of organization independent of the state; and[,] thus, a vibrant “civil society.”
- Control over the military and state security apparatus by civilians who are ultimately accountable to the people through elections.⁷⁴

When these exist in substantial measure, we can call

[the] system a *liberal democracy*. To the extent that these are greatly diminished, democracy – if it exists at all, is *illiberal*. If there are regular, multiparty elections and other formal institutions of democracy like a national assembly, court system, constitution, and so on, but the people are not able to vote their leaders out of power because the system is, in effect, rigged, then the country has what I call *pseudodemocracy*.⁷⁵ [Emphasis in the Original.]

Elections are, indeed, very crucial to democracy such that anything which erodes the sanctity of the trust and mandate freely given by the electorate debases the process to the extent that the accompanying democratic system is adjudged not free. In the words of Michael Bratton, “...you can have elections without democracy, [but] you cannot have democracy without elections.”⁷⁶ To prevent this scenario elections must therefore be free, competitive, and transparent, with a level playing field provided to the contestants. Elections cannot be free if the

74 These ten “thick” dimensions are as follows: Diamond, L., *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies Throughout the World*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2008, p.22.

75 *Ibid.*, pp.22-23.

76 Bratton, M., “Second Elections in Africa,” in L. Diamond and M. F. Plattner (eds.), *ibid.*:19.

electoral umpire or the electoral administrative machinery is compromised *ab initio*, as well as at every point in the democratization process. The lack of transparency in electoral administration is one of the many challenges in the struggle for democratic politics in Nigeria. (We shall endeavour to take a look at the electoral experience of the Nigerian nation-state as the analysis progresses.)

The democratization process, especially in the emerging democracies, can only be guaranteed or consolidated after a series of elections must have been periodically held wherein the stipulated conditions mentioned above might have also been met. Bratton, referring to this as the challenge of the “second elections in Africa,” poses the following empirical referents/inquiries, to determine how such elections might have fared in the countries he examined: electoral *quantity* (i.e., whether or not subsequent elections were held and were they on time?); electoral *quality* (i.e., whether or not they were free and fair?); and what could have been the electoral *meaning* (i.e., what interpretations were given to the results of the elections or did the losers contest the results?).⁷⁷ It is apparent that the critical point when the nexus of elections and consolidated democracy can be established is that stage when an election leads to the turn-over of political leaders. Bratton would refer to this critical point as follows: “Elections that result in regime transition or leadership alternation are usually unequivocal, signifying a break with the past.” This was witnessed in Benin Republic in March 1996, when the voters returned the former dictator, Mathieu Kerekou, to power after he was previously swept out of office by the same electorate.

This pattern has not been seen in Nigeria until 2015 when Mr. Goodluck Jonathan was defeated by a challenger – Mr. Muhammadu Buhari. Prior to this historic development, an incumbent who wanted to review the constitution in order to stay longer than what was allowed constitutionally was forced to relinquish power, even though his party still controlled power at the center in, arguably, the worst elections the country had ever witnessed, in 2007. This is one of the things that made the General Elections in 2015 much more important than the cumulative elections that had previously been held in the country. In point of fact, Nigerians were very much anxious to see if the elections would be characterized with the universally accepted levels of accountability, transparency, fairness in a democratic contest and/or choice, especially since Yar’Adua, whose election to the presidency in 2007 was thoroughly and morally piqued and condemned, went ahead to set up the Hon. Justice Muhammadu Lawal Uwais Electoral Reform

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.19-21. Emphases contained in the original. The concept of second elections could actually be in terms of a series of such processes, not just in the literal sense that the word “second” is or may likely be interpreted.

Committee,⁷⁸ with a mandate to proffer solutions to electoral malpractice.

Much as the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) retained power in 2011, which elections, without doubt, were poorly conducted by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and were also visited by the usual corrosive factors of rigging, violence, delayed commencement of voting, and the resultant disputed results, due in turn to poorly calculated votes that were cast; cancellations; etc. The 2015 General Elections were a lot better, courtesy of the 'card reader' technology that was introduced and used. The 2019 General Elections also suffered the same fate as a badly administered one, like the previous elections, other than those of 1993 Presidential Elections that were criminally annulled; and the 2015 electoral exercise. Furthermore, it is instructive to mention that it was only the 2015 results of the presidential elections that were never ultimately decided by the Supreme Court since the transition to civilian rule began in 1999. The forgoing narratives should now put us in good stead to analyze the costs of the democratization process as well as the banditry allegory in the title of the Lecture to analyze the kind of democracy in the polity. This is what we now turn to.

COSTS OF THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS IN NIGERIA: THE DEVASTATING DIMENSION OF CORRUPTION⁷⁹

Unlike the costs we have looked at in the preceding section from the theoretical and analytical prisms of economics, the costs we shall look at in this sub-section may have to be based on the normal social science analytic tools. It is not that the science of economics cannot explain them (in parenthesis, is there any such social science discipline which is that better than the field of economics in this regard? The answer is: there is none); but political costs are unique in themselves such that they have to be looked at separately. The costs in question include: corruption; political violence; the ineffectiveness of the electoral administrative bodies to competently enforce rules of engagement, particularly in instances when the extant regulations are meant to be implemented to deter others that may want to contravene them as well as the likelihood of the inclinations of the offenders to repeat the contraventions, time and again. Other costs could come to prominence where some of the key officials involved would refuse to regulate and/or prevent the malfeasance that is contained in and the threats to electoral laws in connivance with the politicians (being the

78 Officially known as *Report of the Electoral Reform Committee* (in VI Volumes, with several parts in Volumes II; IV; V; and VI), December 2008.

79 This section on conceptual issues concerning corruption relies, among others, on my publication on the subject titled: "The Prevalence of Corruption in Africa," *Indian Journal of Politics*, Vol.48, No.1-2, pp.93-121.

primus inter pares among the beneficiaries of the corruption inherent in all this).⁸⁰

All the foregoing corrupt practices are inclusive of the motivators-, organizers- as well as practitioners-in-chief in the annulment of a presidential election in 1993 (which was adjudged to be the most credible in the annals of electoral politics since independence in 1960), because of inexplicable base sentiments and selfish justifications contained therein.⁸¹ Without doubt the annulment and the puerile justifications (from whomsoever they might have come) have had **catastrophic consequences, especially on nation-building and national cohesion, precisely because that was what the annulment was meant to achieve *ab initio***, in any case. The cost of parallel congresses; the cost of also parallel judicial pronouncements; and the ugly phenomenon of godfathers have immeasurably contributed to the cost of democratization in the country. We shall look at these issues *seriatim*, wherever and however possible, and explain the roles of each in the nature of the erosion of the democratization processes and their costs thereof.

Islam and its Strictures Against Corruption

Since this Inaugural Lecture is taking place in an academic institution that is named after a revered Islamic Scholar who carried out the *Jihad* to cleanse the society that had become so steep in corruption and the compromise of the correct practice of the religion, we equally sought for the Islamic perspective on corruption; its cancerous impact on all facets of life in society; and the standpoint of the religion on it. In *Surat Baqarat*, Verse 205, it is stated that "...Allah does not love corruption." Also, in *Surat Al-Rum* (or *The Romans*), Allah has stated that: "Mischief (Corruption) has appeared on land and sea because of (meed) that the hands of men have earned, that (Allah) may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back (from evil)."⁸² Apart

80 The levels of and the extent to which perpetrators would go to commit electoral corruption are so complex that they demand their own special research to unearth the perpetrators; their *modus operandi*, and likely consequences of the nefarious pastimes, which are devastatingly harmful to democratization. Regardless of the enormity of unearthing the full scale of monumental corruption, important snippets of the corruption phenomenon, whether politically and economically, shall be featured in this Lecture

81 In what the newspapers have dubbed the rare interview that General Ibrahim Babangida granted to the Arise Television Network, as part of the activities to mark his 80th birthday celebrations (*circa* August 17th, 2021), the annulled election in 1993 was explained childishly as follows by the annular-in-chief, the "Military President. See the full explanation (not convincing to this Lecture in any case) in footnote 164, p.137 below.

82 Ali, A. Y., *Roman Transliteration of The Holy Quran With Full Arabic Text English Translation*, Lahore and Kano: Alkali Sharif Bala Publisher Kurmi Market, 1934, p.401.

from this text, there are several other *Surat* in the Qur'an (see, among others, Q2:183; and Q2:188; and Q2:205; Q3:104; and Q3:161; Q4:135; Q5:33; Q:64; Q11:85; and Q11:113; Q28:77; Q28:81; and Q28:83; Q29:45; Q83:1-7; and Q89:6-14 that have talked about and/or against corruption and also what punishments God shall mete out to anyone who is found guilty by indulging in it.

The Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are also replete with admonitions both against the commission of the crimes of corruption and the forms of punishments that Allah has sanctioned against culprits. Some of the Traditions are as follows: Islam frowns at corruption and declares it as an evil and ungodly behaviour, which must be prohibited and/or punished.

Prevention of corruption in all its types is one of the two major aims, goals or objectives that the Islamic law (*Shari'ah*) seeks to achieve. This is referred to by Muslim scholars as *dar'al-Mafasid* (avoidance/prevention of harm/evil/corruption). The second objective of *Shari'ah* is accruing or the enhancement of good and benefit which are also referred to as *Jalb al-Masalih* (promotion of the common good/benefit). In other words, the second objective is similar to anti-corruption [campaigns].⁸³

This idea of the prevention of corruption that resonates also in the narration given by Abu Sa'id bn Khudri (r.a.), is found in the following Hadith of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH): "Whosoever amongst you sees evil let him change it with his hands; and if he is not able, then with his tongue; and if he is not able, then let him hate it in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith."⁸⁴ The second objective of ensuring that adherents of Islamic religion ensure the improvement in the existential conditions of the citizens as well as to make them to be aware of the danger inherent in partaking in corruption, could be gleaned in the next two *Ahadith* [Prophetic Traditions] narrated, respectively, by *Sahih Muslim* and *Al-Bukhari*. "Whosoever is given authority by Allah over a people, then he dies while he had betrayed those under his rule shall be deprived of Paradise."⁸⁵ Furthermore, "Some men abuse Allah's Property (that is, public money and funds). They will go to Hell on the Day of Resurrection."⁸⁶

The Traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) are also replete with admonitions both against the commission of the crimes associated with corruption

83 Islamic Education Trust. *Islam and the Challenge of Corruption: Signs and Symptoms, Causes, and Impact, Prevention and Treatment*, Abuja: Lux Terra Leadership Foundation with the Support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 2018, p.8.

84 *Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 186, Quoted in Ibid., p.4.*

85 *Sahih Muslim, Hadith No.380, Ibid., p.17.*

86 *Al-Bukhari, Ibid.*

and the forms of punishments that Allah has sanctioned against culprits. Some of the Traditions are as follows: “Whosoever amongst you sees evil let him change it with his hands; if he is not able, then with his tongue; and if he is not able, then let him hate it in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith.” [71. Narrated by Abu Sa’id (R. A.) and is in *Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 186. Ibid.: 4.*] Another Hadith that was narrated by Anas bin Malik (R. A.) is perhaps a most ingenious Hadith that, if followed religiously, can go a long way in curtailing corrupt practices, but, in the Nigerian setting in particular, people tend to both fear and adulate secular authorities rather than Allah, such that the problems of corruption have become such a humongous seething anomaly in the polity:

“Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or he is an oppressed one.” People asked: “O Allah’s Messenger (PBUH)! It is alright to help him if he is oppressed, but how should we help him if he is an oppressor?” The Prophet (PBUH) said: “By preventing him from oppressing others.”⁸⁷

From this synopsis, it is quite clear, as we had argued previously, that corruption is morally wrong and mortally destructive. Both Christianity and Islam have frowned at it; the human nature is simply inexplicable, in terms of what humans want to heed and what they do not want heed that are known to have come from our Creator. Perhaps with respect to our concern with democratic institutionalization in the Nigerian polity, the extent of this inexplicability is equally the nemesis of the difficulty of the institutionalization of the democratization process in the Nigerian polity. In other words, the Nigerian state and its people cannot obviously and simply eat their cake and expect to have it!

Analysis of Costs from the Standpoints of Corruption and Looting

Corruption and looting, everywhere they have become monumental in nature and practice, have engendered also monumental and devastating consequences. This will be the case whether it is with respect to governance in the society in its entirety or as an aspect of agencies created to handle specific assignments, where each would be judged to be competent or otherwise. In the electoral process, in particular, and in other developmental aspirations, generally, the horrors that corruption has caused and/or is still capable of causing

87 *Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith No.2444, Ibid.:5.* The other *Ahadith* that have provided one perspective or the other in regard to the issue of corruption include *al-Mustadrak, Hadith No. 380; Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahihah, Hadith No. 413; al-Adab al-Mufrad, Hadith No.464; Sunan Abu Dawud, Hadith No.1442; Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 2018; al-Mustadrak, Hadith No. 2156; Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Hadith No.2169; Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 2444; Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No.2493; Sahih al-Bukhari, No.3475; Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No.6496; Sahih Muslim, Hadith No.6979; al-Mustadrak, hadith No.7013; Musnad Ahmad, Hadith No.18015; and Sunan al-Kubra Baihaqi, Hadith No.21301.*

have been terrific in impact. Before we take a look at this, let us define the phenomenon of corruption and talk about why and how it has settled as sediments, especially, which have continued to ruin democratic politics and its consolidation in the country.

Corruption is defined in a variety of ways. This variety includes political (bureaucratic and electoral), economic, social or moral. Before defining the phenomenon called corruption (especially the political and economic), let us see the other words with which it shares some meanings. *The New Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus in One Volume* (2006 Edition) has provided us with the following synonyms:

Breach of trust, bribery...crookedness, demoralization, dishonesty, extortion, fraud...graft, jobbery, profiteering; shadiness...unscrupulousness, venality, baseness, decadence, degeneration, degradation, depravity, evil, immorality, impurity, iniquity, perversion, profligacy, sinfulness, turpitude, vice, viciousness, wickedness; adulteration, debasement, decay, defilement, doctoring, falsification, foulness, infection, pollution, putrefaction, rot....⁸⁸

One insight that scholars such as Rose-Ackerman has provided is to see corruption as “a symptom that something has gone wrong in the management of the state (and/or society). It would be wrong to such an extent that [i]nstitutions designed to govern the interrelationships between the citizens and the state are used instead for personal enrichment.”⁸⁹ It is on this basis that we wish to adopt the definition of corruption provided by Otite as follows. Corruption, to him, is:

...the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour, or moral depravity. **This implies an original state or expectation of individual and societal purity.** When at least two parties have interacted to change the structure or the processes of society or the behaviour of functionaries in order to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situations, we can say that corruption has taken place. Corruption involves the injection of additional but improper transactions aimed at changing the normal course of events and altering judgments and positions of trust.⁹⁰[Emphasis mine.]

Perhaps one of the best ways to concisely define corruption, in our view, from the secular angle, is the one provided mathematically by Rose-Ackerman when he says thus: “[C]orruption equals monopoly

88 *The New Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus in One Volume*, 1988, pp.219-220.

89 Rose-Ackerman, S., *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences and Reforms*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.9.

90 Otite, O., “On the Sociological Study of Corruption,” in F. Odekunle, ed., *Nigeria: Corruption in Development*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1986, p.12.

plus discretion minus accountability.”⁹¹ Indeed, those who passionately indulge in corrupt practices have the monopoly of the value that inheres in the transaction; have discretion as to whether or not to indulge in it; exercise a relative advantage to decide what the pay-off should be (i.e., very much aware of what the costs and benefits are); and are in total disregard of any subsisting law against corrupt practices (thus, such an official can be labelled as someone lacking in accountability).

In the secular realm as well as framework on corruption, Mbaku’s analysis of corruption has come up with four categories which include cost-reduction; cost enhancement; benefit enhancement; and benefit reduction.⁹² Cost reduction is corruption because a business firm works very hard to get reduced the regulation-induced costs below their normal level. Take tax payment for example: state officials would facilitate the illegal reduction of tax obligations and what is “saved” would later be shared between the state officials and the affected firm. With respect to cost-enhancement corruption, an official in charge of, for instance, import licence or stocks of essential commodities, could resort to hoarding and/or selling at prices that approximate free-market prices, which they are not. Consequently, the ensuing “monopolistic” income would be appropriated by the manipulators-in-crime. With regard to benefit-enhancing method, the “...civil servants can permit more public benefits to accrue to an individual or a group than are legally permitted. The recipients then share the additional benefits with the civil servants based on prior arrangements.”⁹³ In the case of benefit-reduction method, it takes place when the civil servants can convert pension benefits of other people and place them in an interest-yielding bank account for the beneficiaries’ benefit –thereby cheating the rightful ones of the pension funds. (In parenthesis, the contributory pension scheme that came into being in 2004 in this country is not yet inundated with these types of scamming practices; but what has been accumulated through the civil servants’ contributions are rumoured to being nicked away, in the usual political nonsense verbiage that the funds are being borrowed by government for development purposes! Based on historic antecedents, can they also be returned as and when due? Everyone’s guess is as good as another’s.

Looking at corruption as an important as well as a critical cost item in analyzing the failure of democracy in Nigeria requires us to specify the types of corruption that would have devastating consequences on the politico-economic (democratic) processes also. Before going into this,

91 Rose-Ackerman, S., *op. cit.*:38.

92 Mbaku, J. M., *Bureaucratic and Political Corruption in Africa: The Public Choice Perspective*, Malabar, Flo.: Krieger Publishing Co., 2000, pp.13-14.

93 *Ibid.*

let it be stressed that the discussion on democracy is not just about peaceful voting, ensuring that the results of the election are credible; maintaining a political party; putting in place mechanisms that will ensure the proper selection of candidates; or having a well-focused opposition party that is making the government and the party that has constituted it to sit up; etc. All of these components of democratic politics are indeed important. It must, however, be understood that the choice of policies by the winning party upon assumption of power requires that policies, especially the political and economic ones, are democratically arrived at; and that their costs are duly as well as diligently evaluated. When this approach informs the choice of such policies, it is reasonable to assume that corruption, at least, if it is not avoided completely, it is likely to be reduced to the barest minimum. What then can be described as political and economic corruptions in a society aspiring to be democratic?

According to Philip, political corruption, which can also encompass its bureaucratic manifestation, “involves substituting [a] rule in the interests of an individual or group for those publicly endorsed practices which effect [on] an ordered resolution to conflicting individual or group interests.”⁹⁴ We can also mention that political corruption that is “...tak[ing] place at the highest levels of political authority...[should be regarded as]...a ‘corruption of greed,’ [as it is expected to affect the manner in which decisions are made to manipulate and distort] political institutions and rules of procedure.”⁹⁵ “Corruption of greed” can also be regarded as “grand corruption,” because, at the “highest levels of authority,” those who may be involved are not looking for “chicken feeds.” This form of corruption can indeed also be referred to as ‘corruption of greed’ given that, in Nigeria, members of the political class are normally disproportionately well remunerated far and above subsistence wages, just as they are largely well catered for by the state to go through a decent standard of living. Putting it differently, were the members of this class to be self-disciplined enough, the legitimate perquisites of office are adequate for them; their families; and the extended family members (as the latter are equally an important social category in the Nigerian setting and, probably, a remote (nevertheless huge) factor in the corruption equation!

Okoisor goes further to explain that “bureaucratic corruption,” which is a component part of political corruption, “...occurs ‘in the public administration,’ or ‘the implementation end of politics,’ [and it] is the ‘low level’ or ‘street level’ corruption. This is the type of corruption [that]

94 Phillip, M., “Defining Political Corruption,” in P. Heywood, ed., *Political Corruption*, Oxford and Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers for the Political Studies Association, 1997, p.42.

95 Okoisor, H., “Corruption...Managing the Economic Challenges,” *THISDAY* Newspaper, January 22nd, 2007, pp.22-23.

the citizens encounter daily at places [such as in] the hospitals, schools, local licensing offices, police stations, tax offices among others. It is [also called] ‘petty’ – [a] ‘corruption of need’ – that occurs when one obtains a business from the public sector through inappropriate procedure.”⁹⁶ (Emphases in the original.) In this instance, even movement of files from one table to another for further necessary action by superior offices will attract a “tip,” not necessarily because one is satisfied with the services rendered. It is a form of corruption because failure to part with such “gratuity” may render the official transaction irrelevant or undone, as files may be lost, hidden from the owners until the “needful” is seen to have been done. Sordid occurrence of this nature could, without doubt, impact on democratic politics given that democracy isn’t just an end in itself, but a means to a variety of ends – the development of the polity democratically; an improvement on the existential conditions of the citizens, especially the provisions of qualitative education, health services, housing, and affordable items of food consumption; the enhancement of their security; etc.

The manner by which the phenomenon of political corruption has been rationalized has been magisterially put in place by Ekeh as follows:

Broadly...political corruption is understood to be an illicit diversion of public funds for private purposes – from the public realm to the private realm. The truth of the matter is that political corruption in Nigeria and Africa is distinctive because its character is larger than the diversion of monies and resources to the private realm from the civic public realm. What makes political corruption a major problem area in African politics is that it compels the diversion of public funds and resources from the civic to the primordial public. Indeed, it is expected that a public official in his [*sic.*] activities in the public realm should enrich his [*sic.*] particular primordial public realm of, say, an ethnic group. In the view of many in Nigeria, a public officer is a failure if he [*sic.*] does not enrich his [*sic.*] ethnic primordial public while he [*sic.*] is in office.

In other words, political corruption has a ring of legitimacy in Nigeria and many Black African countries. It also means that, in theory, and in practice, a man adjudged guilty in the civic public for diverting funds from the civic public for uses elsewhere may be a political hero, if his [*sic*] primordial grouping benefits from his [*sic.*] alleged official misconduct. Obviously, it is the separation of state from society that fuels political corruption.⁹⁷

96 *Ibid.*

97 Ekeh, P. P., “Nigeria’s Emergent Political Culture, in P. P. Ekeh, P. Dele-Cole, G. O. Olusanya, *Nigeria Since Independence: The First 25 Years, Volume V, Politics and*

In this manner, it becomes easy to understand why both those that indulge in corruption and the victims of the sordid practice may not be able to see why the hues and the cries against it. In many extremely backward and fissiparous societies, where the civic public realm and the civic private realm are wrapped up together, according to Ekeh, such double jeopardies (of ethnicity and poverty) would always make rooms for corruption to thrive. We can see this combination veritably demonstrated in the realm of economic corruption, which is where we go on, to briefly discuss next.

Economic corruption is also based on deceit, sabotage, and/or acting inappropriately. It is the sort of corruption that usually involves huge financial leakages also. The trajectories of political corruption and economic corruption may appear to be different. That is in terms of the site of operation; but the objectives and *modus operandi* are, more often than not, the same. It may or may not involve only the members of the political class; the private sector is usually also very heavily involved. It ideally takes place in the process of enunciating and implementing programmes of economic development and/or budgetary processes as well as in the inter-industry trade relations between multinational corporations (MNCs) and their subsidiaries. The form this will take involves such leakages as over-invoicing (by over-pricing imports such as spare parts and raw materials) and under-invoicing (i.e., those finished products going out to the parent companies overseas).

In the political history of Nigeria, accusations and counter-accusations about corruption in public offices have been made against one regime or the other as well as against one individual or the other. The most celebrated was arguably the case that involved late Mr. Joseph S. Tarka when Mr. Daboh accused him of official corruption in the twilight years of the administration of General Yakubu Gowon in the seventies. It must be emphasized, however, that this case, important as it was then being that a private person was accusing a public official, was still

Constitutions, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Ltd., 1989, p.4. See also the insights provided by a former Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and, currently, the Chancellor of the Baiz University, Abuja, in an interview with the Channels Television, Lagos, circa 2019. Specifically, he identified seven glaring ways by which corruption is being perpetuated in Nigeria. These are: a) Inflated government contracts which are within the range of fifty-five to sixty-five percentage mark-up; b) unreported or remitted government revenues; c) extortions from citizens who would come forward to render services to government and this could range from =N=50 to multi-million dollars; d) conversion of public property to private ownership; e) misuse of security votes; f) criminal wastefulness including the use of private jets and any other resources of government; and g) undue influence of fraternity and relationship. According to him, those in authority are aware of these methods, but either in collusion or is simply not having the spine to deal with the menace of corruption and, as a consequence, the Augean stable festers along.

a novelty; but it then paled off into insignificance,⁹⁸ compared to the humongous corruption exposés that are released below. Under the military regime, no inquiry or prosecution was embarked upon. But, in response to the accusations and counter-accusations, when both colonial and post-colonial administrations considered them worth their while (that is, when such malfeasances could be considered pertinent to be probed), one commission of inquiry or the other would be set up to examine the basis or otherwise of the ensuing development.

During the colonial era, a major commission of inquiry was the one set up to probe Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the leader of government of the Eastern Region, who was alleged by one Mr. E. O. Eyo, the Chief Whip of the Eastern House of Assembly to have indulged in corruption misdemeanour, and went further to table a motion in the House “accusing [the former] of gross abuse of public office in that he allowed [two million pounds] of public money to be invested in the African Continental Bank in which he had substantial personal interest and which at the time was running at a loss.”⁹⁹

A commission of inquiry was set up in 1955, conducted the investigation and submitted a report tagged “*Report of the Tribunal Appointed to Inquire into Allegations Reflecting on the Official Conduct of the Premier of, and Certain Persons Holding Ministerial and Other Public Offices in, the Eastern Region of Nigeria*, Cmnd. 51 (London: H.M.S.O, 1957 (Hereafter referred to as the *Report of the Foster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry*). The Tribunal was headed by the Chief

98 The Tarka versus Daboh sensational accusation over official corruption that a private person wanted to bring to the limelight. There could have been a bigger issue beyond actually catching the thief that committed an act of corruption. As a newspaper columnist put it later while writing on another case of corruption charges between a member of the National Assembly and a one-time Inspector General of Police, both of whom had worked in the Nigerian Police Force before one became a Senator in the National Assembly. Like the case of Tarka and Daboh who were also of the same kindred; the latter had had something linking them together – a common career background: “Allegations and suggestions of corruption were not novel at that stage of the Gowon administration. But it was a military regime and[,] therefore, the accusations were muffled. This time, the details, the specifics and the high profile of the accuser and the accused got the nation salivating, the media[,] on its part[,] was relentless; devoting yards of newsprint to the drama. The tit for tat was interesting while it lasted as the two erstwhile friends threw mud at each other.

“At the end of the day, Tarka, the dogged fighter of many political battles, lost this corruption battle and had to throw in the towel....At best, it [was] a test of secrecy and loyalty among thieves. At worst, a form of blackmail. In this particular whistle blowing episode, few people doubted the complicity of Daboh. But the message was so juicy that they could afford to ignore the messenger.” Muyiwa Adetiba, “Tit for Tat or Daboh for Tarka,” *Vanguard* Newspaper, September 9th, 2017. Downloaded from [vanguard.com/2017/09/tit-tat-daboh-tarka/](https://www.vanguard.com/2017/09/tit-tat-daboh-tarka/) on Friday, September 17th, 2021, at 12 hours.

99 Crowder, M., *The Story of Nigeria*, London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1973, Revised Third Edition, p.291.

Justice of the Federation of Nigeria, Sir Stafford Foster-Sutton (after whom the report was named). The tribunal's findings, in any critical evaluation, could be considered to be ambivalent. In one breath, for instance, it was stated that:

With respect to Dr. Azikiwe, the Tribunal found that on one occasion he exerted influence to encourage the deposit of [thirty thousand pounds] in the bank by the Eastern Regional Production Development Board at a time when the liquid assets of the bank were dangerously low. On the crucial issue of whether or not Dr. Azikiwe knew the terms of the Agreement prior to his conversation with the Secretary of State [in London] in November 1955, no conclusive evidence was adduced to rebut Dr. Azikiwe's categorical denial. But circumstantial evidence indicated that the investment had been effected by means of collusion involving Dr. Azikiwe, Mr. Ojike [the Minister of Finance], and Mr. Blankson, the Acting Governing Director and Chairman of the Bank. **It was established that the board of the African Continental Bank had voted to increase the bank's authorized capitalization from [two hundred fifty thousand pounds] to [one million pounds] and to issue a total of 877,000 shares to the Eastern Region Finance Corporation even before the Corporation had been inaugurated or its membership approved by the Executive Council.** In fact, the precise terms of the agreement that was signed by the chairman of the Corporation and the Acting Chairman of the Bank on May 20, 1955, were discovered in the minutes of a meeting of the board of the Bank on March 5th. Dr. Azikiwe admitted having been told informally by the Minister of Finance that an investment of about [one half of a million pounds] would be made, but he denied emphatically that either Ojike or Blankson had ever informed him of the terms of the agreement.¹⁰⁰ [Emphasis mine.]

In another breadth:

...it was said logically in Azikiwe's defense, that if he did actually scheme to enrich himself at the expense of the public, he could have adopted a "more obvious or fatuous method" than the one pursued; for it was "bound to be known everywhere and inevitably to invite public attack." [Statement made by Dr. Azikiwe's counsel.] If he knew that his conduct was discreditable, possibly dishonest, would he have run the risk of sacking his principal accomplice, the Minister of Finance, on the

100 Sklar, R. L., *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation*, New York and Lagos: Nok Publishers International, 1983 Paperback Edition, pp.174-175.

ground that the latter's reputation had been tarnished by the allegations of corruption that were in certain respects less damaging than the allegations to which he might have been exposed by counter-disclosures? For an embittered and vengeful Ojike would have been a deadly witness against his vulnerable chief.¹⁰¹

While in the former quotation, the questions of immorality, double standard and pursuit of private interest as well as agenda should be obvious because of the circumstance in which the Bank had found itself in an apparent state of virtual collapse; and, thus, was looking for a bail out from public funds that did not follow procedure, the latter quotation clearly shows that the witnesses might have been intimidated by the personality of Dr. Azikiwe and therefore decided to keep quiet, bear the blames in their entirety, especially if they had been surreptitiously intimidated not to spill the beans in public. **Actually, the "chiefs and elders of Arondizuogu" told Ojike not to testify against Dr. Azikiwe.**"¹⁰²[Emphasis mine.]

The defense counsel's curious submission smacked of a lawyer that did not know his onions. What could have been "more obvious" than, one, "the Tribunal found that on one occasion he exerted influence to encourage the deposit of [thirty thousand pounds] in the bank by the Eastern Regional Production Development Board at a time when the liquid assets of the bank were dangerously low," even if the process lent itself to "circumstantial evidence?" Two, if transferring public funds into a personal bank or a bank in which Dr. Azikiwe's family had substantial interest was not ultimately meant to "enrich themselves," one would not know what would have served their interest! What turned out to be the main gist of the legal discourse of the matter inhered in the submission that Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe's was being recapitalized with public funds since the colonial banks did not want to lend money to indigenous (African) businesses. But why this was not adopted as the bank's policy before it was going into insolvency became and has historically remained a moot point! The main moral dimension has perpetually remained buried in the womb of the poverty of good governance.

Finally, the Tribunal is reported to have conceded that:

...Dr. Azikiwe's primary motive was to make available an indigenous bank with the object of liberalizing credit for the people of this country" [Nigeria], but added that his conduct as a minister "has fallen short of the expectations of honest, reasonable people." The Tribunal concluded further that "Dr. Azikiwe ought to have relinquished his financial interest in the

101 *Ibid.*:183.

102 *Ibid.*:185.

Bank when the proposal to inject public monies into it was first mooted, and that he was guilty of misconduct as a Minister in failing to do so.”¹⁰³

More fundamentally from the standpoint of this Lecture, the mere fact that Dr. Azikiwe did not resign on his own volition and also that he was not booted out of office as a minister leads one to two very important lines of inquiry on the factors for the strong presence of corruption in the polity and the consideration of the Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe as the case of conflict of interests which should be considered to be the mother and harbinger of the domestication of corruption in the annals of political corruption in Nigeria. There is no doubt that the origins of corruption should be traced to the British colonialists and imperialists. The manner of both the conquest of colonial territories and the administrative structure in place throughout colonial suzerainty was not only violent (see below our analysis as of the variable of violence as one of the costs that has also affected the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria), but was highly corrupt. We can go back to recall that some of the synonyms of the word “corruption,” which we mentioned at the point of defining the concept included such words as “crookedness;” “dishonesty;” “fraud;” “depravity;” “immorality;” “falsification;” etc. The colonial enterprise was in all material respect fraudulent throughout, including the pattern of decolonization. All this could be summed up in one phrase: “divide and rule.” It was this very pattern of rulership that most of the nationalists used to get to power and retain it, also by hook or crook! Indeed, corruption is essentially Machiavellianism *writ large*; that has been consolidated in the historical and episodic instances that are hereby being analyzed in Nigerian political process. It can thus be considered to have been officially born then by an alien power; and baptized as well as weaned by the succeeding Nigerian parentage, as a normal mode of governance, going forward perpetually. What a pitiable reality for an ethnically and religiously diverse country into which corruption of different varieties has been consolidated and is now and forever, apparently, not dislodgeable from political culture; economic culture; social culture; and, most unfortunately, nation-building culture!!!

It is perhaps important to equally emphasize that there were coincidental happenings that included the policy statement or regulations based on United Kingdom practice and experience for the guidance of Nigerian Ministers. The policy statement was issued by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on December 1st, 1951. There was also an apparent rebuttal statement made by Dr. Azikiwe about debates in the Eastern House of Assembly during the legislative sessions between June 22-27 and August 2-8, 1956, shortly before the

103 *Ibid.*

sitting of the Tribunal for fifty days, from September to November in 1956.¹⁰⁴ In the latter's speech, Dr. Azikiwe:

...contended that the members of the Tribunal of Inquiry should not be subject to the authority of the Secretary of State for the Colonies who was cited as an interested person and a witness in a pending libel suit by the Premier against Mr. Eyo. He contended further that the subject matter of the Tribunal was regional rather than federal and that the proposed Tribunal exceeded the aim of Eyo's original motion in so far as it authorized a general investigation with the A.C.B. at all times.¹⁰⁵

The statement by the Secretary in 1951 was indeed meant to draw the attention of the new ministers to the finest etiquettes in the new ministerial roles the constitutional advance expected them to uphold, as was the practice in the United Kingdom. Alas, innuendoes and ethnic grandstanding would not allow the "leader of the Igbo" and subsequent political cum bureaucratic rulers in Nigeria to differentiate between good and bad conducts in public office!¹⁰⁶ What could have been the greatest catharsis against corruption in the country had, in this clearly messy affair, Dr. Azikiwe resigned given the emerged fact of using public funds to bolster his ailing bank? This recommended step was most desirable, especially, given the additional fact that the Minister of Finance, Mr. Ojike, was sacked by Dr. Azikiwe. It was most unfortunate that Mr. Ojike "died [on November 28, 1956] at the age of 42 of hypertension resulting from excessive strain."¹⁰⁷ One can assert that this verdict on what, by medical report, took the life of Mr. Ojike was not just mere "hypertension resulting from excessive strain," could only be consigned to what it was: a fabrication meant to divert attention from the main moral issue surrounding the real cause. It was an aggravated hypertension, accompanied by the trauma of his dismissal by Dr. Azikiwe despite his unalloyed loyalty and staunch defence. Revisionist history of this episode is, most unfortunately, being rehashed by latter apologetic and unobjective "scholar" entrepreneurs:

A colonial correspondence revealed that the colonial government supported the NCNC because it was seen as the only party organized on a platform of national unity. Without Azikiwe, the NCNC would collapse. The national interest of the

104 *Ibid.*:174.

105 *Ibid.*: pp.171-172. As for the guidance statement by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Speech by Dr. Azikiwe, see *Ibid.*, pp.185-186 (Footnote 92); and pp.172-173, respectively.

106 Ethnic politics had by this time taken the centre stage of leadership recruitment trajectory in the country. See, among others, O. Nnoli, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers Ltd., 1978, *passim*.

107 Sklar, *Op. cit.*: pp.184-185.

country demanded that Azikiwe continue as the leader of the party.¹⁰⁸

The accounts given in Sklar that this Lecture has dwelt from extensively do not support this hackneyed rendition. The politics of ethnicity that had become endemic from this point in time did not also remove the scales from the eyes of the colonial masters.

As stated before, Dr. Azikiwe did not resign. Since then, one can argue that corruption has not been tamed in the Nigerian polity. As we have also argued before, corruption must be contextualized as having been started and/or initiated in a grand manner by the British colonialists in its most literal, i.e., formal and practical senses in Nigeria. Colonial conquest with its attendant consolidation, historically, has always been based on one subterfuge or the other during the seizure of the Nigerian Protectorates. For instance, the following “treaty” between King Jaja of Opobo and the Britain Consul, Mr. Hewitt in January 1884, before the Berlin Conference, was a standard of such subterfuge that had been repeated in other negotiations that placed Nigeria and other territories under British hegemony.

The Queen does not want to take your country or your markets, but at the same time, she is anxious that no other nation should take them. She undertakes to extend her gracious power and protection, which will leave your country still under your government: she has no wish to disturb your rule....¹⁰⁹

The rest is now history. Another factor in the overrun of the Northern territories by Lugard was rendered thus:

Lugard had two things in his favour. First, in the words of Hilaire:

Whatever happens we have got

The maxim gun and they have not.

Secondly, Lugard firmly believed that once the Hausa peasantry saw that he was the real master, they would not put up much of a resistance on behalf of their Fulani rulers. **Even so Kano presented a formidable objective. The great city, encircled by enormous walls, deep thorn-filled ditches and cunningly constructed gates, could under a determined leader, withstand almost indefinite siege. Kano was first to show its cards. The Emir despatched a force against**

108 See M. M. Ogbeyidi, “Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria Since 1960: A Socio-economic Analysis,” *Journal of Nigeria Studies*, Volume 1. Number 2. Fall 2012, p.12.

109 Akpofure R. and M. Crowder, *Nigeria: A Modern History for Schools*, London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1966, p.164.

Lugard's garrison at Zaria, only to withdraw on the news of the death of the Sultan of Sokoto.¹¹⁰[Emphasis mine.]

Wherever corruption has become highly entrenched, such a society can never develop in the desired direction. This is especially the case when “cleverly” planned scheme was embarked upon, apparently meant to nurture the indigenous investors that the British banks did not want to lend money to. The whole scheme ended up in somebody else's private bank that was at the same point heading for bankruptcy. It should by now be a testament of fact that the impact of the messy corruption phenomenon leading to the beefing up of Azikiwe's private bank with government's funds could never have also allowed such a society to promote democratic development, not to talk about its consolidation. This is because it is bound to be a scheme in which others in the future (because of the unpunished antecedent) would embark on it, with gusto as well, in the manner of we are following the “example of the “leader!””

The umbilical cord of corruption, indeed, was not cut with the indecision of the Foster-Sutton Tribunal to pronounce Dr. Azikiwe guilty. From this point to independence in 1960 and beyond, corruption became the proverbial new born baby that everyone would like to cuddle and embrace intimately. The fond love for this baby has not been relented till date, as can be seen from the following cases that have been documented from various sources:

It is observed that the colonial masters [might] have exploited natural resources, but [were] accustomed to responsible government, leaving behind national total assets of 243.7 million pounds when the Nigerian petty-bourgeois[ie] assumed position of authority in the region in 1954. By 1960, the treasury had fallen to 174.2 million pounds and by 1964[,] it had fallen to 76.8 pounds.¹¹¹

In another exposition on corruption, Dudley averred that:

...to secure the resources the Action Group needed to contest the 1959 general elections under the headship of Awolowo, the party channeled funds from the National Investment and Property Company (NIPC), a company controlled wholly by the top Action Group (AG) Functionaries, the Western Regional Board Development Corporation, and the Western Regional Board, to the coffers of the group.¹¹²

110 Crowder, M., *Op. cit.*, p.225.

111 Ukwuaba, I., “Political Corruption in Nigeria: An Assessment of the First, Second and Fourth Republic Republics,” in C. O. T. Ugwu, ed., *Corruption in Nigeria: Critical Perspectives*, Nsukka: Chuka Educational Publishers, 2002 Print, p.70.

112 Quoted in E. I. Ani, “Corruption and Culture in Nigeria: Between Institutionalism and Moral Individualism,” in *UCHE: Journal of the Department of Philosophy, University of Nsukka*, Vol.15, 2009, pp.47-48.

In further quoting Dudley, Ani asserted that “between 1958 and 1960, some six and a half million pounds of public funds found it[*sic.*] way through NIPC to the Action Group treasury.”¹¹³

Since it is in Nigeria that governance is looked at, first and foremost, from the triangular viewpoint of the East, North, and West and, so far, we have examined the corruption charges against the leaderships of the East and West, what about the Northern leadership, for balance? Sir Ahmadu Bello was the third leader in the “triangular pillars” upon which the Nigerian polity stood up to the 1966 coup d’état, it is therefore imperative to observe in order to find out if similar malfeasance occurred in the North. As a matter of fact, Sir Ahmadu Bello was accused of a corrupt practice; he was prosecuted, found “guilty,” and was jailed! He appealed the judgment and was acquitted by a superior (appeal) court. As he explained the prosecution in his autobiography, the alleged corruption trial went thus:

After necessary investigations by an instigated administrative officer who was specially sent for the purpose. I was summoned to appear before the Sultan’s Court. I was tried and sentenced to one year’s imprisonment. Knowing my own reputation and standards and the way the case was tried. I appealed. To the Appeal Court. The learned Judge (Mr. Ames), with two Muslim jurists, allowed my appeal and I was therefore acquitted.¹¹⁴

The general commentary regarding the trial of the Sardauna is the belief that the allegation and trial at the Sultan’s Court was simply political.¹¹⁵ He had contested against the Sultan for the coveted Sultanate stool and lost to the incumbent. But in Sardauna’s magnanimity after he became the Premier of Northern Nigeria, he did not use his higher position to undermine the Sultanate stool, in particular, or the traditional institution, in general, in the region. Some people attributed this development (policy orientation) to the fact that Sardauna was keen to become the Sultan of Sokoto at the opportune time. Beyond such ambition, the Sardauna was regarded as a unique leader of men and resources: honest, just, hardworking, punctual to functions and very procedural in policy matters. He was simply a gem in leadership values whom Nigeria lost in the misguided coup d’état of 1966.

In the wake of the *coup d’état* in 1975, General Murtala Mohammed’s administration set up an Assets Investigation Panel to conduct inquiries into cases of corruption under the General Yakubu Gowon Administration. The result was the indictment of “ten (10) of the twelve

113 *Ibid.*, p.48.

114 Quoted in John N. Paden, *Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto: Values and Leadership in Nigeria*, Zaria: Hudahuda Publishing Company, 1986, p.119.

115 *Ibid.*, particularly pp. 113-133.

(12) governors of corrupt practices, which made the regime to confiscate the right of ownership of such properties. It is pertinent to also mention that the military regime of General Babangida, before it left office in 1993, returned the seized properties to the looters. It must be remarked at this point this policy reversal by his administration was most unfortunate, as Babangida himself was a member of the Murtala Mohammed administration that took the decision to confiscate. It shouldn't come as a surprise to people who were very conscious of the role of Babangida in deepening the scale of corruption in the country. (We shall have more to say about his patently corrupt administration and his level of degeneracy as a ruler of a country that has generally become the poster site of corruption globally. Further, his stand on the contemporary level of corruption, some 28 years after he took this decision to return the seized properties to the looters, without doubt, shall for long leave a sour grape in the mouth of Nigerians. Indeed, his utterance on corruption when he celebrated his 80th birthday demonstrated and portrayed him as an "incorrigible corruption fraudster and/or promoter!!!")

There is no apology to offer in our attempt to demystify the aura surrounding the regime of Babangida in the annals of the history of governance in the country, especially shortly before and since independence. What is however so worrisome to Nigerians who are genuinely concerned about the spate of corruption in the country is the fact no matter how evangelical an in-coming government is about fighting its scourge, the moment the new regime settles down in office, the tune naturally changes (because of insincerity to a cause of sublime importance); because of humongous resources of the country, which a number of the administrations that have ruled have deliberately ruined with reckless abandon; and, literally speaking, because the governance process, more often than not, turns such administrations into the "hunter becoming the hunted." This reality forces us to accept the assertion of Thoroethin that:

The basic contours of Nigeria's political history is simply wholly and squarely the history of corruption and corrupt [rulership]; that public office[s], be [they] political, bureaucratic or judicial, are no longer held in trust. An occupant of any of these positions is expected to go into it with clean hands and go out in a similar manner. But, this becomes impossible in the face of **endemic corruption**.¹¹⁶ [Emphasis mine.]

To put the corruption saga in its proper perspective having agreed to the preceding viewpoints and findings, we may still, at this juncture, need to go back to the point at which in the history of the country the

116 Thoroethin, P. S., "Corruption and the Erosion of Public Accountability in Nigeria," in E. O. Ezeani, ed., *Public Accountability in Nigeria: Perspective and Issues*, Enugu: Academic Publishing Company, 2003, p.101.

military struck, to appreciate the point made earlier in this Lecture about the apparent lack of political will to stem the “endemic nature” that corruption has assumed. When the military sacked the civilian regime in January 1966, a cardinal objective of the *coup d'état* was to put an end to corruption, which was likely to have snowballed in the manner in which Dr. Azikiwe **patented it**; coupled with the way it was handled by the outcome of the investigation (given the manner in which “students” would like to imitate the “teacher cum ruler” who had been left undisciplined as if he were an “untouchable;” and given the foregoing revelations as well as what we shall still come back to note below). Before getting to that point, it is instructive to mention the following accounts of the contemporaries of the likes of Azikiwe and Awolowo in the corruption quagmire, which were cashed upon by the coup plotters of 1966:

The First Republic [1969-66], with [Azikiwe] as the President, was marked by widespread corruption. Government officials looted public funds with impunity. Federal Representative and minister of Aviation, KO Mbadiwe, flaunted his wealth by building a palace in his hometown. When asked where he had gotten the money to build such a mansion, KO replied, “From the sources known and unknown.” [The] Minister of Finance[,] Chief FS Okotie-Eboh responded to charges of accumulation of wealth by government officers by quoting from the Bible, “To those that have, more shall be given. From those that do not have, shall be taken even the little they have.”¹¹⁷

It was no wonder, that, in view of the cascading height of corruption, when the military takeover occurred, the following was what Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, the main brain of the uprising had to say:

The aim of the Revolutionary Council [*sic.*] is to establish a strong, united, and prosperous nation, free from corruption and internal strife....

My dear countrymen, no citizen should have anything to fear as long as that citizen is law abiding and if that citizen has religiously obeyed the major laws of the country and those set down in every heart and conscience since 1 October 1960. Our enemies are the political profiteers, swindlers, the men in the high and low places that [*sic.*] seek bribes and demand ten per cent, those that [*sic.*] seek to keep the country divided permanently so that they can remain in office as ministers and VIPs of waste, the tribalists, the nepotists, those that [*sic.*] make

117 Okonkwo, R., “Corruption in Nigeria: A historical Perspective (1947-2002 (Part 1 of 2), Downloaded on Saturday, February 26, 2022, at 11 Hours, from africaunchained.blogspot.com/2007/09/corruption-in-nigeria-historical.html.

the country look for nothing before international circles, those that [*sic.*] have corrupted our society and put the Nigerian political calendar[*sic.*] back by their words and deeds.¹¹⁸

The mentioning of the phrase “Revolutionary Council” was a misnomer because, both, in the conception and execution of the insurrection, those who carried it out were misguided elements,¹¹⁹ who came up with a myopic ethnic agenda for dominance.¹²⁰ Out of the nine individuals

118 Text of the Radio Broadcast on Radio Kaduna by Major C. K. Nzeogwu on January 15th, 1966 – the Day the *Coup d'état* took place. Reproduced in O. Obasanjo, *Nzeogwu: An Intimate Portrait of Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu*, Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 1987:97, and 99.

119 According to Obasanjo, who confessed to be an intimate friend of Nzeogwu, “Chukwuma was by nature and upbringing, incapable of planning, let alone executing a coup d'état designed to deliberately suppress one tribe politically and elevate another. But the execution of their plans in the South were susceptible to such an interpretation. He was unhappy about it. He felt disappointed, almost betrayed.” Obasanjo, *Nzeogwu...., Op. cit.*, p.107. Obasanjo's opinion here is a revisionist position aimed at deodorizing Nzeogwu's faulty capacity for excellence in planning such a complex assignment. In the first place, if we go back to the quotation, Nzeogwu said, among other things, “Our enemies are the political profiteers, swindlers, the men in the high and low places that [*sic.*] seek bribes and demand ten per cent, those that [*sic.*] seek to keep the country divided permanently so that they can remain in office as ministers and VIPs of waste, the tribalists, the nepotists, those that [*sic.*] make the country look for nothing before international circles, those that [*sic.*] have corrupted our society and put the Nigerian political calendar[*sic.*] back by their words and deeds.” If he didn't want the country to divide or the people becoming enemies of one another, why was the putsch one-sided? (See, compare, and judge for yourself from reading footnote 106 above. Given the confessions of the two in the quotation, why should an Itsekiri Minister be killed on account of corruption and an Igbo Minister was spared after confessing that he partook in corrupt practice? My judgment is undoubtedly that the coup d'état of 1966 was an ethnic agenda for the ultimate domination of the country by the Igbo ethnic group.) In the second place, is Obasanjo convinced that it was not a partial and ethnically misguided officer who was supposed to find other officers from other ethnic groups to assist him get rid of the premier in the Eastern Region; or wait for Azikiwe to return from his medical trip outside the country before the coup d'état would be carried out? Truth is always the victim when it is handled by an insincere and biased writer.

120 Refer to the promulgation of Decree No. 34 that unified the Civil Service and the statement credited to Nzeogwu disavowing the picture of the advisers that Aguiyi-Ironsi surrounded himself with – they were majorly and mainly Ibos. In an interview with a news magazine, he was asked the following question: “It has been said that Gen. Ironsi set out to complete your job for you. Was there anything you did not like in his administration?” He answered as follows: “Yes, everything. First[,] he chose the wrong advisers for the work he half-heartedly set out to do. Most of them were mediocre or absolutely unintelligent. Secondly, he was tribalistic in the appointment of his governors. Thirdly[,] the Decree 34 (which nullified the federal constitution and established a unitary government) was unnecessary[,] even silly....See O. Obasanjo, *Ibid.*, p.136. This statement credited to Nzeogwu was an after-thought, not after the incalculable damage had been done to the psyche of the people of Northern Region, in particular that lost all her star political leaders!

that participated in the January 1966 *putschism*, only one member was not of Ibo nationality and this was Major W. Ademoyega, who wrote one of the accounts of the rebellious revolt, *Why We Struck: The Story of the First Nigeria Coup* (Ibadan: 1981). It was not just the ethnic composition that made the insurrection condemnable, but that all the participants were highly placed officers in the armed forces – meaning they were simply not frustrated officers that wanted to use the coup phenomenon to reverse professional grievance—one key reason why military intervention happened.¹²¹ Not a few senior officers have expressed the regrets of the institution's intervention in politics as the development arguably brought about a setback to professionalism in the military. Thus, if anything, it is now that the *raison d'être* for military intervention should find expression because of the historic neglect of the professional and equipment needs of the institution.

Leaving aside the issue of the ethnic conspiracy, the main object of the coup – corruption – was one issue that the Nigerian military may never escape the ire of Nigerians. Put differently, the military involvement in governance witnessed the worst expression of the corruption, apart from the toxic manner by which the various democratization processes since the impact of the institution's incursion in governance has led, in reverse gear, to one of the missing links in nation building. We shall come back to look at this variable briefly when we focus on the variable of military incursion as a great cost issue with regard to the process of democratization of the polity.

In the meantime, we shall go on to analyze the figures in the tables below as evidential expressions of monumental corruption this country has witnessed and continues to witness in its chequered history. In addition, there will be an examination of the results of judicial prosecution (if any), before going on to draw inferences therefrom in terms of their costs (our central concern) on democratic development. The first amazing fact to be mentioned at this point is that, as shown in Table 1 below, of the 20 people mentioned therein, 18 of them had held prominent positions in government. The remaining two

121 Among the literature on the causes of military interventions in the Third World countries, see S. E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback*, Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2nd Edition, 1988; S. P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Society*, London: Yale University Press, 1977, 13th Edition; R. Luckham, "The Military, Militarization and Democratization in Africa: A Survey of Literature and Issues," *Africa Studies Review*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (September 1994), pp.13-75; J. Freire (Translated by Sheena Caldwell), "The Military and Political Intervention: Ideological Trends and Contemporary Contexts," *Revista Critica de Ciencias Sociais*, Issue no. 2, 2010, <http://journals.openedition.org/rccsar/227>; M. Onder, "What Accounts for Military Interventions in Politics: A Cross-National Comparison," *Son Guncelleme Tarihi*, August 2010; and M. Dawood, "The Causes of Military Interventions in Politics: A Case Study of Pakistan and Bangladesh," *European Scientific Journal*, August 2014 (Special Edition), pp283-293;

personalities mentioned were children of the late General Sani Abacha (ex-military chieftain; ex-minister of defence; and, to crown a public service of impunity and kleptomania, a late head of state¹²²). This fact should not imply that of the series of ministers and other government officials appointed by various military and civilian rulers from the time of the Shagari regime (1979-1983) and all through to that of the General Abdulsalami Abubakar (1998-1999), only these 18 individuals could be adjudged to be guilty of official abuse of office. Indeed, the impression is not being created that those not featured in the table were the “good and patriotic guys” who, apparently, did not syphon resources critically needed by the country for development. This point may speak volumes about the poor and inadequate nature of record keeping in the country, which most researchers (both foreign and indigenous) have often observed and sorrowed about. Such poor record keeping could also impact on the accuracy of these figures that the *Newswatch* Magazine published.

Be that as it may, what emerges from Table 2 below that is more substantive and pertinent to our research is to argue that there has been a great deal of financial hemorrhage that is detrimental to the development of the country, both economically and politically. The aggregates for each currency denoted in the said table are as follows (in their various currencies): £29,332 billion; \$34.123 billion (most probably Swiss currency); US\$11,005 billion; and DM6.199 billion. These amounts would be huge sums of money in their conversations to the naira as of 2008. In nationalistic and patriotic terms, these were sums of money that, were they saved in Nigeria, could have had multiplier effects on the economy. But, could the monies that have had their way out of the country to these overseas countries be those that were legitimately made in the country or they belonged in the category of “looted funds,” which, on their face-value, were too much going through the eyes of the needle? The answer to this question may not have been easy to come by, since they had not also left the country through official routes. All the same and according to the United

122 In the history of public looting sprees by officials in Nigeria, there is apparent that no Nigerian has ever been more unique in this business than Abacha. His loots are still being identified in foreign banks and are being returned to the national treasury for subsequent sharing among the various levels of governance, some of which are also being alleged to be “re-looted” by both the “juveniles” and the “master looters.” It should also be stressed that there could be other kleptomaniacs who might have outclassed Abacha; but both poor record keeping and the lack of patriotism by the rulers who came to office after Abacha’s death and therefore were unwilling to expose their predecessor’s filth in order to safeguard their filth that a subsequent regime may want to bring to limelight. (This phenomenon is humorously but realistically christened thus: “Rub my Bank, I Rub Your Own.”). Otherwise, military governance did open the cankerworm of corruption that has largely become the defining characteristic of governance in the polity, which is too alluring, as it were, to be ignored!

Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Development and Globalization: Facts and Figures," (2004), the main factor in increasing in-country capital is the increase of savings and that, in that regard, developing countries should prioritize programmes that promote domestic savings, in order for capital to be invested towards the most productive practices."¹²³ Because the sums were not saved in the country and, based on the arguments we have been making all along, the "favourable" opportunity cost of such domestic savings on reducing poverty, generating investible funds, employment generation through economic growth, etc., could not eventuate. The missed opportunity to gain all these benefits accruable from domestic savings could easily be and are indeed being transformed into the "historic reproduction of hoodlums," who are ever ready to be recruited, to cause mayhem during election periods. The consequence of this development, in turn and as we have always been emphasizing in this Lecture, stuffs away democratic ethos and its practice of politics.

Could there be a contradiction of the looting of such funds to developed economies? Indeed, there should be, as it has been established that:

Developing countries, differently from developed countries[,] have a much more important relationship between increasing domestic savings and economic growth of the country. [This is because] [b]usinesses in developed countries have varying financial resources available at low cost; they also have a major investment in infrastructure, technology, and development and do not necessarily need to attract foreign investors. This correlation does not occur in developed countries.¹²⁴

123 Paraphrased in A. Ribaj and F. Mexhuani, "The Impact of Savings on Economic Growth in a Developing Country (The Case of Kosovo)," in *Journal of innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 10, 1(2021). Downloaded on Monday, September 20, 2021 at 10.20 Hours.

124 *Ibid.* See also O. S. Oladipo, "does saving really matter for growth in developing countries? The case of a small economy," *International Business and Economics Research Journal*, 9(4). <https://doi.org/10.19030/iber.v9i4.556>.

Table 2: Looted Fund by Government Officials Discovered in Foreign Banks

| Name of Depositors | London | Swiss | USA | Germany |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Former Military President Ibrahim Babangida | £ 6.256billion | \$7.41 billion | \$2.00 billion | Dm 9.00 |
| Former Military Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar | £ 1.31billion | \$2.33 billion | \$8.00 million | _____ |
| Admiral Mike Akhigbe | £ 1.24billion | \$2.42 billion | \$671 million | _____ |
| General Jerry Useni | £ 3.046billion | \$2.01 billion | \$1.01 billion | _____ |
| Alhaji Ismaila Gwarzo | £ 1.03billion | \$2.00 billion | \$1.30 billion | Dm 1 billion |
| Alhaji Umaru Dikko | £ 5.01billion | \$1.4 billion | \$700 million | _____ |
| Paul Ogwuma | £ 300million | \$1.142 billion | \$200 million | Dm 700million |
| Former Military Head of State, General Sani Abacha | £ 600million | \$4.09 billion | \$800 million | Dm 345million |
| Mohammed Abacha | £ 400million | _____ | _____ | Dm 500million |
| Abdulkadir Abacha | £ 1.12billion | \$1.2 billion | \$150 million | Dm 3.01million |
| Alhaji Wada Nas | £ 2.5billion | \$1.21 billion | \$900 million | Dm 535million |
| Tom Ikimi | £ 600million | \$1.32 billion | \$153 million | Dm 471million |
| Dan Etete | £ 2.9billion | \$1.39 billion | \$400 million | Dm 300million |
| Don Etiebet | _____ | \$1.03 billion | \$700 million | Dm 371million |
| Major Al-Mustapha | £ 2.3billion | \$1.06 billion | \$360 million | Dm 1.72million |
| Tony Aninih | £ 700million | \$1.001 billion | \$161 million | Dm 361million |
| Bashir Dalhatu | £ 300million | \$1.09 billion | \$700 million | Dm 1.66million |
| Alhaji Hassan Adamu | £ 120million | \$200 million | _____ | Dm 1.42billion |
| Lt. Gen. T. Y. Danjuma | _____ | \$1.02 billion | _____ | _____ |
| General Ishaya Bamaiyi | _____ | \$800 million | _____ | Dm 190million |
| GrandTotal | £ 29.332billion | \$ 34.123billion | \$ 11.005billion | Dm 6.199billion |

Source: *Newswatch Magazine*, May 19, 2008.

Note: Entry for former Military President, Ibrahim Babangida’s looted money in Deutschmark has no indication of whether or not it was calculated in millions or billions.

The third table below showcases those who majorly operated during the first eight years after the transition from military dictatorship. For reflective leadership with vision, wouldn’t a transition from military to civilian regime have required a much deeper analysis of precisely what could be done to create a significant difference from what the military banditry in governance had done? Other considerations from patriotic leadership would have included: what can be done to stamp out what is now generally referred to in everyday governance discourse as “stomach infrastructure?” What is (or better put) what should be the manifest destiny of the country in the contemporary conjuncture? How can this become the shared perspective of the Nigerian people in such a manner that, though the citizenry is mosaic, a consensus can still be created that can serve the interests of several generations yet unborn? All these concerns did not cross the minds of the buccaneers that took over the administrations from 1999 to date. Shallow thinking and how

to manipulate the system for self-aggrandizement of the rulers took the better part of their strategy and this, invariably, is without depth and focus. This precisely is the reason why what is obvious is the picture of those who capture power and also deftly manoeuvre to capture the available resources. It never occurred to them that the patrimony everybody was dwelling on was not meant for anyone person, but is meant for everyone and that it's a sacred obligation and responsibility that everyone in government swore to protect and utilize in a solemn and responsible manner. Like it was argued with respect to the figures that were analyzed therein, looted monies spelt an unmitigated spoliation and wastage of resources meant to improve the existential conditions of the citizenry through provision of amenities, institutions, and the protection of lives and the protection of both public and private properties. The aggregate sums allegedly stolen that are mentioned in the table stood at =N=255.104 billion; and \$17.251 billion.

Again, we are confronted with the problem of opportunity cost, in which the stealing by a number of the chief executives in the states would imply that there was also no choice that the voters had made, which was based on "quality choice." The implication is that the elections that brought politicians to office, no matter how credible they might have been, did not and would never advance the cause and course of democracy! One is therefore justified to argue, as this Lecturer is wont to do quite often, that there is no democracy at all in Nigeria. What we rather have is a civilian governance system that, at its best expression, is getting nastier and more brutish than its military counterpart!! Indeed, during the Olusegun Obasanjo pseudo-monarchical reign (1999-2007), the communities of Odi in Rivers State and Zaki-Biam in Benue State are still smarting from the brutal and violent attacks and destructions carried out by this regime that people thought came to power to lay some solid foundations for democratic development. Apart from these episodes, the regime conducted itself like a **roguish ensemble** that attempted, unabashedly and nearly successfully (courtesy of the due diligent counter-campaigns of the National Assembly members), at the same time a broad-day robbery and rape of the constitution by embarking on debased campaigns and manipulations to entrench itself in a third-term imposition (see table four below).

Under the administration of Muhammadu Buhari (2015-2023), the entire country is being consumed by multiple debacles of unprecedented insecurity, incompetence of the highest order, ante-diluvian, myopic cum nepotistic governance style, and, crowning it all with the most difficult existential challenges that the Nigerian people have ever faced since independence. As a first recommendation in the quest for democratic development of the polity, any erstwhile dictator that comes to partake in how to build democracy for this country should

be rejected, no matter how their dress rehearsal as a democratic entrepreneur is packaged. This recommendation of the Lecture should not be seen as an assault at circumscribing the democratic and human rights of anyone; rather, it is also going to be tied to the nature and capacity of the political parties that may emerge to give vent to the expression of such entrepreneurship. Thus, we should be able to ask the key questions of: what is the level of internal democracy that subsists in each political party? What are the democratic credentials that members jostling for nomination to varying positions in the electoral contests are bringing to the table for consideration? What have been the notable (positive) antecedents in leadership that would-be contestants have been associated with?

To round up the analysis of table two, cases pertaining to three officers of the judicial branch have also come up with respect to corrupt practices. The affected justices were Charles Archibong; Okechukwu Opene and David Adedoyin Adedeji. Their offences, respectively, pertained to a lack of procedural value when delivering judgment and bribery for the other two. If the judiciary, which is often described as the “temple of justice for all and sundry” could descend to this level of debauchery, one is piqued to ask: Where is the hope of the poor man? Similarly, where the judiciary has descended to this nadir level of soliciting for bribes and the inability to dispense with justice procedurally, what hope is there for those who may come forward for equity and the rule of law? The consequence of this development is that it is not only undemocratic government that can be an impediment to the course of justice, but the judicial branch has acquired the notoriety of inanity having become the ultimate traducer of all the values of justice, equity, fair play, democracy and the rule of law. This point has to be emphasized because, in the rancorous politics of the country, the judiciary is now routinely called upon to dispense with justice so that, at least, a democratic dinosaur can rise from the dead or inconsequentiality which both military and civilian lack of faith in democratic governance has consigned it to. All these shenanigans plus the humongous lootings in the executive as well as the legislative branches are not going to allow democracy to develop and blossom.

Table 3: An Account of Corruption Narratives During Obasanjo Administration (1999-2007)

| Name | Allegation | Position | Amount |
|-------------------------|---|--|---------------------|
| Bode George | Misappropriation and Embezzlement | Former Chairman of the Nigerian Port Authority (NPA) | 85 billion Naira |
| Mohammed Goje | Embezzlement | Gombe State Governor | US \$82 million |
| Gbenga Daniel | Embezzlement | Ogun State Governor | US \$372 million |
| Adebayo Alao-Akala | Embezzlement | Oyo State Governor | US \$372 million |
| Alhaji Aliyu Akwe Doma | Embezzlement | Governor of Nasarawa State | US \$115 million |
| Tafa Balogun | Money Laundering | Former Inspector-General of Police | US \$130 million |
| Sunday Afolabi | Embezzlement | Former Minister of Interior | 81.4 billion Naira |
| Arthur Nzeribe | Bribery | Former Senator | 300 million Naira |
| Orji Uzor Kalu | Arrested on 107 state Counts | Former Governor of Abia State | 5 billion Naira |
| James Ibori | Arrested on 170 state Counts | Former Governor of Delta State | N 9.2 billion |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Unconstitutional withdrawal of funds from federal account | Former President of Nigeria | 2.1 billion |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Misappropriation | Former President of Nigeria | \$ 16 billion |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Bribery to elongate his tenure (The National Assembly members were bribed to pass a law for extension of his political tenure popularly known as Third Term Agenda) | Former President of Nigeria | 23.45 billion Naira |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Illegal acquisition of shares | Former President of Nigeria | 200 million Naira |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Raising of funds while in office for personal accumulation (construction of private library) | Former President of Nigeria | 8.5 billion Naira |
| Peter Odili | Arrested on 170 state counts | Former Governor of Rivers State | 6.2 billion |
| Adolphus Wabara | Bribery (He was alleged of collecting bribe from Minister of Education, Prof Fabian Osuji, purposely to pass the Budget of Ministry of Education) | Former Senate President | 55 million Naira |
| Diepreye Alamieyeseigha | Money Laundering | Former late Governor of Bayelsa State | \$ 55 million |
| Professor Fabian Osuji | Bribery (He was alleged of bribing Senate President mainly to pass the Ministry of Education) | Former Minister of Education | 55 million Naira |
| Chimaroke Nnamani | Arrested on 105 state counts | Former Governor of Enugu State | 5.3 billion Naira |

| Name | Allegation | Position | Amount |
|--|---|--|--|
| Evans Enwere; Chuba Okadigbo; Gbenga Aluko; Haruna Abubakar; and Samaila Mamman | Inflation of contract | The first two were former Senate Presidents while the others in the first column were former members of the Senate | 917 million Naira |
| Rowland Owie | Inflation of contract | Former Senator and Chief Whip of National Assembly | USD 125,000 |
| Salisu Buhari | Certificate forgery | Former Speaker of the House of Representatives | |
| Justice Charles Archibong | Lack of procedural value in delivering judgment | Retired Judge of Federal High Court, Lagos | |
| Hon. Justice Okwuchukwu Opene | Bribery | Former Judge of the Court of Appeal | 15 million Naira |
| Hon. Justice David Adedoyin Adeniji | Bribery | Former Judge of the Court of Appeal | 12 million Naira |
| Ayo Fayose | 51 state counts | Former Governor of Ekiti State | 1.2 Billion |
| Joshua Dariye | Arraigned on 14 state counts | Former Governor of Plateau State | 700 Million Naira |
| Saminu Turaki | Arraigned on 32 state counts | Former Governor of Jigawa State | 36 Billion Naira |
| GrandTotal | | | ₦255.104 billion \$17.251 billion |

Source: Adopted from the Compilation made by John Sunday Ojo, "Looting the Looters: The Paradox of Anti-Corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-2014)," *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 12, No. 9, 2016, pp.5-6. For updates, see Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA), *A Compendium of 100 High Profile Corruption Cases in Nigeria*, 2018; 2019; and 2020.

Notes:

- Entry of 2.1 billion for former President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, has no unit of currency; therefore, it is not part of the Grand Total of the alleged looted funds.
- Entry of 6.1 billion for former Governor of Rivers State, Dr. Peter Odili, has no unit of currency; therefore, it is not part of the Grand Total of the alleged looted funds.
- Entry of 1.2 billion for the former Governor of Ekiti State, Mr. Ayo, has no unit of currency; therefore, it is not part of the Grand Total of the alleged looted funds.

In table four below, we have a coterie of alleged looters of public funds during the tenure of late President Shehu Musa Yar'Adua. The multitude ranged from some state governors; members of the National Assembly and members of some State Houses of Assembly; members of the federal and state executive councils; top bureaucrats in both the federal and state civil services; board members of parastatals; and a vice-chancellor of a state university! From the table, one can just say

that, indeed, corruption has become so pervasive that no any sector of the polity could be exceptionalized or being exempted therefrom. It is so, so sad and unfortunate. The humongous spate in the corruption discourse has become very frightening. In the table, it could be seen that the sums of =N=119.317 billion and \$5 million were carted away, with gusto. It would be with gusto because, by this period, the agencies of the state for fighting corrupt practices were already empowered and were baring their fangs. Since the motive for looting public funds is more often than not the same for each alleged corrupt official, we may indeed not bother to spend much time analyzing a widespread phenomenon. Rather, we should note the data in the table and later look at the mechanism by which the state tried to handle the phenomenon with respect to how to blunt its sharp edges and the impact.

Table 4: Cases of Political Corruption Under Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007-2010)

| Name | Allegation | Position | Amount |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Mrs. Olubunmi Eteh | Misappropriation and embezzlement | Former Speaker of House of Representative | 5 million Dollars |
| Gabriel Aduku | Arraigned on 56-state counts | Former Minister of Health | 300 million Naira |
| Hon. T. Faniyi; Albert Soje; & Others | Arraigned on 30-count charges | The first serves as former Kogi State Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy; and the second person is former Commissioner of Agriculture in Kogi State | 3 billion Naira |
| Jolly Nyame | Arraigned on 21 state counts | Former Governor of Taraba State | 180 million |
| Francis Okouro | Arraigned on 6-count charges | Former Bayelsa State Accountant General | 2.4 Billion Naira |
| Lucky Igbiniedion | Arraigned on 191-count charges | Former Governor, Edo State | 4.3 billion Naira |
| Kenny Martins | Arraigned on 28-count charges | Police Equipment Fund | 7.740 Billion Naira |
| Attahiru Bafarawa | Arraigned on 47-count charges | Former Governor of Sokoto State | 15 billion Naira |
| Michael Botmang | Arraigned on 31-count charges | Former Plateau State Governor | 1.5 billion Naira |
| Prof. Babalola Borishade | Arraigned on 11-count charges | Former Minister of Aviation | 5.6 billion Naira |

| Name | Allegation | Position | Amount |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Nyesom Wike | Arrested on state-count charges | Former Minister of Education, and Chief of Staff to Governor of Rivers State. He is also the present Governor of Rivers State | 4.670 billion Naira |
| Professor Adenike Grange | Arrested on 56-count charges | Former Minister of Health | 300 million Naira |
| Boni Haruna | Arrested on 47-count charges | Former Governor, Adamawa State | 250 million Naira |
| Nicholas Ugbade | Arrested on 158-count charges | Former Member of House of Representative | 5.2 billion Naira |
| Adamu Abdullahi | Arrested on 149-count charges | Former Governor of Nasarawa State | 15 billion Naira |
| Roland Iyayi | Arrested on 11-count charges | Former Managing Director of Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) | 5.6 billion Naira |
| Femi Fani Kayode | Arrested on 47-count charges | Former Minister of Aviation | 250 million Naira |
| Professor Innocent Chuka Okonkwo; Uchechi Nwugo; and Wilfred Uwakwe | Arrested on 14-state count | The first person is the Vice Chancellor of Imo state University | N145 Million |
| Ndudi Elumelu | Arrested on 158-state count | Member of House of Representatives | 5.2 billion Naira |
| Hamman Bello Hammed | Arrested on 46-state count | Former Comptroller-General of Nigerian Customs | N2.5 Billion Naira |
| Chief Joe Musa; Olusegun Ogumba; Chinedu Obi; Oparagu Elizabeth; and Kweku Tandoh | Arrested on 12-state count | The first is the former Director General of National Gallery of Art, while others are Directors of the same institution | 1.012 Billion Naira |
| Dr Yuguda Manu Kaigama | Arrested on 37-state count | Chairman, Taraba State Civil Service Commission | 17 Million Naira |
| Dr Albert Ikomi | Arrested on 4-state counts | Retired Permanent Secretary | 43 Million Naira |
| Tom Iseghohi; Muhammed Buba; and Mike Okoli | Arrested on 32-state counts | General Manager & Managers of Transcorp Group PLC | 15 Billion Naira |

| Name | Allegation | Position | Amount |
|---|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Dr Ransome Owan; Mr. Abdulrahman Ado; Mr. Adulrasak Alimi; Mr. Onwuamaeze Iloeje; Mrs. Grace Eyoma; Mr. Mohammed Bunu; and Mr. Abimbola Odubiyi | Arraigned on 196-state counts | They include chairman and six commissioners of Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission | 1.5 billion Naira |
| Dr Aliyu Abdullahi | Arraigned on 158-state counts | Former Federal Permanent Secretary | 5.2 billion Naira |
| Hon. Paulinus Igwe | Arraigned on 158-state counts | One-time Member of the House of Representatives | 5.2 billion Naira |
| Iyabo Obasanjo-Bello | Arraigned on 56-state charges | Former Senator and one-time Commissioner in Ogun State. She is also a daughter of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, former President | 10 million Naira |
| Rasheed Ladoja | Arraigned on 33-state counts | Former Governor of Oyo State | 6 billion Naira |
| James Ibori | Arraigned on 170-state counts | Former Governor of Delta State | 6.2 billion Naira |
| GrandTotal | | | ₦119.317 billion \$5 million |

Source: Adopted from the Compilation made by John Sunday Ojo, "Looting the Looters: The Paradox of Anti-Corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-2014)," *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 12, No. 9, 2016, pp.7-8. For updates, see Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA), *A Compendium of 100 High Profile Corruption Cases in Nigeria, 2018; 2019; and 2020.*

Table 5 below paints the same picture as the preceding tables 2 and 3, except that, in Table 4, the name of the president, who was also in office within the time frame within which the table has covered the phenomenon of looting, had had his name come up for mention. Again, apart from the fact that the correct terminology of Jonathan's looting is called "illegal," like what other people who indulged in this unpatriotic pastime should be called. Indeed, the major issue of inclination to corrupt practices by people who are the appropriate custodians of the core values of accountability and patriotism is what institutional mechanisms should be put in place to teach other would-be corruption practitioners to desist therefrom. The higher calling in this regard should be a change of mindset towards taking the country out of the

doldrums it suffers from intermittently. Put differently, without punishing Nigerians who are naturally prone to or are prepared to indulge in corruption, come what may, the cost of corruption not only to the economy of the country gets worse since corruption has become an on-going concern. It is also the prospects of harnessing the positive spin-offs from a functional economy to beef up the correct political practice that can redound to democratic politics that is the concern herein.

Table 5: Cases of Political Corruption under Goodluck Jonathan's Regime (2010-2015)

| Name | Position | Allegation | Amount |
|--|--|--|---|
| Stella Oduah | Former Minister of Aviation | Misappropriation and Inflation of Contract | 643 million Naira |
| Goodluck Jonathan | Former President of Nigeria | Illegal Contract | US \$15 million |
| Abdulasheed Maina, B. G. Kaigama, and John Yusuf | The first person is the Chairman of Pension Task Force Team (PTFT) while others are members of the committee | Misappropriation and embezzlement | 195 billion Naira |
| Farouk Lawan | Member of House of Representative | Bribery | \$620,000.00 |
| GrandTotal | | | ₦195.643 billion \$635 million |

Source: Adopted from the Compilation made by John Sunday Ojo, "Looting the Looters: The Paradox of Anti-Corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-2014)," *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 12, No. 9, 2016, p.9. For updates, see Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA), *A Compendium of 100 High Profile Corruption Cases in Nigeria*, 2018; 2019; and 2020.

In table 6 below, we have the evidences that the looters are variously being subjected to judicial trials and receiving various types of judgment, depending on the gravity of their offences. Some of the looters were actually convicted and jailed, according to judicial procedures. Some were discharged and acquitted, if and when the allegations could not be proved against "such lucky ones." Quite a number of the cases have not yet been disposed of. Opinions differ in the country with regard to the effectiveness and efficiency of the judicial branch of government. **One of the most publicized cases of political corruption that was similar to that of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was the trial of James Ibori, who was initially tried in Nigeria. The case**

was not diligently handled and he was, “consequently, not found guilty?!!!” That was also not to be the case when the case was handled in the United Kingdom:

Ibori might have been untouchable in Nigeria, but not in the United Kingdom, where he had laundered some of his stolen money. London Metropolitan Police Service secured an order from a London court, in 2007, to freeze \$35 million worth of his foreign assets, including a private jet.

Over the next two years, the Metropolitan Police arrested several of Ibori’s associates who lived or traveled within the United Kingdom’s jurisdiction, including Ibori’s wife and sister, as well as his British lawyer and two financial consultants. In 2008, French authorities also arrested one of Ibori’s personal assistants and extradited her to the United Kingdom. Ibori’s six accomplices were charged for their role in laundering the stolen funds. Each was convicted by a London court and sentenced to prison terms ranging from 30 months to 10 years.

In May 2012, Ibori was arrested in the United Arab Emirates on an international warrant obtained by the Metropolitan Police. He was extradited to the United Kingdom in April 2011, and arraigned on 25 counts of money laundering, forgery, and fraud. On February 27, 2012, as his trial was set to begin, Ibori pleaded guilty to seven counts of money laundering, one count of conspiracy to commit forgery, one count of obtaining property by deception, and [another] count of conspiracy to defraud.

“This case was not just about financial transactions in British banks,” said [Daniel] Bekele [Africa Director at Human Rights Watch]. **“It was about acknowledging global responsibility for helping to stop the devastating human cost of corruption [and the arrest of democratic development and consolidation] in Nigeria.”**¹²⁵[Emphases mine.]

It is not the fact that Ibori went to jail after sentencing (which should not be underestimated), but, more fundamentally, the fact that when he was released from prison and he came back to Nigeria, he was given a hero’s welcome by the same people he caused, by his actions and inactions when he was in power, to be impoverished and denied of essential services such as in education, health and infrastructures. One

125 Hrw.org/news/2012/04/17/Nigeria-uk-conviction-blow-against-corruption. Downloaded on Thursday, September 3rd, 2021 at 03.30 Hours. Nigerian people cannot but be grateful to Mr. Daniel Bekele for his internalist solidarity and gesture to their country, which anyone thrust into power can decide to scorn at and treat with levity.

can hardly explain or even imagine the scenario in which some people would have fought against being dragged to a Nigerian court to try him for embezzlement and corrupt practices, even after leaving office, which is the impunity relief granted to governors and the president by the constitution. In some better and different climes with strong institutions, he would be allowed to be punished procedurally for the wages of his incompetence and maleficence in office. One is also forced to ask whether or not corruption is innate to all Nigerians to the extent that nobody can or should be inoculated against its virus. It is indeed a disaster of monumental proportion that Nigerians generally cannot regard corruption as the number one challenge to nationhood (as topmost priority agender facing every citizen) and democratic development (the second or parallel topmost priority). Without these twin priorities tackled, one is afraid, the other challenges facing the country may not be amenable to solutions.

In the same table, there is a coterie of evidences that show that the fight against corruption is still a non-starter, either because the agencies set up to fight the menace are not sufficiently endowed to carry the fights to their logical conclusion; or, as already stated, the citizenry have simply become numb and insensitive to the havoc being caused to development and democratization – especially, the latter which has been corrupted to allow the politicians to enjoy its benefits without assuming its full responsibilities such as ensuring that elections are credible (that those who may have won elections are properly certified) and that elections are violence-free. That is why we may still find the likes of Nyesom Wike, Abdullahi Adamu, Orji Kalu, etc., allowed to be in competitive elections, either to the executive branch or the legislative branch, respectively, (the latter are not covered with the cloak of immunity), to continue with the pillage, where possible or to be part of the hallowed chamber of the Senate to make laws for the entire country.

What all these collectively underscore is the very lowest morality quotient of the people of the country. The basic philosophical and moral issues before Nigerians, therefore, are: if these kinds of people could be allowed to enjoy immunity while in office (ostensibly to avoid being distracted from their so-called enormous responsibilities), how come that they are still covered by “illegal immunity” having been alleged to have involved themselves in infractions such as corruption charges? The law as well as the fights against corruption should be such that **until someone is as sinless as a new-born baby; they should not be allowed to stand for elections to any public office. No baggage should in the least be allowed until this condition is met. Let them be shamed for a while, during their prosecution!!!**

Table 6: Prosecuted Cases of Political Corruption 1999-2014

| Names | Allegation | Position | Amount | Court Verdicts |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| Saminu Turaki | Arraigned on 32-state counts | Former governor of Jigawa State | 36 Billion Naira | Granted bail by court since 2007 |
| Bode George | Misappropriation and Embezzlement | Former Chairman of the Nigerian Port Authority (NPA) | 85 billion Naira | Sentenced to 30 months jail |
| Orji Uzor Kalu | Arraigned on 107 state counts | Former governor of Abia State | 5 billion Naira | Granted bail in 2008. Prosecution is still on-going |
| James Ibori | Arraigned on 170 state counts | Former governor of Delta State | 9.2 billion Naira | Granted bail in 2008, in what apparently was meant to preclude from going to jail. But a court of competent jurisdiction found him guilty and, accordingly jailed him. |
| Ayo Fayose | 51 state counts | Former Governor of Ekiti State | N1.2 billion | Granted bail by court since 2007. He is still in court. |
| Joshua Dariye | Arraigned on 14-state counts | Former Governor of Plateau State | 700 million | Granted bail by court since 2007. Convicted and jailed |
| Tafa Balogun | Money laundering | Former inspector-General of Police | US \$130 million | Convicted and sentenced to jail for five years |
| Chimaroke Nnamani | Arraigned on 105-state counts | Former governor of Enugu State | 5.3 billion Naira | Granted bail by court since 2007 |
| Gabriel Aduku | Arraigned on 56-state counts | Former Minister of State for | 300 million Naira | Case determined in 2008 |
| Hon. T. Faniyi, Albert Soje & others | Arraigned on 30-state counts | The first is former Kogi State Commissioner for Local government while the other one served as commissioner for agriculture | 3 billion Naira | Suspects arraigned on April , 2010, Remanded in prison custody and later granted bail |

| Names | Allegation | Position | Amount | Court Verdicts |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------|---|
| Jolly Nyame | Arraigned on 21-state counts | Former governor of Taraba State | 180 million Naira | Granted bail by court since 2008. Eventually convicted and jailed |
| Francis Okokuro | Arraigned on 6-count charges | Former Bayelsa State Accountant General | 2.4 billion Naira | Suspect Remanded in prison custody |
| Lucky Igbinedion | Arraigned on 191-count charges | Former Governor, Edo State | 4.3 billion Naira | Granted bail by court since 2008 |
| Kenny Martins | Arraigned on 28-count charges | Police Equipment Fund | 7.740 billion Naira | Granted bail by court since 2008 |
| Attahiru Bafarawa | Arraigned on 47-count charges | Former Governor of Sokoto State | 15 billion Naira | Suspect remanded in prison custody and later granted bail by court. However, nothing was heard about the case again |
| Michael Botmang | Arraigned on 31-count charges | Former Plateau State Governor | 1.5 billion Naira | Granted bail in 2008 |
| Prof. Babalola Borishade | Arraigned on 11-count charges | Former Minister of Aviation | 5.6 billion Naira | Granted bail in 2008 |
| Nyeson Wike | Arraigned on state count charges | Former Minister of Education, and Chief of Staff to Governor of River State. He is also a former Governor of Rivers State | 4.670 billion Naira | Granted bail in 2008 |
| Adenike Grange | Arraigned on 56-state count charges | Former Minister of Health | 300 million Naira | Granted bail in 2008 |
| Boni Haruna | Arraigned on 47-state counts | Former Governor, Adamawa State | 250 million Naira | Granted bail in 2008 |
| Nicholas Ugbade | Arraigned on 158-count charges | Former Member of House of Representatives | 5.2 billion Naira | Remanded in Prison Custody and later granted bail by the court in 2009 |

| Names | Allegation | Position | Amount | Court Verdicts |
|---|--------------------------------|--|---------------------|---|
| Adamu Abdullahi | Arraigned on 149-count charges | Former Governor of Nasarawa State, former Senator in the Upper Chamber and currently the National Chairman of the ruling party-All Progressives Congress (APC) | 15 billion Naira | Granted bail by the Court |
| Roland Iyayi | Arraigned on 11-count charges | Former Managing Director of FAAN | 5.6 billion Naira | Granted bail by the Court in 2008 |
| Professor Innocent Chuka Okonkwo, Uchechi | Arraigned on 14-state count | The first person was the Vice Chancellor of Imo State University | 145 million | Remanded in Kuje Prison and later granted bail by the court in 2009 |
| Ndudi Elumelu | Arraigned on 158-state count | Former Member of House of Representatives | 5.2 billion Naira | Remanded in prison and later granted bail by the court in 2009 |
| Hamman Bello Hammed | Arraigned on 46-state counts | Former Comptroller General of Nigeria Customs | 2.5 Billion Naira | Suspects Remanded in Kirikiri & Ikoyi Prisons and later Granted bail by the court in 2009 |
| Chief Joe Musa; Olusegun Ogumba; Chinedu Obi; Oparagu Elizabeth; and Kweku Tandoh | Arraigned on 12-state counts | The first person was the Former Director General of National Gallery of Art, while others were Directors of the same institution | 1.012 Billion Naira | Remanded in Kuje Prison and later granted bail by the court in 2009 |
| Dr Yuguda Manu Kaigama | Arraigned on 37-state counts | Chairman, Taraba State Civil Service Commission | 17 Million Naira | Remanded in prison custody and later freed |
| Dr Albert Ikomi | Arraigned on 4-state counts | Retired permanent Secretary | 43 Million Naira | Suspects Remanded in Ikoyi Prison and later Granted bail by the court in 2009 |

| Names | Allegation | Position | Amount | Court Verdicts |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Tom Iseghobi, Muhammed Buba, Mike Okoli | Arraigned on 32 state counts | General Manager & Managers of Transcorp Group PLC | 15 billion Naira | Remanded in Kuje Prison and later granted bail by the court in 2009 |
| Dr Ransome Owan, Mr. Abdulrahim Ado; Mr. Adulrasak Alimi, Mr. Onwuamaeza Iloeje, Mrs. Grace Eyoma; Mohmmed Bunu; Mr. Abimbola Odubiyi | Arraigned on 196 state counts | They include chairman and six Commissioners of Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission | 1.5 billion Naira | Granted bail in 2009 |
| Dr Aliyu Abdullahi | Arraigned on 158 state counts | Former Federal Permanent Secretary | 5.2 billion Naira | Remanded in Prison Custody and later granted bail by the court in 2009 |
| Hon. Paulinus Igwe | Arraigned on 158 state counts | Former Member of House of Representative | 5.2 billion Naira | Remanded in Prison Custody and later granted bail court bail by the court in 2009 |
| Iyabo Obasanjo-Bello | Arraigned on 56 state counts | Former Senator and one-time Commissioner for health in Ogun State | 10 million Naira | Granted bail in 2008. No longer in the country. |
| Rasheed Ladoja | Arraigned on 33 state count charges | Former Governor of Oyo State | 6 billion Naira | Granted bail in 2008 |
| GrandTotal | | | ₦ 261.47 billion \$ 130 million | |

Source: Adopted from the Compilation made by John Sunday Ojo, "Looting the Looters: The Paradox of Anti-Corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-2014)" *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 12, No. 9, 2016, pp.10-13. For updates, see Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA), *A Compendium of 100 High Profile Corruption Cases in Nigeria*, 2018; 2019; and 2020.

Note:

- Entry for James Ibori, Former Governor of Delta State appeared twice over the same allegation but of different amount, i.e. arraigned on 170 state counts for 9.2 billion naira and 6.2 billion naira respectively.
- Entry of 145 million for Professor Innocent Chuka Okonkwo (V.C. of Imo State) and Uchechi has no unit of currency.
- Entry of 700 million for Joshua Dariye, former Governor of Plateau State has no unit of currency.

Table 7 below is about people who have been alleged to have committed acts of impropriety that, similar to those in table 6 above and are having the sword of Damocles over their heads, are still allowed to move about freely and at the same time make what sometimes would, initially, appear meaningful; which are, in the end, meaningless inputs into democratic politics. The palpable role play, consequently, is compromises and truncates what it has in reality become, going by our consistent analysis in this Lecture. In this table, we have seen those who apparently were/are untouchable, who have not been prosecuted despite the glaring and weighty allegations against them. The allegations against everyone in this table are weighty and a great concern to any inquiry into the phenomenon that is called corruption. This is simply because a number of the expenditures, diversions, and utilizations of the funds (whatever they might have been, which are contrary to their original purposes) border on some forms of criminality and unconstitutional and unaccounted for diversion of what amounts have been mentioned against their names. Let it be stressed that one is not passing judgment on the alleged looters; but, from the perspectives of morality and logic, this group of individuals who appear larger than life in the society and/or as hefty as the enormity of their alleged infractions are never likely to go on trial and, as a result, their cases are not sub-judice, before, now, and later.

If this conclusion is or becomes the case, what is then likely to be the outcome of their impunity, insincerity, and the lack of objectivity? Without doubt, the consequence shall be chaos (the deteriorating security issues in the country are a direct consequence of also the deteriorating corruption cases in society),¹²⁶ institutional decay, and the

126 The founding leader of Boko Haram – Mohammed Yusuf – is reputed to have embarked on what has now become the security albatross of the country based on his preachment that rejects secularism, democracy, western education and westernization. “The main planks of Yusuf’s narratives were framed, though not exclusively, around the following issues or variants of them: (1) the concept of *taghut* (idolatry), including secularism, democracy, and partisan politics; (2) Western education and Westernisation; (3) working for an un-Islamic government; and (4) repudiation of the charge of Kharijism levelled against them by the local *ulama*, especially his former colleagues in the Wahhabi group in Borno.” K. Mohammed, “The message and Methods of Boko Haram,” in M.-A. P.

arrest of development. Let us take the issue of the arrest of development from the list of debilitating outcomes of the dereliction of duties to the motherland assigned to the traducers of the nation's destinies, for further brief analysis. The arrest of development is actually caused by the siphoning of the monies set aside for such a purpose. The inclination towards stealing legally allocated funds for selfish and unproductive indulgences therefore shall impact on the development of both the society and the human capacity of the citizens. Again, all these have manifested in the contemporary corresponding abyss in security challenges, a bleak future, and the increased aspiration of the younger generation to take to their flight at the opportune time.

When and where the legion of corrupt cases has become as bad as it could have been in any society as it is today in the country, what should be done is to embark on proactive measures to ensure that the guilty ones do not go unpunished. Some of the individuals listed in the table are even dead, while those who are alive, as stated earlier, appear as if they are being treated as untouchables. For instance, someone such as Chief Olusegun Obasanjo should be asked to account, at least, for the sum of \$16 billion "electricity budget" that never translated into light for schools, homes, industries, hospitals, etc., till today. This recommendation is apt because if we bring in again the opportunity cost theory to bear on this monumental negation of leadership responsibility, it can be concluded that Nigerians were not only shortchanged, but could not and shall never gain anything tangible because of the lack of expenditure in the energy sector and the non-repayment of the stolen money. Either way, in other words, the Nigerian people and the country at large are the losers. The same recommendation is equally made in respect of Goodluck Jonathan listed in the table. He should be made to account for the sums allegedly misapplied, especially now that there is a mounting speculation that he is being lured to come out and stand for election to the presidency under the auspices of the All Progressives Congress (APC). The institutional decay that has emerged as a result of the way corruption is allowed to punish any aspirations for democratic development and consolidation. This is the challenge for the country, going forward.

de Montclos, ed., *Nigeria's Interminable Insurgency? Addressing the Boko Haram Crisis*, London: Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, September 2014, p.14.

Table 7: Unprosecuted Case of Political Corruption from 1999-2014

| Name | Allegation | Position | Amount |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Unconstitutional withdrawal of funds from federation account | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | 2.1 billion Naira |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Misappropriation of funds meant for improved electricity services | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | \$16 billion |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Bribery to elongate his tenure (The National Assembly members were bribed to pass a law for extension of his political tenure popularly known as Third Term Agenda) | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | 23.45 billion Naira |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Illegal acquisition of shares (No Specification) | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | 200 Million Naira |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | Raising of funds while in office for the construction of Presidential Library) | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | 8.5 billion Naira |
| Olusegun Obasanjo | 2007 Election rigging, which was condemned and deplored by President Umaru Yar'Adua – the beneficiary | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | |
| Sunday Afolabi | Embezzlement (The Minister was alleged to have defrauded the government in collaboration with SAGEM. The funds meant for National Identity Card were siphoned by the Minister and the company mentioned above) | Former Interior Minister | 81.4 billion Naira |
| Salisu Buhari | Certification forgery | Former Speaker of Federal House of Representative | |
| Andy Uba | Money laundering | An aide to former President Olusegun Obasanjo | Undisclosed |
| Adolphus Wabara | Bribery | Former Senate President | \$400,000 |
| Late Chuba Okadigbo | Personal enrichment, Abuse and misuse of Power | Former Senate President | |
| Late Evans Enwerem | Misappropriation | Former Senate President | |
| Stella Oduah | Misappropriation and abuse of office | Former Minister of Aviation | 643 million Naira |
| Goodluck Jonathan | Fallacious Arms scandal between Nigeria and South Africa | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | US \$15 million |
| Goodluck Jonathan | Diversion and illegal withdrawal of petroleum funds (Exposed by Lamido Sanusi, the former Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria) | Former President of Federal Republic of Nigeria | US \$20 million |
| Justice Kastina-Alu | Abuse of office and Judicial corruption | Former late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court | |
| Diezani K. Alison-Madueke | Misappropriation and embezzlement | Former Minister of Petroleum Resources | £13 billion |
| GrandTotal | | | ₦116.293 billion \$ 17.06 billion £13 billion |

Source: Adapted from the Compilation made by John Sunday Ojo, "Looting the Looters: The Paradox of Anti-Corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-2014)," *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 12, No. 9, 2016, p.13. For updates, see Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA), A

Table 8: Comparative Analysis of the Nature of Corruption in Nigeria's Fourth Republic 1999-Present Which Can be Gleaned From the Rulers' Behavioural Profiles (in Office)

| Regime | Year | Nature of Corruption as may be Explained by Characteristic Rulership Style |
|---------------------|--------------|---|
| Olusegun Obasanjo | 1999-2007 | Election rigging, abuse of office, embezzlement, misappropriation, bribery, inflation of contract, extortion, illegal acquisition of property |
| Umaru Musa Yar'Adua | 2007-2010 | Embezzlement, misappropriation, bribery, inflation of contract, extortion, illegal acquisition of property |
| Goodluck Jonathan | 2011-2015 | Embezzlement, misappropriation, bribery, inflation of contract, extortion, indecisiveness |
| Muhammadu Buhari | 2015-Present | Impunity, nepotism, arrogance, incompetence in handling security challenges, inability or unwillingness to promote national integration, which, unfortunately, has led to agitation for the dismemberment of the country, demonstrating a carefree attitude to corruption allegations (otherwise also referred to as "I don't care attitude," economic chaos due to incompetence and raging corruption that, most irresponsibly, is being denied by the presidency. |

Source: Adapted with modification from the compilation made by John Sunday Ojo "Looting the Looters: The Paradox of Anti-Corruption Crusades in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-Present)," *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 12, No. 9, 2016, p.10.

Table 8 above is both a comparison of corrupt practices and leadership character profiles of four personalities that have presided over the affairs of the country from the point of the transition to civilian rule in 1999. The theoretical point one would like to make in this regard is that personality traits are also a determinant factor in the way rulers react to corruption issues as well as any other issue of governance. As Adefuye has put it:

Political leadership is core to the development of any nation. A country that enjoys strong leadership and good governance is bound to have political stability and economic prosperity. Anywhere in the world, leadership involves competence, commitment, intelligence, and integrity. It involves all ingredients necessary for socio-political and economic survival

and progress of a society. This is why leaders are expected to be people with missions, visions, and actions. Leaders should not only have the passion to lead, they should also have concrete political agenda and the determination to follow such programs through. It is not uncommon to have leaders who lose their focus and their purpose of leadership.¹²⁷

The last sentence of this quotation sums up the poor quality of rulership that the four rulers since transition to civilian rule have brought to the governance of Nigeria. It is also what the characterization (in the table) of the four rulers of the Fourth Republic so far have demonstrated. It is quite unfortunate that, as we have been stressing all along, the return to civilian rule after several years of military dictatorship should have produced successors who would be imbued with vision, which should, to start with, identify what the various challenges to nationhood have been that now require sitting down with other stakeholders to design solutions to address them. Unfortunately, since 1999 when the military was virtually humiliated back to the barracks, there is no visible departure format from the lackluster performance, expensive governance structural trajectories of yester-years that ought to have led us out of the quagmire of underdevelopment – a phenomenon which has also been combined with the non-development, not to talk or think of the non-consolidation of democracy. The combination of the rulership style of the disparate personalities who have ruled the country since the transition rule in 1999 is reason why democracy is not being given the required footing to grow.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE BEFORE, DURING AND POST-ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

We have seen in this Lecture that election is very crucial to democracy because it is the foremost mechanism that is used globally to get the representatives of the people selected for various levels of the governance system. It is also the instrument used to test the extent by which democracy is alive, all other things equal, as well as the extent to which it can determine the basis of leadership recruitment in the polity. The roles that elections play in a democratic setting are multifarious. The principal one as IFES (MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK) has crisply put it is: **“An electoral process is an alternative to violence as it is a**

127 Adefuye, A., “Foreword,” in A. O. Nwauwa and J. O. Adekunle, eds., *Nigerian Political Leaders: Visions, Actions and Legacies*, Glassboro, N. J.: Goldline and Jacobs Publishing, 2015, p.viii.

means of achieving governance."¹²⁸[Emphasis mine.] It is however not a correct nor a plausible argument when the same body avers that:

It is when an electoral process is perceived as unfair, unresponsive, or corrupt, that its political legitimacy is compromised and stakeholders are motivated to go outside the established norms to achieve their objectives.¹²⁹

If this argument is correct for countries in "transition to country" it may not be so for a country such as Nigeria, when, even before any election would take place, the partisans of the various political parties had mapped out strategies for compromising the electoral process, whether in favour or against such partisans' interest.¹³⁰ In fairness to IFES, it also provides what amounts to a caveat when it, in another breadth, argues that: "Electoral conflict and violence become tactics in political competition...[w]hen conflict or violence occurs, it is not a result of an electoral process. It is the breakdown of an electoral process."¹³¹ It is therefore pertinent to re-emphasize that elections can only be credible, free, fair, transparent participatory, and competitive if these parameters are met.¹³²The parameters must be met because democracy and electoral violence are regarded to be antithetical to one another. Indeed, and according to Diamond, elections of this kind of grade of performance and result can only be possible if and when:

...they are administered by a neutral authority; when the electoral administration is sufficiently competent and resourceful to take specific precautions against fraud; when the police, military and courts treat competing candidates and parties impartially; when contenders all have access to the public media; when the electoral districts and do not grossly handicap the opposition...when the secret of the ballot is protected; when virtually all adults can vote; when procedures for organizing and counting the votes are widely known; and when there are transparent and impartial procedures for resolving election complaints and disputes.¹³³

128 IFES (Making Democracy Work), *Electoral Conflict and Violence: A Strategy for Study and Prevention*, February 5, 2002, p.1.

129 *Ibid.*

130 See, among others, the beautiful but yet to be implemented Report of the Justice Muhammed Lawan Uwais Committee on Electoral Reform

131 IFES, *op. cit.*, pp.1 and 2.

132 Omotola, J. S., "Elections and Democratic Transition in Nigeria Under the Fourth Republic," *African Affairs*, 109/437, p.536.

133 Diamond, *op. cit.*, p.25.

These “when” conditionalities that Diamond has listed for good and credible elections are indeed very important for a country whose electoral democracy’s trajectory is without doubt very fragile, just as the country Nigeria itself is. The fault lines of Nigeria’s democracy need to be understood and tackled if really there is a commitment to blunting their rough edges, just as the mindset of those for whom the trajectory of this process has to traverse will have to be “deodorized” from the stench of electoral violence. While this thinking is on, it is only pertinent to refer to the chaotic cacophony and scenario of discord that took place in the National Assembly in the latest and most recent attempt to come up with how to transmit election results from the polling booths or the collation centres to the headquarters of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The cacophony only proved the point that, despite the more than two decades of trying to use the electoral process to choose the rulers for the country, there is the need to warn that the factor of violence is still very much alive and that its anticipation, whether by the politicians standing for elections and/or their foot soldiers (i.e., the thugs employed for that purpose), before, during, and after the elections. Clearly, this anticipation of the high probability of mayhem and violence generally leaves much to be desired; that is, if it is not scary and blood-chilling.¹³⁴

Both philosophically and morally speaking, there shouldn’t be any phenomenon that should be referred to as “political violence” in the discourse about and the practice of democracy as well as any aspect of it, particularly elections. Violence can only be referenced in human relations generally when law and order must have broken down in a polity; when the relationships between two nation-states have gone awry; and/or when it becomes pervasively used in the domestic setting, particularly when women become the butt of dehumanization in a marriage contract/relationship. In any of the circumstances mentioned herein, violence of one human being against another is not anything to be celebrated or embarked upon, especially where dialogue as well as diplomacy could also have been resorted to, to redress an inherent tension. (In parenthesis, domestic violence scenario may be contrived

134 Although the stalemate that was witnessed during the debates on whether or not there should be an electronic transmission of election results directly to the INEC Headquarters from the polling booth has since been resolved in favour of such transmission, those opposed to such method were so disposed to its prevention. They tried to maintain their stand because of the advantage that would be conferred on them to cheat and declare fake results. It was amazing that people could be arguing against reality and/or the increasingly huge advantages that ICT could confer on doing the right thing, especially with regard to ensuring that there would be transparency and peaceful voting as well as an end to ballot snatching and the usual legion of electoral malpractices.

by a nasty husband to even a score that may not even be there in the first place; it may merely be contrived.) To this extent and, indeed, whatever may be the case, violence in any form is and should always be deprecated, frowned upon and/or avoided by all means possible.

This must or, at least, should be so because violence against any human being is, invariably, about the dehumanization of the victim. In a political space that has been our main concern, violence does not have a role to play in politics other than the fact that it is intentionally embarked upon to, principally, waste a human being and, as a corollary, waste the values, such as democratic values of free, accountable and equitable system of governance, which the wasted individual might also have planned to bring to the table should they have survived and won the election. In most cases, a violated individual in politics, even if they survived due to the minor nature of the violent attack, may also lose properties that may run into millions or billions of naira. Whether or not such unexpected or undesired losses can be recovered at any point in time by the victims is neither here nor there. This is because the avenue for recovery (when this is feasible at all) is likely to be from the political angle rather than the economic angle, with the likely implication that corrupt practices would be resorted to in such a bid to rehabilitate victims. Arguably, the first variable we considered as a major contributor to the absence of democracy in the Nigerian polity resonates very clearly in the arguments herein again. See equally the following arguments aptly put up by Diamond *et al.*,¹³⁵ and amplified by both W. A. Fawole;¹³⁶ and S. Adejumbi:¹³⁷

The state [becomes] 'a resource, devoid of moral content or attachment, to be pursued, occupied, milked – and later plundered – for the individual politician and [their] support group'....Politics in post-colonial Nigeria was conceptualized as a crude competition for appropriating the nation's wealth, a

135 Diamond, L., "Nigeria" The Un-civic Society and the Descent into Praetorianism," in L. Diamond, J. Linz, and S. M. Lipset, eds., *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, 2nd Edition, Boulder, Co.: Lynne Rienner, 1995, p.419.

136 Fawole, W. A., "Voting Without Choosing: Interrogating the Crisis of 'Electoral Democracy' in Nigeria," in T. Lumumba-Kasongo, ed., *Liberal Democracy and its Critics in Africa: Political Dysfunction and the Struggle for Social Progress*, Dakar: CODESRIA Books in Association with Zed Books (London and New York) and University of South Africa Press, 2005, p.156.

137 Adejumbi, S., "The Two Political Parties and the Electoral Process in Nigeria, 1989-1993," in G. Nzongola-Ntalaja and M. C. Lee, eds., *The State and Democracy in Africa*, Harare: AAPS Books, 1997, p.126.

practice which made good governance and accountability an alien philosophy....As a result, political contestations between individual politicians and between political parties [would be] marred by thuggery, violence and hooliganism; governments at all levels [would be] unaccountable to the electorate, and constitutional checks and balances [would be] thrown overboard for lawlessness to reign supreme; human rights and fundamental freedoms [would be] abused with impunity as incumbents...employ...crude methods of pacification to silence...opponents...[to] remain in power; elections [would be] rigged [while] governments [would] function...outside and in spite of the wishes of the people. In short, the quest for the control of the state [that more often than not ends up being very violent] and [the] appropriation of its resources constitute 'the logic of electoral competition among the political parties' in post-colonial Nigeria.

Further to the foregoing argument about the likely negative fallout of flawed elections, it has been demonstrated that there could be the subversion of the sovereignty of the people because, under Section 14(2)(a) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, As Amended, "Sovereignty belongs to the people...from whom government...derives its powers and authority;" and the undermining of the legitimacy of the government even where a declaration of a candidate as the winner of an election and a validation of that declaration by a court or tribunal thereto, will merely confer legality on the outcome and nothing more. Furthermore, that type of declaration can render the task of governance difficult because the electorates are likely to believe that they do not owe allegiance to the government. Without legitimacy, it may be difficult for the government to mobilize the citizens to channel their energies and resources towards the development of the country. In other words, an apparently legal government, which is bereft of legitimacy, can only govern by the sheer force of state power. Furthermore, flawed elections can constrict the democratic space and stunt the growth and development of democracy. Voter apathy can also occur and the electorates are not likely to respond to any clarion call on them to come out, next time around, to cast their votes; they are most likely to respond with disdain.¹³⁸

138 See D. C. J. Dakas, "Post-2011 Presidential Election Violence in Nigeria: Peace and Security Imperatives," in J. H. P. Golwa, *Peace and Security as Imperatives for National Development: A Collection of Papers Presented at the 2011/2012 Quarterly Lectures Series of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution*,

Electoral flaws are definitely going to aggravate political enmity, as losers see themselves as victims of personal and institutional conspiracy. Aside from this, a flawed election can produce an electorate who would be prepared to accept any unconstitutional method to change the regime that is declared the winner of such election – a development that further aggravates the problem of cost as well as the lack of development and consolidation of democracy. There is also the dimension that violence can eventuate into sordid outcomes if, for instance, the disputed election results should go to court for adjudication, wherefrom there may be more questions than answers if the courts/tribunals may give conflicting and inexplicable decisions that are perceived to be partial and politically tainted, as have been witnessed in some earlier and recent court pronouncements in the country.¹³⁹ Finally, it cannot be ruled out that the flawed outcome of elections can generate violence and instability during and after the process might have been concluded.¹⁴⁰ This is precisely the pictures that tables 9, 10, 11 and 12 below have brought out boldly, apart from the evidential costs that have also been highlighted by the narratives on pervasive corruption on the project of democratizing the polity.

Casualties (accepted to be the very central features of the Nigerian political culture¹⁴¹) have always been associated with elections. Typical

Abuja: Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2013, pp.32-34.

139 Perhaps, the most contested election in Nigeria till date was the Presidential Elections of 1979, during the transition to the Second Republic. There was never any love lost, politically speaking, between President Shehu Shagari and Chief Obafemi Awolowo. The Supreme Court verdict was simply a sour grape in the mouths of the defeated Awolowo and his supporters.

140 *Op.cit.*, pp.34-35.

141 The concept of political culture as explained by the likes of Lucian Pye, Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba in their pioneering works in Comparative Politics was meant to situate the dominant behavioural tendencies, which would, first and foremost, be discernible according to the healthy nature or otherwise of the political competition; and, secondly, it would equally be expected to conduce to the ultimate objective of political development, i.e., were the competitions democratically conducted. Almond and Verba, in particular, concentrated their research on the concept of “civic culture.” In other words, they were concerned with developing a framework of political culture that would lead to the development and consolidation of liberal democracy. The argument of the duo is based on the distinction among three pure types of political culture – parochial, subject, and participant: “In a parochial political culture, citizens are only indistinctly aware of the existence of central government[; while in] a subject political culture, citizens see themselves not as participants in the political process but as subjects of the government. In a participant political culture, citizens believe both that they can contribute to the system and they are affected by it.” [See, britannica.com/topic/political-culture. Downloaded on Wednesday, November 10th, 2021, at 05.00 Hours.] In short, political culture is a set of shared views and normative judgments held by a population regarding its political

of the 1964 General Elections to the Western Regional Elections of 1965, where many lives as well as properties were lost and destroyed, respectively, it has been argued that:

Electoral violence has remained a feature of elections conducted in Nigeria since the colonial era. The situation [has not changed] with independence and with [the] return to [civilian] rule in 1999....The pattern and intensity has remained dynamic across different locations....

Between 1954 and 2015, eleven general elections were conducted by different Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) in Nigeria, in addition to other off-cycle, re-run and local government elections. All these elections have witnessed varying levels of violence with those of 1965, 1983, and 2011 notorious for the high incidence[s] of electoral violence recorded. The 1965 elections contributed to the collapse of the first republic due to the intense struggle by the various political parties to 'win'...by all means. This led to bloodshed and violence in which over 2,000 people were reported to have lost their lives, with many other casualties including election officials. Similarly, the violence associated with the 1983 general elections led to the fall of the second republic. The 1983 violence followed allegations of widespread electoral fraud, which triggered pockets of violent protests across the country leading to the destruction of lives and properties.¹⁴²

The picture of some of the leading politicians who lost their lives because of political differences between 2003 and 2015 is not only symptomatic of the poor political culture of Nigerians, but demonstrates the heavy cost to the democratic development of the country: Engr. Funsho Williams, the PDP gubernatorial aspirant for Lagos State in 2003; Dr. Harry Marshal, a staunch PDP stalwart in Rivers State between 1999 and 2003, who fell out with the sitting governor of the State (1999 to 2007) and defected to the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), was gunned down in his house on March 5, 2003; Chief Bola Ige, a serving Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation under President Olusegun Obasanjo, was assassinated in his house in Ibadan on account of the political differences between him

system. Nigerian political culture is largely that of **impunity by the rulers and the led! That is why killings of human beings and the wanton destruction of properties, especially before, during and after electoral campaigns, aren't seen as anything abnormal and abhorrent in the polity.**

142 Centre for Democracy and development (CDD), *Nigeria: Electoral Trends*, Abuja, Centre for Democracy and Development, 2019, p.29.

and the then Deputy Governor of Osun State, Iyiola Omisore.¹⁴³ Chief Uche Ogbonna, a former PDP member who defected to ANPP to contest the Orlu Senatorial District against the incumbent Senator Arthur Nzeribe, was murdered in broad daylight; Barrister and Barrister Mrs. Barnabas Igwe were brazenly murdered for daring to challenge the callous administrative and leadership style of Chimaroke Mbadiniuju, while the latter was serving as the Governor of Anambra State; and Dr. Chris Ngige, a serving Governor of Anambra State, was, on 10th July, 2003, kidnapped as a result of renegeing on the agreement entered into before a shrine, prior to his election to the office in 2003!¹⁴⁴

The shenanigans, sleazes and, most unfortunately, violent (political) attacks were similar in Bayelsa State in 2015, as the following narration has also shown:

[Some] few hours before the commencement of [the] accreditation of voters, the country home of the former Minister of State for Agriculture and the Director General of the Sylva/Igiri [C]ampaign [O]rganization, Senator Heineken Lokpobiri came under attack by gunmen. The thugs[,] believed to be loyal to a particular party and aspirant were said to have stormed the house of the Minister...in the early hours of Saturday [5th December, 2015]. In the ensuing encounter, the thugs...overpowered the security men...and made their way into the minister's [sic.] compound causing mayhem. One person was reported dead in the shootout between the military and the gunmen. In a related development, a policeman and four others were killed [the same day] by thugs suspected to be working for the All Progressives Congress (APC) during the governorship election [therein.]¹⁴⁵

Apart from the direct physical violence that is often resorted to as explained above, Ibrahim has come up with other forms of fraudulent and anti-credibility tactics for electoral competitions that have been observed by election monitoring teams to be in operation/existence, as follows: a) illegal printing of voters' cards; b) illegal possession of ballot boxes; c) stuffing of ballot boxes; d) falsification of election results; e)

143 Omisore was alleged to have had a hand in the killing and was charged to court, but was eventually discharged and acquitted – along with other suspects. See *Vanguard* Newspaper of July 19th, 2016. (vanguard.com/2016/07/Omisore-welcomes-re-visit-bola-ige-dokubos-murder/. Downloaded on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 03.00 Hours.)

144 See O. A. Emma and S. I. Aloysius, "Political and Electoral Violence on Nigeria: A Case of [the] General Election in Kogi and Bayelsa States of Nigeria," *Indian Journal of Economics and Development*," Vol.5 (12), December 2017, p.2.

145 *Ibid*.

illegal thumb-printing of ballot papers; f) infant [underaged] voting; g) compilation of fictitious names on voters' lists; h) illegal compilation of separate voters' lists; i) illegal printing of forms used for collection and declaration of election results; j) deliberate refusal to supply electoral materials to certain areas; k) announcing results in places where no elections had taken place; l) unauthorized announcement of election results however this might have been; m) harassment of candidates, agents, and voters; n) [abrupt] change of [the] list of electoral officials; and o) box-switching and inflation of figures.¹⁴⁶ In addition, it has been discovered that, in an effort to render the results incorrect and unacceptable except to the perpetrators of such malpractices: "...some politicians who have [an] upper-hand in government, in an attempt to win an election by all means[,] may call for an illegal arrest and detention of their opponents on or before the Election Day. This[,] as a result, might render mobilization of votes by [their] opponents very limited."¹⁴⁷ (See also table 9 below.)

These preceding 14 to 15 methods of how elections can be compromised have also been compressed into the IFES's five intervals of electoral conflict and violence in an electoral chronology: first, it is pointed out that there is an identity conflict that can occur during the registration process when refugees or other conflict-forced migrants cannot establish or re-establish their officially recognized identities. Secondly, there is a campaign conflict which can occur as rivals seek to disrupt the opponents' campaigns, intimate voters and candidates, and use threats and violence to influence participation in the voting. The third level occurs on election day when rivalries are played out at the polling station. Fourthly, there is the results conflict, which can occur with disputes over election results, along with the likelihood that the inability of judicial mechanisms to resolve disputes fairly, timely, and in a transparent manner. Fifthly and finally, there is the representation conflict, which emerges in an electoral system that is zero sum that, in turn, leaves out losers without participation in governance.¹⁴⁸

146 J. Ibrahim, quoted in N. P. Orinakachkwu, and J. A. Jawan, *The Electoral Process and the Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*, academia.edu/22361054/The_Electoral_Process_and_Democratic_Consolidation_in_Nigeria?auto=download&email_work_card=download-paper. Downloaded on Friday, October 1st, 2021 at 23.40 hours, p.131. See also IFES [*op. cit.*:3], on the likely occurrence of electoral conflict and violence in an election chronology:

147 *Ibid.*

148 IFES, *op. cit.*, p.3.

Before getting to the ugly and unwholesome nature of the scale of political violence in the Nigerian polity, we would also like to analyze a study (see Table 9 below.) that has looked at the typologies of conflict in the six geopolitical zones and the Federal Capital Territory into which the country has been divided, for some political calculations. A look at the national average of the comparative ratios of the different conflict incidences shows that political conflicts in the country as calculated from across the various geopolitical zones notch up to a ratio of 67.16%, and it is the highest among the typologies the authors examined. This is followed in descending order of magnitude by “resource control” with a ratio of 55.13%; “religious conflicts” scoring 49.16%; “ethnic conflicts” attaining 46.43%; and “communal conflicts” with a ratio of 31.96%. Apart from observing the problem of the conceptual distinction made by the authors in separating “ethnic” and “communal” conflicts into different boxes – since there is a very tiny differentiation between them in meaning and utilization, that is, if there is any, there is also the palpable problem of our inability to comprehend how the ratios for each geopolitical zone was generated. In other words, how many variables were compared before arriving at each of the ratios for each box since it is obvious from the table that there are five variables that have each earned some values for each geopolitical zone and the cumulative values total more than 100%. And it is not explained in the book that the cumulative values for each geopolitical zone is up to 500%!

Table 9: Prevalent Conflict Typologies in Different Parts of Nigeria

| Conflict Typologies | Geopolitical Zones | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| | North Central | North East | North West | South East | South South | South West | Federal Capital Territory | National Average |
| Ethnic conflicts | 46.7% | 71.4% | 34.6% | 43.3% | 20.0% | 44.0% | 65.0% | 46.43% |
| Political conflicts | 63.3% | 75.0% | 69.2% | 63.3% | 33.3% | 76.0% | 90.0% | 67.16% |
| Religious conflicts | 63.3% | 57.1% | 50.0% | 40.0% | 16.7% | 52.0% | 65.0% | 49.16% |
| Resource control conflicts | 50.0% | 53.6% | 7.7% | 63.3% | 43.3% | 88.0% | 80.0% | 55.13% |
| Communal conflicts | 26.7% | 39.3% | 7.7% | 46.7% | 23.3% | 20.0% | 60.0% | 31.96% |

Source: Elite/Decision Maker Interview (October 2006), in O. Ibeanu and S. Egwu, *Popular Perception of Democracy and Political Governance in Nigeria*, Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development, 2007, p.66.

Be that as it may or in spite of this methodological confusion inherent in the table, it is very clear that the cumulative national average of the

entire conflict variables, as stated earlier, shows that political conflicts are more prevalent in Nigeria than any other form of conflict. This conclusion is on the basis of the analysis arrived through the interpretation of the data as related to the variables generated by the authors and as shown in the table. But looked at more closely and critically, one could also aver that politics was roundly an important component of the other sources of the prevalent conflicts. But, as if the authors appeared to be under-stressing this point as they, on the other hand, aver that: "It is[,] however, important to suggest that all the typologies of conflict identified are closely linked and interwoven in the way they are outwardly manifested."¹⁴⁹ Indeed, it must never be underestimated that inherent in ethnic, land and/or economic resources conflicts are the underlying political triggers generated, for instance, by reactions against manifest control exercised by someone defined to have come from a different ethnic background – an advantage that must be stopped by whatever means possible. Unfortunately, the weapon that is easily resorted to, more often than not, is violence in its various dimensions as shown serially in tables 10 to 12 below.

In both tables 10 and 11, we have been able to show not only the victims of political violence, but also some of their names and circumstances under which they were brutally murdered and/or violated upon, one way or the other. (In parenthesis, attention is hereby drawn to the fact table 10 is more comprehensive, dating back to some of the earliest cases of political assassinations in the country as well as duplicating some of the names that have already been mentioned in table 9.) As we have tried to argue above, the intent in killing the victims (opponents) was simply to, as much as possible, eliminate a competitor who, firstly, is defined as an enemy; whose presence and success or victory at the polls, secondly, would likely prevent the perpetrators of political violence from emerging victorious. This second "rationalization of the nature of the competition" is fair enough since it is a First Past the Post electoral system that is in use in virtually all the elections that have been used to choose the political rulers. Even when the elections might not have pitted candidates with equal chances of winning, election should have been seen as a kind of sport or contest in which the contestants are bound to meet again at another electoral competition whose best weapon is honing the tactics and strategies for victory, as well as arming oneself with a robust and well-prepared manifesto to win the brains and hearts of the voters. Unfortunately, this is not the political culture of the average Nigerian politician. Elimination

149 Ibeanu, O. and S. Egwu, *Popular Perception of Democracy and Political Governance in Nigeria*, Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development, 2007, p.69.

of the opponent is the only language understood by all the competitors. Where there is not going to be an or any opportunity for such physical elimination of the “enemy;” or, where it would only be feasible to completely destroy any item that could sustain dominance over the opponent, the one with the upper hand would readily go for it.

In a scenario of this nature, the outcome of the dastardly act of political violence unfortunately confirms the thesis of the Lecture about the inevitability and, more so, relevance of the explanatory power of “opportunity cost,” i.e., the elimination of an opponent in order to gain advantage. But, to reiterate the point previously made in the theoretical section of the Lecture, the ultimate point that would need emphasis is both the loss of those who have been maliciously eliminated and the fact that the lacunae occasioned by the physical elimination are, at the same time, the impossibility of the fructification of both the seeds and the fruits of democracy, especially if the eliminator is not of the same caliber in creating policy thrusts to better the standard of living of the deceased/eliminated. In other words, and ultimately, political violence is a double-edged sword in the politics of democratization and should be avoided by all means. Both advantages and disadvantages inhere in political violence. Indeed, from the cataclysmic coup d’état of 1966, the pace of democratization of the Nigerian polity has largely been in regression.

Table 10: Examples of Killings and Politically Violent Attacks in Nigeria: 1999-2003

| S/No | Victims of Political Conflicts | Dated Killed or Attacked | Remarks |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Mr. Sunday Ugwu | September 9, 1999 | This was a case of mistaken identity as the victim was an elder brother of Hon. Nwabueze Ugwu, the target, who is a member Enugu State House of Assembly. |
| 2. | Chukwudozie Nwachukwu | January 10, 2000 | This victim and the next one (in number 3 below) were brutally murdered by Bakassi Boys in Abia State. |
| 3. | Okechukwu Maduekwe | January 10, 2000 | Same as the preceding narration has depicted. |
| 4. | James Ibori | February 4, 2001 | Delta State Governor escaped death at the hands of assassins by the whiskers. The crisis leading to the attack was intra-party. |
| 5. | Momoh Lawal | March 5, 2001 | A victim of inter-party conflict between ANPP and PDP in the Okene Local Govt. Area of Kogi State. |

| S/No | Victims of Political Conflicts | Dated Killed or Attacked | Remarks |
|-------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
| 6. | An unidentified person killed | August 24, 2001 | A result of protest by market women and youths against the continued interference in the internal affair of the state by Senator Anyim Pius Anyim. |
| 7. | Odunayo Olagbaju | December 21, 2001 | The victim was a member of the Osun State House of Assembly and was killed by an unknown assailant. |
| 8. | Bola Ige | December 23, 2001 | The victim was the late Minister of Justice whose assassination is still a riddle that the Police have not unraveled till date. |
| 9. | Three Students reportedly lost their lives | March 7, 2002 | The incident occurred after a PDP rally held at Effurun Warri, the headquarters of the Petroleum Training Institute. |
| 10. | Janet Olapade | August 13, 2002 | A prominent PDP leader clubbed to death by assailants, mainly youths, for preventing them from pasting poster of a chairmanship candidate on her house. This was presumably an inter-party conflict. |
| 11. | Ahmed Pategi | August 15, 2002 | The victim was the Kwara State Chairman of the PDP who was murdered along with his Police orderly when his car was accosted on his way to Abuja. It was probably an outcome of an intra-party conflict. |
| 12. | Victor Nwankwo | August 29, 2002 | The victim was the younger brother of Dr. Arthur Nwankwo, the founder of the Eastern Mandate Union (EMU) – a higher profile politician. |
| 13. | Barnabas Igwe and his wife, Abigail | September 1, 2002 | Both of them were lawyers, with the husband also serving as the Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association of Onitsha Branch. |
| 14. | John Nunu | September 26, 2002 | The victim was the treasurer of Akossa Local Government Area. |
| 15. | Alhaji Isyaku Mohammed | September 2002 | The victim was until his death the National Vice-Chairman of the United Nigeria Peoples Party (UNPP) for the North-West. Most likely it was a result of an inter-party clash. |
| 16. | Dele Arojo | November 25, 2002 | The victim was the PDP's gubernatorial aspirant for Lagos State. |
| 17. | Unspecified number of people died from gunshot wounds in Ibadan | January 13, 2003 | This was inter-party clash at the Oyo State secretariat of the ANPP. |

| S/No | Victims of Political Conflicts | Dated Killed or Attacked | Remarks |
|-------------|---|---------------------------------|--|
| 18. | Adamu Waziri | January 18, 2003 | Gangs from the rival ANPP attacked the campaign convoy of the PDP gubernatorial candidate – Adamu Waziri – at the Gulani Bularafa-Dokini area of Yobe State. |
| 19. | A soldier and three youths were killed in clash over PDP primary elections in Warri | January 2003 | The cause was the rivalry between factions within the PDP. |
| 20. | One person killed in Owo, Ondo State | February 2003 | It was caused by factional fighting in the Alliance for Democracy (AD) party. |
| 21. | Eight people killed in Benue State | February 18, 2003 | A security man attached to the residence of Paul Unongo, the ANPP candidate in Benue State, was killed by unknown persons. When news of the death got to ANPP supporters, believing that the victim was killed by PDP supporters, the former went on a revenge mission, which eventually led to the death of seven more persons. |
| 22. | Assassination attempt | February 21, 2003 | An attempt on the life of the Speaker, Borno State House of Assembly, Malam Inuwa Kabo, in Maiduguri by three-gun men. The incident led to the killing of a security man on duty in the fateful day. |
| 23. | Ogbonnaya Uche | February 2003 | He was one of the senatorial candidates of the ANPP in Imo State. Speculations were rife that he was eliminated because of his huge popularity of winning the election into the Senate Chamber. |
| 24. | Theodore A Agwatu | February 2003 | This victim was a principal secretary to the Imo State Government. |
| 25. | Eight people died in political clashes | February 2003 | ANPP and PDP thugs engaged themselves in a battle for supremacy in Jato-Aka, Kwande LGA. |
| 26. | Mrs. Emily Omope (aka Mrs. Thatcher) | March 03, 2003 | She died on this day from the acid poured on her in December 2002. She belonged to the Alliance for Democracy party. |
| 27. | Marshall Harry | March 05, 2003 | The victim who started as a PDP stalwart decamped to the ANPP where he also became a leading member. Indeed, he was the South-South Coordinator of the presidential campaign of the ANPP candidate in the 2003 General Elections. |

| S/No | Victims of Political Conflicts | Dated Killed or Attacked | Remarks |
|------|---|--------------------------|---|
| 28. | 20 houses burnt to ashes in Tungar Dan-Nupe, Bunza Local Govt. Area, Kebbi State. | March 12, 2003 | 70 people were arrested. The fracas was between ANPP and PDP supporters of the respective gubernatorial candidates of the two parties. |
| 29. | One person killed and several others wounded, including two commissioners, in Obubra, Cross River State | March 20, 2003 | The incidence occurred when the Governor of the State was on a campaign tour of the area, which is a stronghold of his former Deputy, now a gubernatorial candidate of the rival political party – the ANPP. |
| 30. | Moshood Gidado and Ibrahim Razak | March 21, 2003 | One of the killings took place at the Idi-Ape family quarters of the Kwara State Governor, Alhaji Mohammed Lawal. As a matter of fact, the first of the two victims was the Governor's cousin. Properties were also destroyed with several hundreds injured. This incidence could be classified as an inter-party conflict. |
| 31. | One person killed | March 24, 2003 | The unidentified victim was killed in Ogaminana in Adavi LGA of Kogi State in an inter-party clash. |

Sources: *Tell News Magazine*, No. 10, March 10, 2003, p.23; *The Guardian*, Thursday, March 13, 2003, p.15; Friday, March 21, 2003, p.3; and Saturday, March 22, 2003, p.3; *ThisDay*, Saturday, March 22, 2003, p.4; *Weekly Trust*, March 15-21, 2003, p.19; and S. G. Tyoden, "State and Security in Nigeria's Fourth Republic," Being Paper Presented at the National Conference on Four Years of Democracy in Nigeria and Organized by AFRIGOV at Pioneer Hotel, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja, FCT, 20-23 March, especially pp.7-9. Some of the incidents were based on eyewitness reports made available to the author by verifiable informants. This table is taken from the earlier published work by this author in Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, *Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Issues and Perspectives* and edited by Bash Olasupo, pp.298-302. See also the sordid narrations about the violence witnessed before, during, and after the circles of election in the country in J. Adele Bamgbose, "Electoral Violence and Nigeria's 2011 Elections," *Constitution: A Journal of Constitutional Development*, Vol.11, No.2, June 2011, pp.39-56.

Table 11: CASES OF POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS FROM 1966-2016

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|--|--|-------------------|----------------------|
| Tafawa Balewa | 1966 | Lagos | Northern People's Congress (NPC) | Prime minister and Head of Government | Gunshot | Military |
| Ahmadu Bello | January 15, 1966 | Sokoto | Northern People's Congress (NPC) | Premier of Northern Nigeria | Gunshot | Military |
| Aguiyi-Ironsi | July 29, 1966 | Lagos | Nigeria Military | Military Head of State | Gunshot | Military |
| Adekunle Fajuyi | July 29, 1966 | Oyo | Nigeria Military | Military Governor of Western Nigeria | Gunshot | Military |
| Ladoke Akintola | January 15, 1966 | Oyo | Action Group | Premier of Western Nigeria | Gunshot | Military |
| Alfred Rewane | | Lagos | National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) | Businessman, Elderstatesman and NADECO financier | Gunshot | Military |
| Shehu Musa Yar'Adua | December 8, 1997 | Abakaliki Prison | Military | Military chief of staff and SDP Presidential candidate | Poisoned | Military |
| Murtala Mohammed | Feb 13, 1976 | Lagos | Nigeria Military | Head of State | Gunshot | Military |
| Tunde Idiagbon | 1999 | Ilorin, Kwara | Nigeria Military | Military vice president | Poisoned | Yettobe identified |
| Moshood Abiola | | Lagos | SDP | Presidential winner of 1993 Election | Poisoned | Yettobe identified |
| Dele Giwa | October 19, 1986 | Lagos | Newswatch Newspaper | Editor, Newswatch | Parcel of Bomb | Military state |
| Kudirat Abiola | June 4 1994 | Lagos | SDP | Business mogul | Gunshot | Military State |
| Bola Ige | Dec. 23, 2001 | Oyo | Alliance for Democracy (AD) | Minister of Justice and Attorney General | Gunshot | Yet to be Identified |

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Marshal Harry | March 2003 | Abuja FCT | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | ANPP Vice Chairman for the South-South Zone | Gunshot | Yet to be Identified |
| Aminosari Dikibo | Feb.6, 2004 | Delta State | PDP | PDP National Chairman | Gunshot | Yet to be Identified |
| Ogbonnaya Uche | February 8, 2003 | Imo State | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | ANPP senatorial candidate for Orluzone at Owerri | Gunshot | Yet to be Identified |
| Andrew Agom | March 4, 2004 | Nasarawa | People Democratic Party (PDP) | Former boss of Nigeria Airway and PDP board of trustee | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Alabi Okoju | May 15, 2005 | Osun | Oranmiyan Group | Leading financier Oranmiyan group,a socio-political organization | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. Ikenna Ibor | March 27, 2003 | Anambra State | All Nigeria Peoples Party(ANPP) | ANPP councillorship candidate in Anambra State | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Odunayo Olagbaju | 2001 | Ile-Ife, Osun State | Alliance for Democracy(AD). | Osun State House of Assembly. | Macheted | Yettobe identified |
| Funsho Williams | July 2006 | Lagos | People Democratic Party (PDP) | Lagos PDP governorship aspirant | stabbed andstrangled | Yettobe identified |
| Ayo Daramola | 2006 | Ekiti State | People Democratic Party (PDP) | Former World Bank consultant and PDP governorship aspirant in Ekiti State | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Anthony Nwudo | March 21, 2003 | Ebonyi | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | ANPP House of Assembly aspirant, | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Godwin Agbroko | December 25 th 2006 | Lagos | ThisDay Newspaper | chairman, ThisDay Editorial Board | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Ade Awonusi | January 7, 2002 | Abuja | Confidential Secretary to the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Mohammed Uwais | Confidential Secretary to the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Mohammed Uwais | Stabbed | Yettobe identified |

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Abayomi Ogundeji | August 17, 2008 | Lagos | ThisDay Newspaper | ThisDay Newspaper Editor | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Bayo Ohu | September 20, 2009 | Lagos | Guardian Newspapers | Assistant News Editor of The Guardian Newspapers | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Bagauda Kalto | 1996 | Abuja-Kaduna Road | Newsmagazine | Newsmagazine | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Charles Nsiegbie | November 21, 2009 | Rivers State | People Democratic Party | Political associate of Rivers state governor, Rotimi Amaechi | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Dipo Dina | Monday, January 25, 2010 | Ogun state | Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) | Ogun state ACN governorship candidate | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Janet Oladape | August 13 th 2002 | Ondo | People's Democratic Party (PDP) | Leader of People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Odigbo LG | Clubbed | Yettobe identified |
| Babatunde Elegbede | May 5, 1994 | Lagos | Nigeria military | Former chief of Naval Staff and military Governor of Rivers state | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Lekan Owolabi | March 1995 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Captain Tunde Ashafa | June 11, 1995 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| David Izegwere | December 1995 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Kayode Awosanya | January 1996 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mrs. Tajudeen Abiola | February 9, 1996 | | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Alhaji Sama Kano | April 8, 1996 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Admiral Olu Omotehinwa | May 22, 1996 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Mrs .Irene Obodo | June 1996 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Chief Adejola Balogun | June 15, 1996 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Esther A. Tejuoso | September 19, 1996 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Ahmed Onipede | 2010 | Lagos | Alliance for Democracy (AD). | former special adviser on mineral resources to the governor of Lagos State, Bola Tinubu | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Alhaja Suliat Adedeji | November 14, 1996 | Ibadan | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Toyin Onagoruwa | December 1996 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Engr. Adesoji A. Dina | September 1998 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Kola Tokunbo | January 31, 1999 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Patrick Okoye | January 31, 1999 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Sunday Ugwu | September 9, 1999 | Enugu | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Igwe Francis Nwankwo | February 15, 2000 | Anambra | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Nicholas Okhuakhua | June 2000 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mohammed Shuaibu | September 2000 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Obatou Mumbo | October 17, 2000 | Onitsha | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Idowu Braimoh | November 5, 2000 | Ondo | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| Joseph Osayande | December 4, 2000 | Edo | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Chief Layi Balogun | December 10, 2000 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Monday Ndor | August 19, 2001 | Port Harcourt | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Onyebuchi Ede | August 23, 2001 | Ebonyi | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Chibueze Idah | August 23, 2001 | Ebonyi | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Ogbonna Odimbaiwe | August 23, 2001 | Ebonyi | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Ifeanyi Nnaji | August 23, 2001 | Ebonyi | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Sunday Atte | February 5, 2005 | Kogi | legislative council Yagba East local government | Leader of legislative council Yagba East local government | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. S. A. Awoniyi | January 7, 2002 | Abuja | Former confidential Isecretary to a former chief of justice Muhammadu Lawal Uwais | Former confidential secretary to a former chief of justice Muhammadu Lawal Uwais | Stabbed todeath | Yettobe identified |
| Eyo Eyo | April 2002 | Cross River | Former information officer attached to the state's commissioner for agriculture in Cross River | Former information officer attached to the state's commissioner for agriculture in Cross River | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Ifeanyi Igbokwe | April18,2002 | Lagos | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Musa Dayo | May 9, 2002 | Bauchi | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| Christopher Ogbonna | May 26, 2002 | Enugu | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Maria-Theresa Nsa | June 11, 2002 | Cross River | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Igbafe and Offiong | | | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Chief & Mrs. Barnabas Igwe | September 1, 2002 | Anambra State | Nigeria Bar Association | Onitsha branch chairman of Nigeria Bar Association | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. Ogbonnaya Uche | February 8, 2003 | Imo | All Nigeria Peoples Party | Former commissioner of commerce | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| E. Emenike | February 13, 2003 | Imo | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Theodore Agwatu | February 22, 2003 | Imo | Former Principal secretary to the Imo state governor | Former Principal secretary to the Imo state governor | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Emily Omope | March 3, 2003 | Oyo | Alliance for Democracy (AD). | Alliance for Democracy (AD) member | Acidattack | Yettobe identified |
| Bala Mai-Haice | March 17, 2003 | Gombe | People's Democratic Party(PDP) | Chairman of People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Yamaitu Deba Local Government | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Ajibola Olanipekun | June 20, 2003 | Ibadan | Senior Advocate of Nigeria | A lawyer in Ibadan | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Lateef Olaniyan | July 16, 2005 | Oyo | | | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Professor Chimere Idu | October 20, 2002 | Enugu | University of Nigeria, Nsukka | Vice chancellor University of Nigeria, Nsukka | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Ahmed Pategi | August 15, 2002 | Kwara | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Mr. Anthony Ozioko | July 27, 2005 | Abuja | People Democratic Party (PDP) | Peoples Democratic Party's Assistant National Director, Research and Planning, | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. Patrick Origbe | June 3, 2005 | Delta | People Democratic Party (PDP) | Principal Administrative Officer, Uvwie LGA | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. Felix Eboigbe | August 2005 | Edo | People Democratic Party (PDP) | Councilor in Oredo local government of Edostate | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Chief Jesse Aniku | July 2006 | Plateau State | ACD | Gubernatorial aspirant of ACD | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Captain Jerry Agbeyegbe | Oct 12, 2004 | Lagos State | Nigeria Aviation | Aviation Chief, | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. Esho Egbelu | August 2004 | Cross Rivers State | Unknown | Unknown | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Chief Philip Olorunnipa | April 2004 | Kogi State | Former Kogi state electoral commissioner | Former Kogi state electoral commissioner | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Hon. Tony Dimegwu | April 30, 2003 | Imo State | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | An ANPP member of the House of Assembly | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Yemi Oni | March 2003 | Ekiti State | Alliance for Democracy (AD). | | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. Issa Zaria | April 2003 | Kwara State | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | Member All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Mr. Luke Shingaba | March 2004 | Kogistate | Unknown | LG Chairmanship candidate | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Dr. Ayodeji Daramola | August 14, 2006 | Ekiti State | People Democratic Party (PDP) | governorship aspirant of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Ekiti State, | Stabbed in the chest and strangled | Yettobe identified |
| Onyewuchi Iwuchukwu | April 19, 2003 | Imo state | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | Politician | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |

| NAME | YEAR | LOCATION OF DEATH | AFFILIATION | POSITION | NATURE OF KILLING | KILLER |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Alhaji Modi Fannani Gubio | January 28, 2011 | Borno State | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) | All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) candidate | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Comrade Olaitan Oyerinde | May 3, 2012, | Edo State | Chairman of Lagos Campaign for Democracy (CD) between 1992 to 1994, | Private Secretary to the Edo State governor | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |
| Hon Monday Eleanya | February 11 2016 | Riversstate | Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) | Former member of Rivers state House of Assembly | Gunshot | Yettobe identified |

Source: Adapted with some factual corrections from J. S. Ojo, "Join Us or Be Junked? Party Politics, Military Coups and Political Assassination in Post-Independence Nigeria 1966-2016," *Canadian Social Science*, 13(2), pp.1-14.

Note: The above names do not comprise the total number of politically related killings since independence, there are other eminent politicians that were killed but their profiles could not be ascertained.

Table 12 is about the number of victims of political violence in both off-season and on-season elections in the 36 states of the federation, as well as in Abuja, between 2006 and 2018. The data in the table show that the states have been arranged on the basis of the six geopolitical divisions of the country. It starts from the North-Central, which is followed by the North-East; and the North-West. In the southern part of the country, the arrangement starts from the South-East, which is followed by the South-South and ending in the South-West. Within the period covered in the table, a total of 727 people was killed and, naturally would have to be defined as victims of political violence. This cumulative figure is a huge loss to the polity as the loss of any one single soul is a huge cost to the family, the state, and the country because of the highly unlikely possibility of the victims' replacement. A breakdown of the casualties, state by state, shows that the flash point states are, not in any order, as follows: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Bayelsa, Rivers, Delta, Edo, Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo.

Table 12: Dimensions and Rates of Violence During Three National Elections, Including Pre-Election Year and Election Year Electoral/Political Violence (2006/2007, 2010/2011, 2014/2015 Elections and 2018 Leading to 2019 National Election

| State | Year | | | | | | | Total | % |
|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| | 2006 | 2007 | 2010 | 2011 | 2014 | 2015 | 2018 | | |
| Benue | 2 | 23 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 37 | 5% |
| Kogi | 3 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 26 | 4% |
| Kwara | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 15 | 2% |
| Nasarawa | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 11 | 2% |
| Niger | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 1% |
| Plateau | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 1% |
| FCT | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0% |
| Adamawa | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 1% |
| Bauchi | 0 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 1% |
| Borno | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 13 | 2% |
| Gombe | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 1% |
| Taraba | 0 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 14 | 2% |
| Yobe | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0% |
| Jigawa | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 1% |
| Kaduna | 0 | 2 | 1 | 21 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 30 | 4% |
| Kano | 0 | 45 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 51 | 7% |
| Kastina | 0 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 1% |
| Kebbi | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0% |
| Sokoto | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0% |
| Zamfara | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0% |
| Abia | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1% |
| Anambra | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0% |
| Ebonyi | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 10 | 1% |
| Enugu | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 1% |
| Imo | 1 | 18 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 33 | 5% |
| Akwa Ibom | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 14 | 2% |
| Cross River | 1 | 15 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 24 | 3% |
| Bayelsa | 0 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 25 | 3% |
| Rivers | 8 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 25 | 2 | 55 | 8% |
| Delta | 1 | 33 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 53 | 7% |
| Edo | 0 | 37 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 47 | 6% |
| Ekiti | 0 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 16 | 2% |
| Lagos | 2 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 24 | 3% |
| Ogun | 1 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 23 | 3% |
| Ondo | 0 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 23 | 3% |
| Osun | 1 | 73 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 81 | 11% |
| Oyo | 2 | 9 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 3% |
| Total | 30 | 353 | 69 | 84 | 30 | 119 | 42 | 727 | 100% |

Source: Centre for Democracy and Development, *Nigeria Electoral Trends*, Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development, 2019, p.30.

Tables 13 and 14 examine the trend of violence in one of the states in the federation in the course of the 2019 General Elections. It has to be emphasized that the Taraba State where the generated data are about (concerned with) might not have been the worst-case scenario, but being one state where in the course of sourcing for data was readily available, it is not out of place to describe the emerging reality therefrom as typical of the spates of violence being unleashed in the polity.

Table 13: Violent Cases During Campaigns in Taraba State, 2019

| S/N | Nature of Violence | Locations | Date |
|-----|--|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Assassination attempt on APC Gubernatorial Candidate resulting in five deaths | Ibi Roundabout, Wukari LGA | January 17 th |
| 2. | Violent APC Presidential Campaign Rally resulting in deaths, destruction of billboards, cars, etc. | Jalingo Metropolis | February 7 th and 8 th |
| 3. | Harassment of PDP Gubernatorial Candidate at a campaign rally | Baiissa, Kurmi LGA | February 21 st |
| 4. | Post-Presidential election violence resulting in three deaths | Amar/Kambari, Karim-Lamido LGA | February 24 th |
| 5. | Harassment of PDP Gubernatorial Candidate | Nyamusala, Jalingo LGA | March 7 th |
| 6. | Violent clash between PDP and APC supporters | Nyamusala, Jalingo LGA | March 8 th |
| 7. | Violent Clashes between political opponents resulting in one death | Kashimbilla, Takum LGA | March 9 th |
| 8. | Violent clashes in one death | Lissam II, Ussa LGA | March 21 |

Source: A. D., I. Mohammed, and M. J. Garba, "Politics and Violence in Nigeria: An Assessment of the 2019 General Elections in Taraba State, Nigeria," in *Jalingo Journal of Social and Management Sciences*,

Table 14: Violence Cases Resulting into Deaths from Post-Election Confrontations in Jalingo, Taraba State

| S/ N | Locations | Casualties | Date |
|------|-------------------------------|------------|---|
| 1. | Anguwan Kassa, Jalingo LGA | Nil | March 9 th , 2019 |
| 2. | Main Market Area, Jalingo LGA | 2 | February 13 th , 2019 |
| 3. | Water Board Area, Jalingo LGA | 5 | February 12 th - 14 th , 2019 |
| 4. | Sabon Gari, Jalingo LGA | 1 | February 13 th , 2019 |
| 5. | Nyamusala, Jalingo LGA | Nil | February 12 th - 13 th 2019 |
| 6. | Tella, Gassol LGA | Nil | February 12 th , 2019 |

Source: Same as Table 13 above.

While it is generally accepted that elections play a very crucial role in the consolidation and sustainability of democracy, those who are bent or have been recruited by their principals to not only disrupt the electoral process, but also cause the destruction of lives and properties should they be told that democracy cannot be reduced purely to elections. All the stakeholders should be educated to understand that there are other various political processes that:

...play equally important role for democracy to subsist and be sustained. These include respect for human rights, citizen participation, constitutionalism, rule of law, separation of powers, checks and balances, and the equitable distribution of nation wealth[,] to mention but a few.¹⁵⁰

Indeed, civic education is also very pivotal not only for the election period, but for all the components of politics. Given the rampant nature of political violence during the election periods, civic education should be made broad enough to stakeholders, to transmit knowledge about political parties and how to develop democratic instincts in them; membership financial requirements to reduce drastically the toxic roles of godfathers; the recruitment of members and developing leadership qualities in such members; etc. In short, agenda setting for nurturing democratic political culture is a patriotic duty that needs to be undertaken from time to time to promote and defend these components of democracy and democratization which are easily compromised by the sponsors of the chaos and the mayhem that creates incalculable problems for democratization. In short, the erosion of the electoral process invariably creates the conditions for the phenomenon of military intervention that has become the next level of the undesirable and overriding costs that have stunted the growth of a democratic polity.

FURTHER COSTS TO THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS: THEIR ESCALATION AS A CONSEQUENCE OF MILITARY INTERVENTION

Without any iota of doubt, the incursion of the military into the country's politics represents the greatest setback to the democratization project. In one fell swoop, the military did not only send politicking into abeyance through a variety of means: by outlawing any process that smacked of politics, even if this just amounted to the wearing of party labels or mouthing party slogans; by suspending the constitution, a process which was replaced with ruling through decrees by unrepresentative and undemocratic body; by outlawing and disbanding

150 Ogbeidi, M. M., "A Culture of Failed Elections: Revisiting Democratic Elections in Nigeria, 1959-2003," *Historia Actual Online*, No. 21, February, 2010, p.44.

both political parties and ethnic associations, which hitherto enabled citizens belonging to the latter to maintain such outlets that permitted or enabled contacts with one another, especially in urban centres that were far away from ancestral homes. What's more, the associational activities they carried out to develop their communities were nuclei of civil society organizations, which we earlier identified as veritable organs of democratic development, as well.

In addition, the military regime of General Aguiyi-Ironsi, through the infamous Decree 34 of 1966 – the year the military made the initial incursion into governance – dissolved the semblance of a federal system of governance that was generally agreed to have been resorted to by Nigeria's founding fathers, to preserve the country's fragile unity that was expressed in the talismanic phraseology of "unity in diversity!" The dissolution of the federal system in favour of the unitary system of governance merely exaggerated further the mutual suspicion of Nigerians who were actually hobbled into a union by colonialism that did not put in place corresponding structures that could meld them into one entity, to think as one nation. (In parenthesis, colonialism deliberately resorted to the policy of "divide and rule," to maximize the exploitation of the colonized. The various divisions of the Nigerian people were now sharply more defined, particularly when the outcome of the *coup d'état* patently displayed the sectional nature of the change of regimes from civilian to military.

In plaintive fact, the military takeover was carried out by the Igbo ethnic stock and it deliberately wiped out largely the political and military leaderships of the North; decimated, a bit, the political leadership of the Western Region and the Mid-Western Region; while, politically, tactically, unintelligently, and stupidly left intact the political and military leadership of the Eastern Region, where the bulk of the Igbo ethnic group resided. The political and tactical stupidity of the organizers of the insurrection could be explained by the fact that, at the point of the exercise, the senior officers of the Nigerian military were largely populated by the Igbo:

Igbos were three quarter[s] of the officer corps before the coup of 1966. But I doubt if they were even 5 percent of those carrying guns. Fulani maybe five per cent of the officer corps. But the people carrying guns were mainly from Benue/Plateau area.¹⁵¹

To a large extent, also, the Igbo ethnic group in the bureaucracy also dominated – a reality that made other ethnic groups to ask the

151 Asiodu, P., [thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2020/05/30/53-years-of Biafra-why-the-aburi-accord-failed-phillip-asiodu/](https://thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2020/05/30/53-years-of-Biafra-why-the-aburi-accord-failed-phillip-asiodu/). Downloaded on Wednesday, December 22, 2021, at 14 Hours.

fundamentally ethical and political question: what would the Igbo ethnic group be looking for in Nigeria which they had not already acquired during the colonial and the immediate post-colonial period that would impel them to embark on the suicidal plot of ethnic cleansing of the political class of two regions other their own? The picture in the following quotation warrants this question:

After independence in 1960, the composition of the public sector became a major aspect of the war of attrition between the competing regional political forces. [T]he Yoruba controlled Western Regional government alleged that under the pretext of pursuing the bogus theory of tribal balancing (the Yoruba had a historic head-start [as far as western education was concerned]), [but] the Igbo were constituting themselves into the 'sole shareholders' of the many statutory corporations....[apparently federal parastatals]. [In other examples], there were allegations of nepotism and 'tribalism' in the Railway Corporation under an Igbo Chairman. It was [argued] that 'out of a grand total of 431 names in the...staff list of...[the] Railway Corporation, 270 [were Igbo] and 161 [belonged] to other tribes.' [...] At the Nigerian Ports Authority under an Igbo Transport Minister, Mr. Raymond Njoku, it was alleged that 21 of the top positions were [held by] Igbo, and that of the top 104 positions in the Authority, 73 were Igbo, 23 Yoruba, and all the other ethnicities had a paltry representation of eight....¹⁵²

It need emphasis to also add that in the medium- and small-scale business enterprises – such as the control of the sales of motor spare parts – this same ethnic group predominated from amalgamation to date! Could it be the boasting of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe that make this reality a “self-fulfilling prophecy?”

It would appear that the God of Africa has specially created the [Igbo] nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of ages....The martial prowess of the [Igbo] nation at all stages of human history has enabled them not only to conquer others but also to adapt themselves to the role of preservers....The [Igbo] nation cannot shirk its responsibility.¹⁵³

152 A. R. Mustapha, *Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector in Nigeria*, Oxford: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE Working Paper No. 18), Queen Elizabeth House, the University of Oxford, May 2005, p.13.

153 Quoted by J. Harnischfeger, “Igbo Nationalism and Biafra,” *Afrikanistik Aegyptologie Online*, Downloaded from afrikanistik-aegyptologie-online.de/archiv/2011//3042, on December 17, 2021, at 03.15 Hours.

With this level of grandstanding, it is only fools that would not be disturbed that Armageddon had arrived at their door step when the coup d'état took place; and, therefore, would have to prepare for a showdown or else prepare for its dire consequence. Naturally and after the success or otherwise of the insurrectionary exercise, the leadership of the military government was bound to be led by an Igbo officer, given the fact that in the military institution junior officers and other ranks are required to obey and carry out instructions from senior officers without demurring. This was how Major General J. T. U. Aguiyi-Ironsi naturally became the Head of State and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, even though it was generally felt that he was not central to the planning of the insurrection.¹⁵⁴

This development, it must be stressed, left a sour grape in the mouth of the average Northerner, particularly the top civil servants and military officer cadres, should not come as a surprise. Those who felt that there should be retaliation to even the score had their rank swelled up. This eventuated in the so-called "pogrom," i.e., the killings of the Igbo people in a number of the northern cities, particularly in Kano. The ultimate result was that, within six months of the first overthrow of the civilian administration of Tafawa Balewa, the Aguiyi-Ironsi regime was also overthrown. Because of the killings of the Igbo people in the North and the failures of the Aburi Peace Accord entered into by the Yakubu Gowon (who took over as the Head of State after the killing of Aguiyi-Ironsi) and Lt.Col. Francis Adekunle Fajuyi (the Military Governor of the then Western Region), Nigeria gradually slid into a 30-month Civil War in which more than three million lives were allegedly lost, unfortunately, on both sides. The civil war should better be described also as political violence, which is not different from its definition and description we examined earlier in the Lecture. Apart from this, it is also apposite to regard the losses sustained as a part of the opportunity costs that eventuated under the military misadventure, which Nigeria's quest for democracy must have suffered from. (We shall come back to this point in due course. In the meantime, we shall look at the theoretical issues of military intervention in the Third World countries.)

Hackneyed Cum Obscurantist Theories About the Alleged Benefits of Military Intervention in Politics in the Third World

154 See, among others, D. J. M. Muffett, *op. cit., passim*; and O. Obasanjo, *op. cit., passim*. See also the revisionist history on the role of the military on "Project Nigeria," as painted by M. A. A. Ozekhome in his book, *Zoning to Unzone: The Politics of Power and the Power of Politics in Nigeria*, Lagos: Mikzek Law Publications Ltd., 2015 Reprint Edition, *passim*.

Claude Ake's thesis that western social science is imperialism is the greatest theoretical bequest that he has left behind, in the radical social science literature.¹⁵⁵ There is nowhere this has been more relevantly expressed than in the theory of military vanguardism in spheres of societal development as well as, by implication, democracy of the Third World countries. To re-emphasize, we wish to state that the western theories of the role of the military in the economy and politics of such countries are the most unscientific of the politics of political development genre, with, of course, the most affected of this genre being the democratic development of such politics. Let us try to knit together how this has come to be on the basis of the analysis published in the *Studies in Politics and Society*, Issue No.7, August 1992, pp.41-66, that I authored. I would like to quote from this piece of work *in extenso*:

The sixties and the seventies witnessed volumes churned out with regard to the phenomenon of military intervention in the politics of the developing countries by western theorists.¹⁵⁶ A critical analysis of this literature easily shows that the theorists were not out to explain this phenomenon but were inclined to prescribe the military form of governance as the ideal, the inevitable and/or [the] desirable. The major problem with the body of the literature was its methodology. This is in the sense that it was idealistic, mystify[ing], abstract and ideological. In its most blatant defective form, the western literature on the Third World military isolated this institution from the society – particularly the specific socio-economic structure in which it existed. It was seen as a force hanging over and above society and, like the Platonian formulation, it was to serve as the guardian, the philosopher-king. In further specific terms, the military was perceived to be cohesive where the rest of society was fractious; it was more professional than the other social groups and, thus, was more modern than the rest of the average Third World society. Such a military, in addition, was assumed to have imbibed the western ethos of development,

155 C. Ake, *Social Science as Imperialism: The Theory of Political Development*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, Second Edition, 2000.

156 Among others, see the collection in J. J. Johnson (ed.), *The Role of the Military in Under-developed Countries* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1962); D. Lerner and R. D. Robinson, "Swords in Ploughshares: The Turkish Army as a Modernizing Force," *World Politics*, Vol. XIII (October, 1960); M. Janowitz, *The Military in the Political development of New Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); S. P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), and L. W. Pye, "Armies in the Process of Political Modernization," *European Journal of Sociology*, Vol. II, No.1 (1961), pp.82-92.

industrialism and modernism – and since the developing countries were taking the first steps towards development, there was no other institution than the military to bear the burden.

As stated above, it was the defective methodology used that ultimately led to such formulation. An understanding and application of dialectical materialism would show that the military institution was part and parcel not only of the society but also the mode of production predominant in it. If the larger society was riddled with crisis of production, for instance, military intervention would be one manifestation of that crisis; it might therefore not have come to resolve the contradiction of the mode of production, but, at best, to fine-tune the system in order to ensure further accumulation within it.

To situate this argument in a concrete social formation, the Nigerian social formation is the creation of British imperialism, roughly between 1851 and 1960. The primary objective for imperial hegemony was to use Nigeria, as other colonies, as a dumping ground for goods produced in Britain for which there was no adequate market. Similarly, Nigeria was earmarked to produce raw materials for the British industries.¹⁵⁷ The contradiction of this arrangement is quite glaring. In the famous Nkrumah[ist] formulation, Nigeria, like other African colonies, was made to produce what it did not consume and to consume what it did not produce.¹⁵⁸ Apart from other subjective factors, this objective factor contributed to the rise of nationalist feelings and anti-colonial struggles.¹⁵⁹

Other conjunctural factors – particularly the global developments in the wake of the second inter-imperialist war (1939-45) and the virtual capitulation of the British forced the imperial mother country as well as other colonialist powers to accede initially to the sharing of powers with the nationalists.

157 Items that Nigeria exported included groundnut, palm produce, cocoa, hide and skin, etc., from which Nigeria imported biscuits, soap, chocolate, shoes, etc. To appreciate the volumes as well as the values of these items of Nigeria's external trade, see, among others, G. K. Helleiner, *Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria*, (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1966).

158 Nkrumah, K., *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1966).

159 For a detailed analysis of the factors behind and processes involved in Nigeria's struggles, see O. Aluko, "Politics of Decolonisation in British West Africa, 1934-1960," in J. F. Ade Ajayi and M. Crowder (eds.), *History of West Africa*, Vol. II (London: Longman Group Limited, 1975 Edition), especially pp.635-644; and Bade Onimode, "Class Struggle as a Reality of Nigerian Development," in O. Nnoli (ed.), *Path to Nigerian Development* (Dakar: CODESRIA Book Series, 1981), pp.166-191.

This period of tutelage enabled the British to fashion a neo-colonial solution to the nationalist stirrings. By October 1st, 1960, Nigeria emerged a sovereign but less than [an] independent nation-state. Less than independent because the emergent petty-bourgeois leadership soon realized that the independence granted was empty and hollow as the economic foundation was still firmly in the grips of the erstwhile colonialists, in active collaboration with other imperialist powers.¹⁶⁰

In order to transcend the contradiction within which it found itself, the petty-bourgeoisie instituted a politics that has been likened to warfare.¹⁶¹ In the ensuing 'war' the petty-bourgeoisie resorted to all the reactionary tactics and instruments such as tribalism, ethnicism, region and other negative features or primordial symbols that could only lead to further and deeper divisions in the Nigerian polity. Consequently, elections were rigged, opponents were beaten, tortured, maimed and/or killed [as we have laid bare in the preceding paragraphs of this Lecture]. Another manifestation of this kind of politics inhered in population figures which were manipulated to suit base political interests. In short, formal bourgeois constitutionalism, parliamentarism and liberal democracy were subverted and rendered unworkable. This development served as a great threat to the interest of imperialism just as it opened up possibilities with regard to alternative political options....

The petty-bourgeoisie instituted this "political warfare" for obvious reason. Lacking an independent base in accumulation, the Nigerian state became the base, the instrument through which the accumulatory [*sic.*] proclivities could be articulated and/or realized. This was so because the state was not only the largest employer of labour, but the organ with more than a disproportionate share of the national surplus at its disposal. The imperatives of the "developmental process" – influenced largely by the pattern of intervention by the colonial state, demanded that the post-colonial state got actively involved in

160 For the documentation of the speeches showing this awareness on the part of the petty-bourgeoisie, see S. O. Osoba, "The Deepening Crisis of the Nigerian National Bourgeoisie," *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 13 (May-August, 1978), pp.63-78.

161 See, among others, O. Nnoli, "Musical Chairs and Cheers for the Music," Presidential Address at the 11th Annual Conference of the Nigerian Political Science Association, 17th May, 1984 and Published in *Studies in Politics and Society*, Issue No. 2 (October, 1984), pp.163-172; O. Nnoli, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers Ltd., 1978), *passim*; and C. Ake, *A Political Economy of Africa* (Harlow, Essex: Longman Group Ltd., 1981).

accumulation and production processes. Thus, the state did not only award contracts – which the leadership influenced greatly – but provided avenues through which fraud, corruption and abuse of office were indulged in by the such leadership.¹⁶² In short, ministers, top bureaucrats, their families, etc., were involved in what can appropriately be referred to as primitive accumulation. The consequence was that they were the ones that became powerful, rich, famous or, if you like, infamous. [As recently as during the campaigns for presidential elections in 2019, Atiku Abubakar, a former vice president (1999-2007); and a recurring participant in subsequent elections, announced that upon his election as the president, he would not demur to sell national patrimony to his friends. Of course, if he could sell to his friends, would any Jupiter stop him from selling to himself or handle it in the opaquest manner?] There was little doubt, however, that the success of some of them made them the envy of their compatriots, particularly their political opponents who desired to capture state power not fundamentally to render public service, but to similarly pursue a career of crass opportunism, self-aggrandizement, self-indulgence and also to continue this form of the “politics of warfare.” The resultant effect of all this has been, to borrow the western social science language, the crisis of “legitimation,” “integration,” “participation,” “extraction” – in short, the emergence of the crisis of economic and political development[,] which has been seen to have engulfed the Nigerian social formation.

This, in a nutshell, is what the challenges confronting the military are assumed to be; and given its peculiar organizational features, western social science has prescribed it as the social group that is capable of addressing same. But because the prescription of the military form of governance has not been situated in the context of the specific Nigerian military institution nor its specific society, as we have argued above, it becomes a generalization lacking in empirical validation or plausibility. More fundamentally, because the contradictions of the Nigerian politics are not analyzed, western social science on the military

162 In the political history of Nigeria two Commissions of Inquiry, among others, [stood out to document] fraud and abuse of office by political leaders. These are (1) [previously discussed when we did an analysis of corruption in this Lecture] *Report of the Tribunal Appointed to Inquire into Allegation Reflecting on the Official Conduct of the Premier of, and Certain Persons Holding Ministerial and Other Public Offices in the Eastern Region of Nigeria*, Comnd. 51 (London: HMSO, 1957); and (2) *Report of Coker Commission of Inquiry Into the Affairs of Certain Statutory Corporations in Western Nigeria*, 4 Vols. (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information, 1962).

has therefore failed to situate the dynamics of military intervention in the Nigerian politics or the politics of other Third World countries for that matter, within the destabilization thrusts and machinations of global imperialism.¹⁶³

In other words, it would appear that the entire gamut of the western social science on the Third World military also missed the cardinal import of the point in the quotation below about how the conditions for such intervention should be handled to meet the overarching objectives of imperialism, at the height of the Cold War and even beyond.

In 1959[,] the Rand Corporation sponsored the first intellectual conference on the role of military in under-developed countries. Hans Speier, Chairman of the Rand Research Council at the time prefaced the published version of the papers...with the following statement: 'In any of the new states that have emerged in the recent era of decolonisation the military play a vital role.' He argued further that as a revolutionary force they have contributed to the disintegration of traditional political order; as a stabilising force they have prevented some countries from falling prey to communist rule; as a modernising force they have become champions of middle-class aspirations or of popular demands for social change and have provided administrative and technological skills to the civilian sector of the countries in which such skills are scarce.¹⁶⁴

It is instructive to note that it is not just the fact that the conditions that could have allowed the fructification of democratic politics in the Third World were not just there in their critical mass; rather it must be stressed that such absence was facilitated in a very remarkable manner by the destabilization thrusts and machination by global imperialism. First, the content as well as the intent of the following quotation on the attributes of the military in the Third World since, first and foremost, the militaries in such countries were being encouraged or pressurized to join imperialist countries in their then "proxy war," on the side of imperialist countries of course, to fight communism. Where they refused to do their biddings, like in Vietnam; Iran; Chile; Cuba; etc.; imperialist countries led by the United States of America would be ready to commit humongous resources to ensure that such countries' democratic rights to choose the kind of regime backed by an ideology that they wanted for their citizens must be scuttled (by all means),

163 Yaqub, N., "The Third Republic, the Military, and the Institutionalization of Democracy in Nigeria," *Studies in Politics and Society*, Issue No.7, August 1992, pp.41-43.

164 Quoted in O. Odetola, *Military Regimes and Development: A Comparative Analysis in African Societies* (London: George Allen & Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1982), pp.20-21.

should they choose to go the communist trajectory, especially. Secondly, the philosophical and moral question such intervention poses for the so-called “defenders of democracy” is the very empirical issue that Fukuyama tried to raise spuriously in his book – *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992:262-265) – which goes thus: “that liberal democratic states do not fight one another.”¹⁶⁵ By implication, in other words, only undemocratic countries would have the urge to fight other countries, including “democratic countries!” Thirdly, truth must be said quite clearly that the western liberal democratic countries fight one another through many subtle methods like trade and cyber wars. More fundamentally, if Fukuyama’s position is to underscore the non-warlike nature of the liberal democratic countries cannot stand empirically because war is war, no matter who and who may be pitted against one another, as long as human suffering is involved.¹⁶⁶ For instance, a trade war that America and other western countries are always eager to wage against countries they have defined to be unfavourably disposed to their exploitative excesses is one that may even be more pernicious than actual military wars carried out with heavy warfare equipment. This is bound to be so because trade war is generally and actually regarded as a “low-intensity confrontation.” Fourthly, as far as the empirical examples of the nature of the intervention of the Nigerian military in politics are concerned (see the analysis below), democracy has never been served throughout the series of times the institution had intervened as well as the outcome of such interventions.

Furthermore, to claim, as contained in the above quotation, that the military in any colonial state was revolutionary is a statement that is blatantly false. This is because a colonial army, under the control of the colonial hegemony, would only obey the command of their superior officers. In the African contest, at least, there was no military in any

165 This assertion by Fukuyama has now been completely debunked of any historical accuracy by the courageous Indian diplomat to the United Nations in the wake of the emergency meeting held to condemn Russia after her attack on Ukraine. The diplomat disclosed in an emotionally charged speech during the session, which went viral, that his country was to be attacked by both Britain and the United States in 1971 during the conflicts for the liberation of both Goa and Bangladesh. That it was the military support of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on the occasions that saved India, which is agreed generally to be the largest democracy in the world. He averred that his country was not ashamed to have abstained from voting against Russia’s attack on her neighbouring state even though he regretted the casualties involved.

166 The United States of America has been at war 225 out of 243 years since 1776. A number of these wars were conducted against democratically elected countries. See https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/59572-the-us-has-been-at-war-225-out-of-243-years-since-1776#:~:text=The%20widely-read%20and%20quoted,operations%20and%20six%20overt%20ones;and.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wars_involving_the_United_States. Downloaded, respectively, on Wednesday, March 09, 2022 at 13.19 and 13.35 Hours.

colonized territory that revolted, in any revolutionary fashion, against the colonial command or system on account of the denial of the fundamental human rights of the colonized! Furthermore, because of the divide and rule tactic of the colonial masters, the military was largely used to keep the colonized under check. With regard to the assertion that the military was revolutionary to the extent that they “contributed to the disintegration of the traditional political order,” one is tempted to retort thus: which “traditional political order” would Hans Speier be talking about when the same colonial system bolstered the existential norms of the traditional political order found at the commencement of colonial intrusion by co-opting it through the “indirect rule” system to ensure efficient and maximal control and exploitation of the colonized people? Mention should also be made that where colonialism did not find in existence a “traditional political order,” a system of “warrant chief,” especially in Nigeria was introduced that facilitated colonial exploitation. In the history of military interventionism, there is no record of where the military had come to quash such quaint contraption. Indeed, the military autocrats merely aligned with the traditional political order to legitimate and retain political power. What was even more appalling was the fact that the military was simply apolitical throughout the colonial period.

As champions of the “middle-class aspirations,” there was never any evidence to support this claim. What could have been the “middle-class aspirations” other than the military rank and file that were also part of the middle class would embark on the transformation of the economy to the extent that such economy would be less import dependent and be more export-oriented in all facets of international trade? It can be started very boldly there was nowhere in Africa where, under the military, the respective economies of each country were transformed in the direction being herein suggested throughout the reigns of the several military dictatorships. Thus, it turned out that the military could not even meet the aspirations of the middle class (from which it could have benefitted) precisely because they did not have the “administrative and technological skills” which the civilian sector lacked. The fact must be stated, once again, that those who went into the military in the twilight of colonialism in several such countries to pursue their professional careers were the ones that did not have the requisite qualifications to pursue alternative careers in the civilian sector. Otherwise, how can one explain the fact a military general who also doubled as the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief in Nigeria’s Armed Forces would find himself making the following statement without giving a thought to its implications in the period and generations to come? “The problem of Nigeria is not money, but how to

spend it.”¹⁶⁷ Assuming he actually did not know how to spend the unexpected inflows of revenue as a result of the petrol-dollar windfalls of the early seventies, couldn't he have mobilized the enormous human resources available to him as Head of State by challenging them to put on their thinking cap and come up with development trajectory that could have turned the country around? As should be expected, idle money left uninvested became ready resources for pilferage! This should not come as a surprise as we have pointed out that, until very recently, the pioneer local officers of the military in most Third World countries comprised those who, most probably, could not make it academically decided to seek their careers in the military. Be that as it may, the mustard seed of corruption that Nzeogwu mentioned above, which his maddening insurrectionary crusade came out to exterminate, merely mushroomed that another military dictator announced misguidedly when he clocked 80 years in August 2021 that corruption during his regime was better than what it is now under Muhammadu Buhari. (See the comprehensive analysis of this statement and others below.)

The Democratization Process and Performances of Respective Military Dictators: 1966-1999

At this point, let me stress that the use of the varieties of the word “dictator” or “dictatorship” in this Lecture is deliberate as they remain antitheses to democracy. Any regime – particularly the military typology as well as civilian regime that abuses the constitution, or employs violence in order to stay in office, or that takes delight in provoking the suffering of the people over whom it conducts the affairs of the state, or lacks empathy but full of impunity in any manner of adversity qualifies to be referred to as a dictatorship. In this section, the focus is, however, on the military regimes that palpably display their dictatorial maladministration without any sense of moral compunction to the extent that democratic development was and still a critical victim.

The Regime of Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi: January-July 1966

Coming back to the analysis of the costs to democracy as a result of the involvement of the military in Nigeria's governance system, one would like to briefly review some of the individual military leader's policies *vis-à-vis* democratic governance. Aguiyi-Ironsi's regime spent barely six months when his regime was toppled. There was no major

167 This statement was made by General Yakubu Gowon in the first half of the seventies, when an author who quoted him was convinced that the inflows of income blinded the General. See A. Adebisi, “Corruption...How We Breed This Monster in This Part of the World (Part 1), feferity.com/corruption-how-we-breed-this-monster-in-this-part-of-the-world/. Downloaded on Wednesday, December 22, 2021, at 17.45 Hours.

policy on democracy that he embarked upon before he was killed in the revenge *coup d'état* of July 1966. That he was mostly pre-occupied with the unfortunate agenda of enthroning the Igbo hegemony through, particularly, the enunciation of the Unification Decree earlier mentioned, he never had time to address any policy relevant to the democratization process, even though Muffett gave him the following benefit of the doubt, at a point in time:

The situation which he inherited was not an easy one. The year before, the President, Dr. Azikiwe had made a ploy to enlist support of the military against the Prime Minister and the proper role for the military in politics was beginning to loom large, thanks no doubt to the example of the Congo. At first Ironsi's reaction was impeccable. When asked what in his view the role of the Army should be, he replied with succinct propriety, "The Army supports the government in power."

He also complained vociferously at the type of officer now coming into Service. "I asked," he once remarked, "for soldiers and am being given politicians dressed in uniform."¹⁶⁸

The worst decision or indecision he probably took during his short reign was the non-trial of the coup plotters and as Muffett laconically and tersely put it: "The tragedy for the future is that none of them was brought to justice."¹⁶⁹ Consequently, the country suffered from very unnecessary military interventions whose greater consequences inhered in the lack of democratic governance from 1966 till date, apart from the tragedies of civil war human casualties and the unconscientious corruption the military left as legacy.

The Regime of General Yakubu Gowon: 1967-75

General Aguiyi-Ironsi was succeeded by Lt. Col. (later General) Yakubu Gowon who was initially saddled with the challenges of how to restore peace and re-unite a badly traumatized country that had witnessed the worst in the treatment of fellow human beings. Attempts were spiritedly made to secure an amicable settlement by going to the Aburi Conference in Ghana in January `967, with Lt. Col. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu. According to *Wikipedia*, the following items were the major agreements reached at the Conference:

- Members agree that the legislative and executive authority of the Federal Military should remain in the Supreme Military Council, to which any decision affecting the whole country shall be referred for determination provided that where it is possible for a

168 Muffett, *op. cit.*, pp.172-173.

169 *Ibid.*, p.166.

meeting to be held the matter requiring determination must be referred to military governors for the comment and concurrence.

- Specifically, the council agreed that appointments to senior ranks in the police, diplomatic, and consular services as well as appointment to super scale posts in the federal civil service and the equivalent posts in the statutory corporation must be approved by the Supreme Military Council.
- The regional members felt that all decrees passed since January 15, 1966, and which detracted from previous powers and positions of regional governments, should be repealed if mutual confidence is to be restored.¹⁷⁰

The Aburi Accord, unfortunately, never brought peace to the country. The major obstacle was largely based on the two factors of Ojukwu's implacability regarding his alleged seniority over Gowon in military hierarchy and/or, to add arrogance to it, that he was the first university graduate to enlist into the Nigerian army; and, more importantly, the feeling that the Igbo ethnic group had suffered so much over the killings in the North. Gowon actually promulgated the Decree 8, which gave affirmation to the Aburi Accord, according to Chief Phillip Asiodu, one of the Super Permanent Secretaries of the time. In furtherance to his explanations as to how and why the Aburi Accord had to be jettisoned, he argues thus:

[T]he permanent secretar[ies] made analysis and said look, if you are really serious, if you are having Nigeria, you must have central function which must be fulfilled. There is no need saying this is central function and you cannot fulfill it. So, we analysed and said these were based on incorrect premises. People came with proper papers, well formulated. The other side just went thinking they were going to do initial breaking of the ice. Therefore, please try to reconcile this to ensure that we still have a country. Gowon[,] in fairness, vetoed that approach, and still proceeded to have decree number 8 of 1967. If you read that decree, and if the East had accepted that decree, there would have been no need for secession. Nigeria would have disintegrated within three months. And you cannot move anybody without unanimity. You collect revenue, you cannot transfer it....¹⁷¹

Gowon was in power for nine solid years. What was his achievement in the realm of democratic development of the country? Both the Second

170 [En.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aburi_Accord](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aburi_Accord). Downloaded on Wednesday, December 22nd, 2021, at 14.00 Hours

171 Asiodu, *op. cit.*

National Development Plan, 1970-74 and the succeeding Third National Development Plan, 1975-80 enunciated the same five objectives, viz., (a) a just and egalitarian society; (2) a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens; (3) a great and dynamic economy; (4) a free and democratic society; and (5) a united, strong, and self-reliant nation.¹⁷² Unlike the Second Plan, the Third Development Plan gave the specific short-term objectives which will be used to facilitate the ultimate realization of the national objectives. These national objectives were (a) increase in per capita income; (b) more even distribution of income; (c) reduction in the level of unemployment; (d) increase in the supply of high-level manpower; (e) diversification of economy; (f) balanced development; and (g) the indigenization of economic activity.¹⁷³

Leaving the realm of economy back to the main concern of the Lecture, let us examine the role of Gowon in the democratic consolidation of the country. It must be remarked that this was the greatest failure of the regime. In both the Second and the Third National Development Plans, the regime boldly expressed its determination and commitment to the development of “a free and democratic society.” The Civil War ended in January 1970; by October 1st, 1970, during a national broadcast to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Nigeria’s sovereignty, he announced that by October 1st, 1976, the military would hand over power to the civilians. Four years later, i.e., precisely on October 1st, 1974, Gowon stunned the country by a contrary announcement that “1976 is unrealistic;” on the following spurious and self-serving grounds:

A large number of well-meaning and responsible Nigerians from all walks of life and from all parts of this country, as well as well-wishers of Nigeria at home and abroad have called attention to the lack of wisdom and [the] danger inherent in adhering to the target date previously announced. Our own assessment of the situation as of now is that it will be utterly irresponsible to leave the nation in the lurch by a precipitate withdrawal which will certainly throw the nation back into confusion.

Four years ago when I gave 1976 as the target date for returning the country to normal constitutional government, both myself and the military hierarchy honestly believed that by that date, especially after a civil war for which there had been a

172 Ibrahimgco.blogspot.com/2017/06/second-national-development-plan-1970-74.html. Downloaded on Thursday, December 23, 2021 at 09.15 Hours. See also AO. Lewis, “Nigeria’s Third National Development Plan, 1975-80: An Appraisal of Objectives and Policy Frame,” ide.go.jp/library/English/Publish/Periodicals/De/pdf/77_01_04.pdf. Downloaded on Thursday, December 23, 2021 at 09.40 Hours.

173 *Ibid.*

great deal of human and material sacrifice and for which we had expected that every Nigerian would have learnt a lesson[;] there would have developed an atmosphere of sufficient stability....Regrettably from all the information at our disposal, from the general attitude, utterances and manoeuvres of some individuals and groups and from some publications during the past months, it is clear that those who aspire to lead the nation on the return to civilian rule have not learnt any lesson from our past experiences.

[The default is]...such a high degree of sectional politicking, intemperate utterances and writings which were deliberately designed to whip up ill-feelings within the country to the benefit of the political aspirations of a few.

[The military had]...the responsibility to lay the foundation of a self-sustaining political system which can stand the test of time in such a manner that each national political crisis does not become a threat to the nation's continued existence as a single entity and which will ensure a smooth and orderly transition from one government to another.¹⁷⁴

The statement, as described above, is self-serving and spurious; it is also bereft of any empirical evidence that could have convinced the readers and the bewildered nation-state, in general, and the demonized politicians, in particular, with regard to the litany of allegations heaped on the latter, had there been such accompanying evidence. It should also be stressed that since the end of the Civil War, the Gowon regime never put in place a time table for transition to civilian rule, to underscore the determination of his regime to such handover by 1976. Indeed, such a time table would have been the yardstick or metric with which to measure the level of commitment of the politicians to a systematic withdrawal process. Without any shred of such evidence, the "advisers, both internal and external," as alleged in the above quotation; and the military on whose behalf he had also read the riot act struck and removed him from office 10 months after (the speech).

The Murtala Mohammed/Olusegun Obasanjo Administration: 1975-79

The Murtala Mohammed/Olusegun Obasanjo administration that succeeded Gowon's administration quickly went to work to produce a

174 Quoted in Cpl G. R. Pardoe, "Nigeria's Return to Civilian Rule: An Assessment of Corrective Military Government," *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies*, Vol 10, Nr 3, 1980, p.34. See <http://scientiamilitaria.journals.ac.za>. Downloaded on Monday, December 27, 2021 at 04.00 Hours.

time table for withdrawal; set up a constitution drafting committee; convoked a constituent assembly to ratify the draft constitution; reformed the local government system; held elections; and handed over power to a civilian government on October 1st, 1979 – within the four-year mandate it set for itself. In terms of faithfulness to the democratization process, the Murtala Mohammed/Olusegun Obasanjo would go down in the history of military transition programme of the seventies as historic. Indeed, Obasanjo, who succeeded Mohammed after the assassination of the latter within six months of coming to power, was adjudged to be the first military dictator to do so, at least, in Africa. Without doubt, Obasanjo also had his underbelly,¹⁷⁵ which, with the benefit of hindsight, could be considered to be the underlying debility that has hobbled him till date, with regard to the democratization process, be it when he was in office and out of it (see below).

The Muhammadu Buhari Military Regime: 1984-85

The next military dictator to traverse the corridor of power was Muhammadu Buhari. The emergence of his regime was based on the absurd performance of the civilian regime of the Shehu Shagari, especially in the gargantuan rape of the electoral democracy of 1983. The economy was not any better under the same Shagari regime, with the ugly face of cost of living; scarcity of essential commodities and unemployment - all rolled into the bargain. Starting from the Buhari/Idiagbon regime, the serial military interventions in Nigeria's governance, with probably the exception of that of the Abdulsalami Abubakar, the Nigerian people went through the worst forms of dictatorship. In the first instance, the regime came to being with vengeance never seen in the history of governance in the country. It introduced a policy called "War Against Indiscipline," which virtually defined all Nigerians guilty of criminal offences, even before any credible charges could be brought against them and/or so pronounced by a court of competent jurisdiction. Nigerians were simply traumatized. Draconian decrees were effortlessly rolled out to deal with *bona fide* criminals and non-*bona fide* criminal individuals. Among such harsh

175 "....After General Murtala Mohammed was assassinated..., General Olusegun Obasanjo...started the rapid decline of the nation in all its respects. That was when heads of state, top military officers and their civilian friends started becoming millionaires and billionaires overnight. The groundnut pyramids disappeared, the railways, airways, shipping line, all the big state-run companies[,] which had operated efficiently, collapsed or lost so much value that they were sold as scrap to the same people who looted them. The Nigerian Naira, which was stronger than the American Dollar, dropped out of sight in value, and the Brain Drain commenced." See Vanguardngr.com/2014/10/general-gowon-saint-sinner/. Downloaded on Sunday, December 26th, 2021 at 09.24 Hours.

decrees included the Robbery and Firearms (Special Provisions) Decree for the prosecution of armed robbery cases; the State Security (Detention of Person) Decree, which gave powers to the military to detain individuals suspected of jeopardizing state security or causing economic adversity; and the Civil Service Commission and Public Offenders Decree, which constituted the legal and administrative basis to conduct a purge in the civil service. The impact of this (latter) decree manifested in the retrenchment of about 200,000 civil servants by October 1984.¹⁷⁶ There was also the anti-drug trafficking decree, which prescribed death sentence to those caught and tried – usually in a kangaroo court in which the trial judges were more likely to be intimidated and/or compromised. The other aspect of the monstrosity of this particular law was its being promulgated retroactively. The law “ensnarled several drug peddlers[,] months after they had committed the crime and before the law was passed. They were summarily executed in spite of the public outcry that the decree was against natural justice.”¹⁷⁷

Without doubt, also, the Buhari military government was a Gestapo kind of governance ensemble. For instance, Decree 2 of 1984 gave the state security and the chief of staff (General Idiagbon):

...the power to detain, without charges, individuals deemed to be a security risk to the state for up to three months. Strikes and popular demonstrations were banned and Nigeria’s security agency, the National Security Organization (NSO) was entrusted with unprecedented powers. The NSO played a wide role in the cracking down of public dissent by intimidating, harassing and jailing individuals who broke the interdiction on strikes....Buhari mounted an offensive against entrenched interests. In 20 months as Head of State, about 500 politicians, officials and businessmen were jailed for corruption.... Detainees were released after [paying into the treasury] sums to the government and agreeing to meet certain conditions....

In 1984, Buhari passed Decree Number 4, the Protection Against False Accusation Decree...[being] the most repressive press law ever enacted in Nigeria. Section 1...provided that “Any person who publishes in any form, whether written or otherwise, any message, rumour, report or statement[...] which is false in any material particular or which brings or is calculated

176 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammadu_Buhari. Downloaded on Tuesday, December 28, 2021, at 10.15 Hours.

177 [Saharareporters.com/2011/04/03/buhari's-many-faces-julius-ogunro](https://saharareporters.com/2011/04/03/buhari's-many-faces-julius-ogunro). Downloaded on Tuesday, December 28, 2021, at 18 Hours. (Published originally by the same author on April 3rd, 2011 in *Sahara Reporters*.)

to bring the Federal Military Government or the Government of a state or public officer to ridicule or disrepute, shall be guilty of an offense under the Decree. The law further stated that offending journalists and publishers will be tried by an open military tribunal, whose ruling would be final and unappealable in any court and those found guilty would be eligible for a fine not less than 10,000 naira and a jail sentence of up to two years.¹⁷⁸

The Buhari administration failed dismally economically and politically. In economic terms, the fact that his regime inherited an economy that was virtually comatose, he could not think of a better way to redress the complex economic problems other than to resort to the mechanism of “trade by barter,” i.e., exchanging the country’s crude oil in the international market with commodities or inputs required in the industries as well as consumer goods. This was contrary to modern commercial deals in the international market. It was also a violation of the quotas that OPEC might have granted to Nigeria, aside from the inherent corrupt practices that were embedded in the strategy!

The political realm was equally very disastrous. The Buhari regime in the 20 months he held sway never articulated any political agenda that would or could promote democratization. The period in office was a huge setback to democracy; what emerged from it was simply a travesty of even the concept of rulership, totally lacking in ideas that could have moved the country forward. It was little wonder that he suffered or experienced a revolt from the inner conclave of his Supreme Military Council, when he was overthrown.

The Regime of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida: 1985-93

Perhaps, by starting with a portrayal of Babangida’s reign by a very perspicacious analyst – Comrade Owei Lakemfa – we shall be able to properly capture how his regime – particularly the subterfuges introduced to stay in power for eight long years – was the acme of the ills and disasters that military intervention has represented to democratization in Nigeria:

...whatever the perception of [Bababgida’s] person, all are agreed that he is a very skillful [but dubious] player on the political turf which earned him the sobriquet MARADONA. Nigerians believed that just as the legendary Diego Maradona

178 *Ibid.* Indeed, under this decree, the Buhari administration opened its fangs of dictatorship to jail Messrs. Nduka Irabor and Tunde Thompson, journalists that were then working for *The Guardian* Newspapers, Lagos, in 1984. They were convicted simply because they breached the provision of the draconian decree 4, even though their reports were accurate.

mesmerized people on the football held, so did Babangida play Nigerians. He accused the Buhari regime of detaining people without trial but went on to detain more Nigerians and violate human rights on a far larger scale. When Nigerians protested against the planned imposition of ruinous IMF [International Monetary Fund] policies and conditionalities, he put it to public debate, acknowledged that Nigerians rejected the policies, but went on to impose them under the Structural Adjustment Programme [SAP]. When people protested, he detained them with the warning that they must accept that 'There is No Alternative (TINA).' He asked Nigerians to form political parties of their choice; they did. He then banned all of them and established his own two political parties. His transition date to civil rule was continuously shifted; 1990 to 1992, then to January 1993 on to August 1993 before he was forced 'to step aside.' His constant shifting of the goal post led the country into the hands of Gen. Sani Abacha who turned the country into one big nightmare. People are forced to write or re-write history; but they do so in vain.¹⁷⁹ [Emphasis in the original.]

We earlier described Gowon's negation of his handing-over date as spurious and self-serving; the Babangida's self-serving antics truly was in a class of its own. No doubt, he set up a Political Bureau Committee to conduct a debate and a synthezation of the opinions of the Nigerian people with regard to the way forward as far as the political future of the country could be idealized. Constructed and delivered to the military junta that set it up, but the various booby-traps/contradictions inherent therein and/or deliberately injected into every move of the "maximum ruler" produced an outcome of historic failures. People were encouraged to form their political parties, as stated in the quotation above, which were dissolved and now marooned to join the state-formed two political party system named – the National Republican Convention (NRC), with a code-name ("a little to the Right of the Centre of the political spectrum") and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) with also a code-name ("a little to the Left of the Centre of the political spectrum").

At this point, it must also be stressed that the political class in Nigeria is largely spineless, unorganized, and lacking in democratic principles. Otherwise, if they were driven by democratic ethos, they would have stood their ground and insisted that, one, they had formed their parties and, therefore, would not be amenable to an arrangement made by the

179 Lakemfa, O., "Tales by Two Former Maximum Rulers," *Vanguard Newspaper*. See Vanguardngr.com/2018/08/tales-by-two-former-maximum-rulers/. Downloaded on Sunday, December 26th, 2021 at 10.02 Hours.

military in their undemocratic tradition. Secondly, that, more importantly, the parties they formed were independent, undergirded by democratic principles, which had been or were likely to be eroded by parties formed by the state – an innovation that was unique at that point in time in the history of the politics of democracy. Indeed, political parties historically are always formed by like-minded members to contest for offices; rather than being the parastatals in which the state would or should be involved in their formation, with implications of lacking in democratic credentials and/or being teleguided, both remotely or otherwise, by a head of state that, particularly in intent and action, had no democratic credentials, *ab initio*. Without these points marshalled against the dictator or any dictator in the foreseeable future that may want to traverse this unwholesome and undemocratic result, the result was a disaster waiting to happen and it did happen when the presidential elections' results of 1993 were annulled with impunity.¹⁸⁰

The consequences of this mindless assault on the building and institutionalization of democratic structures in the country did not just stop at the annulment of the elections; there was also the encapsulated huge implications of the monetary cost of the process as well as to the economy (see the following tables on costs of some of the various aspects of the transition programme of the military junta). The first point to mention is that the tabulated figures are accurate and authentic, having been published by authors who were the “engine-room” intellectuals of the transition process during the dictator’s tenure. Having stressed this point, it is, all the same, imperative to observe that the grand sum of =N=8,329,301,853.88 (eight billion, three hundred and twenty-nine million, three hundred and one thousand, eight hundred and fifty-three naira, eight-eight kobo) could be seen to be too meagre, compared to the expenditure profiles in the contemporary inflationary pummeled economy, it was however a huge sum of money in the eighties, when it was incurred. Indeed, it is when these huge sums of money are analyzed in the context of the fact that all of them were **deliberately wasted on the specified items entered in the tables**, as there was never a genuine intention by serial military dictators to build democracy in the polity in the first place.

We should also not lose sight of the fact that there would be other contending, equally pertinent social and infrastructural issues and projects required for the overall development of the country. As a matter of fact, the period this humongous sum was being wasted, the

180 On June 23rd, 1993, when the annulment took place, it was observed that the process was carried out “in a most bizarre manner; nullifie[d] all relevant court decisions, suspend[ed] NEC [National Electoral Commission] through an unsigned terse statement.” See books.openedition.org/ifra/653?lang=en. Downloaded on Sunday, January 09, 2022 at 04.25 Hours.

Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) was on strike for better funding of the universities. Not only did the government of Babangida refuse to pay attention to such funding, the union leaders were being hounded around, detained and the union itself was proscribed at the whims and caprices of the dictatorial ruler. The fact that other workers were also on strike and/or threatening to embark on strikes to press their demands, the students, in addition, were being harassed for asking the government to demonstrate some responsibility in carrying out effective governance, etc. The multiplicity of protests merely affirms and raises the point that the junta's response was against the vital role we argued in the theoretical section of the Lecture that civil society organizations (CSOs) are veritable and important component structures/institutions for the development and consolidation of democracy in both the mature polities as well as in those that are supposed to be in transition to democratic governance. Indeed, the obvious costs, such as the litany of corrupt practices by top officials in government obviously created their negative impacts on socio-economic developments in the polity; and the non-obvious costs in the democratic struggles by civil society organizations (often subjected to harassments by the state), which, nonetheless, contribute their healthy democratic bequests to the democratization process!

Perhaps, the other serious implication was the toll the annulment has since had on nation-building process. From the emerging result of the elections, had it been allowed to run its successful course, the narrow scope of seeing the country as "a mere geographical expression," or as "the mistake of 1914," could have buried once and for all such spectre of transmutation. This was as a result of the fact that the candidates of the SDP who were both Muslims who shared one ticket, no eyebrow was raised despite the fact that religion is generally seen as a major faultline, which everyone should tread on with circumspection. Indeed, the callous decision to annul the elections has since then and forever closed the chapter on a shared candidature that is based on either one religion, one ethnic group, and/or one geopolitical zone. The toxic regime of Babangida has brought into the democratic politics of the country odiferous substance that was *a priori* tolerated not any more now; and this development is going to have terrible impact on nation-building, whose foundation is still very rickety.

In spite of these serious fallouts have, unfortunately, been willfully explained away by the man at the centre of the most treasonable felony that no regime after his has had the courage to bring him out for prosecution. It goes as follows and we would like to quote *in extenso*:

I know so; I am not daft. He [Abiola] won; he tried. I feel bad about the whole matter. Professor [Omoruyi], I do not see how they [the military goons opposed to Abiola's presidency] will

spare you because they know you are my principal confidant. You think they do not know you? They know; they know you are with me now. They saw you coming and they know you are with me now[.] I cannot kill myself for the sake of what the country wants. I am sorry....

Where do I go from here? They do not trust me. Without Sani [Abacha], I will not be alive today; without the North, I would not have become an officer in the Nigerian Army and now the President of Nigeria[.] I don't want to appear ungrateful to Sani; he may not be bright upstairs but he knows how to overthrow governments and overpower coup plotters.

He saw to my coming to office in 1985 and to my protection in the many coups I faced in the past, especially the Orkar coup of 1990 where he saved me and my family including my infant daughter. Sani risked his life to get me into office in 1983 and 1985; if he says he does not want Chief Abiola, I will not force Chief Abiola on him.¹⁸¹

This is a most disturbing confession from a Nigerian, somebody that has enjoyed the best in terms of what this country can provide any of its citizens. Three aspects of the confession are germane to the consequential issue of the involvement of the military in the politics of a state. The first is the case of a general of the armed forces declaring that they could not die for the motherland – an experience they previously went through to defend the territorial integrity of Nigeria and this was during the civil war of 1967 to 1970, when he was a subaltern. This feeling of not willing to die for the motherland certainly couldn't have come from a battle figure, especially at the point they had already become the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. The second issue of worry is the reference to sectional rejection of the candidate that, for the first time in the history of the country, obtained a pan-Nigerian mandate with its healthy and positive implications for national cohesion and integration, all of which was also at the same level of importance to the democratization process of the country. Could it be conceivable that at the point of attaining such all-round salubrious achievements under a president who these were destined to take place, it was willfully aborted? This is certainly a criminal offence!¹⁸² The third matter arising from the quotation is of spiritual import. As a

181 thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2020/06/08/why-i-made-sure-abacha-also-ruled-nigeria-ibb/. Downloaded on Saturday, February, 05,2022, at 20.50 Hours. This confession was excerpted from the book: *The Tale of June 12: The Betrayal of the Democratic Rights of Nigerians*, by Professor Omo Omoruyi.

182 Till today, the June 12, 1993 Presidential Elections are still referred as the most credible and creative modes of electoral democracy.

Muslim, Babangida is never expected to attribute his destiny to any Being beyond Almighty God. Statement such as “[Sani] saw to my coming to office in 1985 and to my protection in the many coups I faced in the past, especially the Orkar coup of 1990 where he saved me and my family...” is a serious spiritual offence that Almighty God shall not forgive. In Islam, nobody or deity can be associated with God, the ultimate Creator. What is more, if Sani could save him and his family, why was Sani unable to save his son – Ibrahim who regrettably died through an aircraft mishap with friends – as well as save himself from death in June 1998? There was no way Sani could have prevented death to himself or any person for that matter if the time was up. Indeed, the Holy Qur’an says emphatically in several chapters in repeated verses (to give examples from two of them) that: “Every soul shall have a taste of death...,”¹⁸³ and “Everyone is going to taste death, and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good. And to Us you will be returned.”¹⁸⁴ It is stated in another verse that the appointed time cannot be extended nor shortened by anybody; in other words, just like the circumstances of our birth, death is not negotiable. This shows that Babangida’s survival till date is at the mercy or leave of Allah; not by any mortal.

On this basis, the reason why he would not like to die for his country at the time he embarked on the annulment rascality, if we may hazard a guess, was most probably how the humongous looting associated with him in table 1 above was going to be administered after he was no longer alive or in charge. But clerics (both Christian and Islamic) are always reminding mortals that we came into this world with nothing and will go back to meet our Creator with nothing, except our deeds (good or bad). Ideally, for the wise too, the good deeds should be far greater than the bad. For the wise, this reminder from the clerics should always influence what we say and do when the Almighty has granted us – mere mortals – His Grace, that we should guard with the sense of awe and responsibility. For the likes of Babangida, it is pertinent to note that the Nigerian state has not within its sovereign powers resolved the issue of annulment satisfactorily because they were “big” men and untouchable; but, before God, there shall be no such distinction and the final judgment is undoubtedly and happily going to be instantaneous, severe, decisive, and incorruptible!

183 See *Surat ‘Aali-‘Im-Raan*, Verse 185.

184 See *Surat Al-Anbiya*, Verse 35; and *Surat Ankabut*, Verse 57.

TABLE 15: Summary of Budgetary & Extra-Budgetary Allocations, (1987-1991) National Electoral Commission

| Year | Recurrent Subvention ₦ | Capital Subvention ₦ | Voters Registration ₦ | Elections Subvention ₦ | State & Local Govts. ₦ | NEC LGA Buildings ₦ | Grants to Pol. Parties ₦ | Total (₦) |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1987 | 14,500,000.00 | | | 200,000,000.00 | 26,477,086.00 | | | 240,977,086.00 |
| 1988 | 42,500,000.00 | 15,400,000.00 | | | 7,113,079.00 | | | 65,013,079.00 |
| 1989 | 40,000,000.00 | 95,448,628.00 | 43,700,000.00 | 277,919,204.00 | 29,114,344.00 | | | 486,182,176.00 |
| 1990 | 69,000,000.00 | 59,499,265.00 | | 86,165,950.00 | 3,091,155.00 | 100,000,000.00 | 539,980,656.20 | 857,737,026.20 |
| 1991 | 102,000,000.00 | 80,783,984.00 | 171,005,000.00 | 282,164,160.00 | 5,055,520.00 | 79,000,000.00 | 200,000,000.00 | 920,008,664.00 |
| Total | 268,000,000.00 | 251,131,877.00 | 214,705,000.00 | 846,249,314.00 | 70,851,184.00 | 179,000,000.00 | 739,980,656.20 | 2,569,918,031.20 |

Source: Privileged

Table 16: Summary of Budgetary & Extra-Budgetary Allocations, (1989-1991) National Population Commission

| Year | Capital ₦ | Recurrent ₦ | Census: Extra-Budgetary ₦ | Total (₦) |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1989 | 29,996,212.00 | 10,405,890.00 | 101,932,291.00 | 142,334,393.00 |
| 1990 | 53,170,800.00 | 34,264,468.00 | 241,762,840.00 | 329,198,108.00 |
| 1991 | 27,796,495.00 | 88,251,070.00 | 390,00,000.00 | 506,047,565.00 |
| Total | 110,963,507.00 | 132,921,428.00 | 733,695,131.00 | 977,580,066.00 |

Source: Privileged

Table 17: Summary of Subvention for 1990-1991 Centre for Democratic Studies

| Year | Recurrent ₦ | Capital ₦ | Subvention ₦ | Special Grant ₦ | Total (₦) |
|-------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1990 | | | 1,600,000.00 | 8,495,605.00 | 10,095,605.00 |
| 1991 | 16,497,490.00 | 3,000,000.00 | | | 19,497,490.00 |
| Total | 16,497,490.00 | 3,000,000.00 | 1,600,000.00 | 8,495,605.00 | 29,593,095.00 |

Source: Privileged

Table 18 : Summary of Allocation and Actual Releases (1986-1992) Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures

| Year | Budgetary Allocations ₦ | Actual Releases ₦ |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1986 | 433,640,924.00 | 315,591,535.50 |
| 1987 | 500,000,000.00 | 500,000,000.00 |
| 1988 | 500,000,000.00 | 255,000,000.00 |
| 1989 | 300,000,000.00 | 244,250,000.00 |
| 1990 | 300,000,000.00 | 304,562,198.00 |
| 1991 | 152,300,000.00 | 155,229,343.00 |
| 1992 | 250,000,000.00 | 49,999,000.00 (March, 1992) |
| Total Interest on Fixed Deposits & Treasury Bills | | 101,216,007.18 |
| Total (₦) | 2,435,940,924.00 | 1,925,848,083.68 |

Source: Privileged

Table 19: Summary of Subvention/Grants (1987-1991) Directorate for Social Mobilisation

| Year | Capital ₦ | Recurrent ₦ | Total ₦ |
|-------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1987 | | 20,500,000.00 | 20,500,000.00 |
| 1988 | 12,704,865.00 | 61,217,885.00 | 73,922,750.00 |
| 1989 | 11,600,800.00 | 84,390,000.00 | 95,990,800.00 |
| 1990 | 7,000,000.00 | 92,311,770.00 | 99,311,770.00 |
| 1991 | 7,929,444.00 | 92,766,890.00 | 100,696,334.00 |
| Total | 39,235,109.00 | 351,186,545.00 | 390,421,654.00 |

Source: Privileged

Table 20: AMOUNTS SPENT ON TRANSITION PROGRAMMES IN TABLES 14-18

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| TOTAL FOR TABLE 14 | 2,569,918,031.20 |
| TOTAL FOR TABLE 15 | 977,580,066.00 |
| TOTAL FOR TABLE 16 | 29,593,095.00 |
| TOTAL FOR TABLE 17 | 4,361,789,007.68 |
| TOTAL FOR TABLE 18 | 390,421,654.00 |
| GRAND TOTAL | N8,329,301,853.88 |

Sources: The Grand Total in Table 19 is Generated from Tables 15-19, which have been derived from Tunji Olagunju, Adele Jinadu, and Sam Oyovbaire, *Transition to*

Further on the implications of the annulment, the toxic nature of the military intervention in the politics of Nigeria, particularly the Babangida genre, was equally manifested in the scale of corruption that the regime introduced or, better put, consolidated. (In parenthesis, because of the dimensions and the nature of corruption under the Babangida administration, the phenomenon would have to be separately analyzed from the more general analysis that was made in the earlier section of this Lecture.) To start with and in the history of the country, up to the arrival of the Babangida junta in governance, corruption had never been so toxic, blatantly displaced, and monumentally carried out. Indeed, it was made to assume a level of impunity never anticipated and seen in the governance of the country. Corruption was, indeed and in short, on a free fall and it is still, unfortunately, up to this moment. In the first instance, everyone was expected to be a “convert” and/or “committed” to the new way of governance by being seen to be an active participant in its spree. Nobody should either be shocked or be ashamed to indulge in it because in this sort of naïve manner, the “law of Karma” shall not apprehend anyone! (But nobody should forget what is said above, as God is waiting for all of us in the hereafter.)

In the second place, under the Babangida style of corruption, everyone had a price tag. The bank account number of a vociferous and caustic critic of the regime, for instance, could be searched for, obtained/accessed, and then compromised with sums of money paid into it without the owner’s authorization and/or consent or sent through an emissary who was most likely to be respected by the would-be recipient. (The “success” of this stratagem could have been the basis upon which Babangida earned the sobriquet of: “the Evil Genius!”)¹⁸⁵ If

185 Attempts made to confirm this allegation could not be obtained from those whose roles in the public arena (such as labour leaders; prominent men and women of high integrity in the society; radical students; etc.etc.) posed some serious challenges to the dictatorship of the Babangida’s dictatorial administration. The “surrogate evidence” one could lay hands on came from the following newspaper interview interaction between Messrs Olawunmi Ojo and Onyedika Agbedo (journalists of *The Guardian* newspaper) and late Chief Duro Onabule – who served as president Babangida’s Chief Press Secretary (1985-93) on, among other issues, the pattern of corruption during its tenure:

Question: “It was credited to IBB that there is[sic.] nobody that[sic.] cannot be bought. Those who make[sic.] that assertion refer[sic.] to how people like Tai Solarin and [Wole] Soyinka were able to serve under IBB?” [Emphasis in the Original.]

Answer: “Unfortunately, Tai Solarin is dead. You can go and ask Soyinka if the man ever said so to him.

the critic acquiesced, collected the amount without finding a way of refunding it to government coffers, and continued to “embarrass the regime” by their strident criticism, a way would be found to eliminate the “busybody.”¹⁸⁶ Prior to this kind of extreme measure, a critic’s alter-ego of the ultimate recipient of the blood money would be advised to restrain the critic for their own good. If an alter-ego (who could also be compromised financially) was unable to do as instructed or advised, it would now be the time to take the extreme step of eliminating such a critic. “[Babangida attempted to compromise some vocal critics by settling them, and those he could not recruit, he sacked where possible, or detained, or killed, or hounded into exile.”¹⁸⁷

Members of the military, particularly those in their middle-level careers, were openly bribed with brand new Peugeot salon cars bought for them – in other to secure their loyalty. (In parenthesis, the unscientific Western thesis of the salience of military rule (that we have already pulverized above) should also note that the military, particularly in the Third World, was and is still not an organic institution that would be so united as to pursue a common objective policy that could in turn strengthen institutional coherence, salience, and solidarity, not necessarily when the uppermost concern would be who could have access to state resources that would be disbursed with reckless abandon.)

Corruption, to Ibrahim Babangida, would just be the ultimate instrument of governance; but, to a democrat, corruption would be regarded as an instrument to launder antiquated system of governance that only an illegal and dictatorial regime could and/or would resort to, to preserve

“Now, I don’t know how much of Tai Solarin you know. These are highly respected people in the society. If, therefore, the man was going to set up People’s Bank, which represented the poor[sic.] at the time, he looked for somebody with reputation like Tai Solarin and made him Chairman of the bank. Does that mean that he bought Solarin? Or did he buy Soyinka by making him the [C]hairman of the FRSC [Federal Road Safety Commission]? At that time, whether you like it or not, those people had immense reputation unlike these days when you have thugs as Chairmen of the local [government] councils all over the place.” See *The Guardian*, Sunday, August 21, 2022, p.5.

From this kind of response as well as the testimonials from Babangida in this paper, one cannot but assert that there can still be a thread of truth in the allegation, especially that these two personalities mentioned by Chief Onabule built up their reputation on not wanting to have anything to do with not only dictatorial regimes, but also leaders who are patently corrupt and have brought odiousness to governance in the polity.

186 It is often argued in some quarters that it was this kind of relationship that made Mr. Dele Giwa of the *Newswatch* Magazine that led to the tragic assassination of the cerebral journalist in 1986.

187 [Saharareporters.com/2010/04/10/evil-candidate-general-ibrahim-badamosi-babangida](https://saharareporters.com/2010/04/10/evil-candidate-general-ibrahim-badamosi-babangida). Downloaded on Monday, February, 07, 2022 at 03.45 Hours.

the dictatorship and ruin the economy through massive looting. All the same, Babangida's dictatorship did go beyond a democrat's conceptualization of corruption by seeing it unequivocally as his typology of a methodology of governance, which he has now considered to be having an anatomy that is/was different from the anatomy of other regimes that also indulged in dictatorship as well as corruption of one hue or the other! How else could logic be turned upside down?!!! Indeed, before his birthday celebration that took place on the August 17th, 2021, when he clocked 80 years, he granted a press interview in which he grandiloquently and unabashedly declared that corruption under his dictatorship was saintlier compared to the extent of corruption cases under the Buhari's regime of civilian coloration. His judgment should be considered to be a historic statement in a sense; but it should also rob him off the status of statesmanship. Indeed, in a more decent society, his rank, all the accorded titles and honours would be confiscated and he, as a person, will continued to be treated, subsequently, with ignominy! In his own reaction to this patently false and unethical claim (for there is nowhere in the world, speaking once again religiously, where corruption is celebrated in this grotesque manner). In his own reaction, Ibrahim averred and one agrees with him *in toto* that:

The real purpose of the interview, however, appeared to have been to seek to change the memory Nigerians have of him as the President who turned Nigerian into one of the most corrupt countries in the world. To counter the idea, he attacked the current regime led by the same General he had removed from power, so he could rule without encumbrance – Muhammadu Buhari: "From what I read, from analysis, **I think we are saints** when compared to what is happening under democratic dispensation," he said. "Today, those who have stolen billions and are in court are now parading themselves on the streets. Who else is better in fighting corruption?"

....The Nigerian military transformed the country's body politic in a very significant manner. They entrenched the culture of public corruption established by earlier civilian regimes. It was a major change in the country's political culture. Before the military, corruption was corruption – unethical or illegal advantages procured through official positions. Gradually, the military became power drunk and started believing they could generalize corruption and use their monopoly of force to prevent Nigerians from complaining about it. The turning point in this regard was Gowon's attempt to prevent the swearing to affidavits containing accusations of corruption against leading

members of his regime. Under the Babangida and Abacha administrations, what used to be known as corruption became part of the art of government itself. There was a complete prebendalisation of state power and virtually all acts by public officials involving public expenditure or public goods of any kind led to the looting of the treasury. The routine operations of government were subjected to prebendal rules. It was widely known, for example, that officials of state governments and parastatals had to pay, as they put it, a percentage of their statutory allocations to the Presidency, Ministry of Finance and Central Bank officials before their allocations were released. They, in turn, simply took their own personal shares from the so-called government coffers.¹⁸⁸ [Emphasis mine.]

Commenting also on the general ramifications trailing and/or inherent in Babangida's grandstanding position on corruption, Omokri says:

So loud was the demand to probe Babangida's administration after he was forced to quit office by pro-democracy protesters in August 1993 that General Sani Abacha, his successor had to establish a panel of enquiry headed by the respected economist, Dr. Pius Okigbo, to examine Babangida's financial activities. This was in July 1994. In his statement on the occasion of the submission of the report of the Panel On The Reform And Reorganisation Of The Central Bank of Nigeria, Dr. Okigbo accused Babangida and members of his government of stealing the country blind: "Between September 1988 and 30 June 1994, \$12.2 billion of the \$12.4 billion in the dedicated accounts was liquated in less than six years. They were spent on what could neither be adjudged genuine high priority nor truly regenerative investment; neither the President nor the Central Bank governor accounted to anyone for these massive extra-budgetary expenditures. These disbursements were clandestinely undertaken while the country was openly reeling from a crushing external debt overhang." The Persian Gulf Oil crisis of 1990-91 was exactly what General Babangida needed to make the final killing.

The Gulf War triggered a sudden and sharp rise in international oil prices, but instead of spending the additional revenue in productive economic and social projects, Babangida and his cronies saw the windfall as a personal bonus. Billions of dollars

188 Ibrahim, J., "Memory and the IBB Legacy." *Premium Times*, August 13, 2021. [Premiumtimesng.com/opinion/479009-memory-and-the-ibb-legacy-by-jibrin-ibrahim.html](https://premiumtimesng.com/opinion/479009-memory-and-the-ibb-legacy-by-jibrin-ibrahim.html). Downloaded on Thursday, December 30, 2021, at 03.00 Hours.

were diverted into private bank accounts. William Keeling, the Nigerian correspondent of the Financial Times of London who investigated the Gulf Oil windfall scam and published the story in 1991 was set upon by state security operatives and deported on Babangida's orders. For the likes of Babangida Aliyu who claimed on public television on the occasion of General Babangida's birthday celebration that there is no iota of evidence that Babangida's government was corrupt, Dr. Okigbo's testimony and William Keeling's newspaper article stand as monuments to truth. [See table 20 below on the feckless manner by which some of the money was spent, according to the Okigbo Panel Report.]

Politically, the shadow that General Babangida casts on the nation's landscape is still with us. When Babangida banned political parties and insisted that only 'newbreed' politicians would participate in his long-winded political transition programme, he deliberately encouraged the corrupt, the self-serving and the visionless – in short the worst that Nigeria had to offer – to take an interest in politics and elbow out the best and brightest. Nigerians have been complaining that the political class since the advent of the Fourth Republic in May 1999 has been particularly corrupt and feckless. This is so for a reason. These politicians were sired and brought up during Babangida's transition programme in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They saw what Babangida was doing – the corruption, the cynicism and the general cruelty undergirding his political programme – and they resolved to walk down the same road when they got to power. There is thus a real sense in which it can be said that Babangida's perfidy birthed Nigeria's Fourth Republic.¹⁸⁹

Table 21: Some of the Expenditures From the Gulf Windfall

| ITEMS | (\$ Millions) |
|---|---------------|
| Documentary film on Nigeria | 2.92 |
| Purchase of TV/Video for the Presidency | 18.30 |
| Ceremonial Uniforms for the Army | 3.85 |
| Staff Welfare at Dodan Barracks/Aso Rock [Seat of Government] | 23.98 |
| Travels of the First Lady Abroad | 0.99 |
| President's Travels Abroad | 8.95 |

189 Omokri, R., "Reflections on the Country Babangida Built," *ThisDay* Newspaper, September 19th, 2021, thisdaylive.com/index.php/2021/09/19reflections-on-the-country-babangida-built/. Downloaded on Sunday, 01/02/2022 at 15.00 hours.

| | |
|--|--------|
| Medical (Clinic at Aso Rock) | 27.25 |
| Gifts: Liberia | 1.00 |
| Gifts: Ghana | 0.50 |
| Nigerian Embassy: London | 18.12 |
| Nigerian Embassy: Riyadh | 14.99 |
| Nigerian Embassy: Tehran | 2.76 |
| Nigerian Embassy: Niamey | 3.80 |
| Nigerian Embassy: Pakistan | 3.80 |
| Nigerian Embassy: Israel | 13.07 |
| TV Equipment for ABU [Ahmadu Bello University] | 17.90 |
| Ministry of Defence | 323.35 |
| Security | 59.72 |
| Defence Attaches | 25.49 |
| GHQ [General Headquarters] | 1.04 |

Source: *Okigbo Panel Report*, 1994: Item 7.148.

Based on these evidential statements by Babangida, Omokri and the analyses in this Lecture so far, there is nowhere the Babangida administration and the succeeding Abacha dictatorship (which we shall shortly briefly look at) as well as under any military helmsman – whether retired or not, including the regimes of Obasanjo and Buhari – could be considered to have worked in the interest of, first, the organic development of the country; and second, democracy in her history. All of these regimes have lacked accountability and transparency in all the essentialities of these two concepts, in situations where people act by the mandate given by principals as well as in trust owed to such principals, which should not be compromised. (Indeed, this is what democracy is all about.) They wasted resources that could have been used, alternately, to advance the course of development of the country. Even for those of them that purportedly came to office through elections after military interventions in 1966 could hardly be adjudged to be democratic. The Babangida dictatorship promised that after his so-called “corrective and development-driven military” interregnum, *ala* the structural adjustment programme (SAP), there was never going to be a military takeover in Nigeria. Yes, as we have seen above, he had to admit that he had had to annul the June 12th Presidential Elections Results in order to prevent a military takeover that was bound to consume him as well.¹⁹⁰ The rickety Interim National Government under late Chief E. A. O. Shonekan was eventually overthrown within 84 days of its inauguration by General Sani Abacha, who ordinarily would have retired with Babangida when he decided to “step aside;” but was left behind to fulfill the devilish plans of the military oligarchs, to

190 Ibrahim, *op. cit.*

continue the rape on democratic development as well as to destroy the economic base of the country all together. It is this military fiendish dictatorship, led by Abacha, that we briefly turn our attention to next, to x-ray.

The Dictatorial Regime of General Sani Abacha, 1993-1998: The Greatest Traducianism of the Democratization Narrative in Nigeria's History

To start the analysis in the segment of how democracy as a system was trivialized and traduced, the Nigerian people should perhaps thank Almighty God for taking the life of Abacha before his brand of transition could be consummated. (We are aware that, as responsible analysts, we are required to make a statement of this nature, even though it is also a truism, according to that Holy Qur'an that (as we previously analyzed above), the death of a mortal is due at an appointed time and it is not possible to elongate or shorten the date. Indeed, Nigerians heaved a sigh of relief when he died as the dictatorship that was about to be unleashed on the entire country should rather be imagined than described. Many more even interpreted his death at that point in time as a historic Divine Intervention as well as an expression of the unique love of Almighty God for the entity called Nigeria, remaining one. But, as usual and unfortunately, Nigerians are never ready to be well tutored by lessons of history. Indeed, if Nigerians could be told that there used to be a behemoth called the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) that disintegrated like a pack of cards within a twinkle of the eyes, only but few would remember! Dictatorship of unimaginable dimensions with the impact of global imperialism was responsible for that historic dissolution of a modern state.)

Thus, to put the issue the dictatorship of the Abacha regime very starkly and in comparative perspectives, we should remember that the Babangida dictatorial transition, which he knew from the beginning to be a ruse, ended in historic failure. That of Abacha was to up the ante of colossal transition programme failure, along with the possibilities of the dissolution of the entire entity called Nigeria (see below). In addition, from the evidence of the extent of stealing of the patrimony of the Nigerian people that we shall reel out shortly, the dismemberment of the country could not but be the most catastrophic occurrence in state dissolution in the history of the humankind! The basis for this assertion is as follows: while Babangida manipulated his transition, in order to stay in power *ad infinitum*, and his trickiest point of mischief-making reached its nadir when he decided "to step aside" in the hope that after a while, particularly when he would have come to the conclusion that Nigerians had forgotten and forgiven him, he could then come back to pick up the presidential slot – "the jewel in the crown!!!"

He, indeed, underestimated the capacity for devilish planning by Abacha, after leaving him behind to “stabilize” the rickety regime of Chief Shonekan. Such reality must have dawned on him as Abacha, immediately he consolidated power, retired the so-called “Babangida Boys” in the various units of the Nigerian military institution.

From evidence that emerged during the almost five years of his brutal reign, Abacha’s strategy was to rule the country permanently, even if it would mean killing all Nigerians at will, to achieve the pet ambition. This strategy started to manifest when, by September 30th, 1996, five political parties were registered to participate in the presidential elections by the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON).¹⁹¹ The critical trick that Abacha would have used to edge out any competitor, had he lived beyond 1998 to fulfill his ambition, would be to argue that since four out of the five parties adopted him as their candidate, he would like to rule, at least, one term for each of the parties, *seriatim* – which would have meant a cumulative period of 16 years at least!!! Such arrangement would also have been 16 years of toil, bloodshed, in short, anomie never seen in the country. As speculated above, what is still now known as Nigeria would also have gone with the winds, in smithereens.

The other strategy was the humongous looting of the common patrimony of the Nigerian people – which was not just to serve the interests of his family members, but also the thugs, other hangers-on and the foot soldiers that were being groomed to make sure that the Nigerian people would accept the new mode of the highly personalized rule, whether or not the people liked or wanted it. Abacha indeed looted from Nigeria which estimate stood at between four and five billion dollars in the period between 1993 and 1998, according to the lawyer – Mr. Enrico Monfrini – who was hired by the Nigerian government to help in recovering the historic daylight robbery. (See also table 2 above again.) The snippets of how Mr. Monfrini went about the assignment are reconstructed as follows:

“We had so much proof of different money being sent here and there, Bahamas, Nassau, Cayman Islands, you name it.”

191 The political parties registered by the election management board (EMB) included: The Committee for National Consensus (CNC); Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN); Grassroots Democratic Movement (GDM); National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN); and United Nigeria People’s Convention (UNPC). See books.operation.org/iframe/653?lanf=en. Downloaded on Sunday, January 09, 2022 at 04.25.

“Nobody seems to understand how much work it entails. I have to pay so many people, so many accountants, so many other lawyers in different countries.”

“The Abachas were fighting like dogs. They were appealing about everything we did. This delayed the process for a very long time.”¹⁹²

Furthermore, money was being taken from the Central Bank during his reign with reckless abandon in truckloads to the home of Abacha. (In the process of transporting same to his home, nothing would stop the messengers from helping themselves as well.) Other illegal means of carrying out the looting was through contract awards that would be excessively padded to the benefit of both the contractor and the Abacha family. According to Transparency International, the following details some of the recoveries made by successive governments after Abacha’s death in 1998.

- Under General Abdulsalami Abubakar: \$750 million.
- Under President Olusegun Obasanjo: \$2.307 billion.
- Under President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua: Apparently no recovery
- Under President Goodluck Jonathan: \$2.087 billion and
- Under President Muhammadu Buhari: \$630 million.¹⁹³

The various sums came from different bank sources in countries such as Switzerland, Jersey Island in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Liechtenstein. These various sums were only released by the governments of these countries after the Nigerian authorities agreed that the money would be used, specifically, to finance the construction of the Second Niger Bridge, the Lagos-Ibadan expressway and the Abuja-Kano road.

General Abdulsalami Abubakar, June 1998 – May 1999

By the time Abubakar administration commenced, immediately after the sudden death of Abacha, the image of the military as a force of governance had been rubbished and completely bartered. What was most likely to be crucial for it, clearly, was how to quickly and strategically schedule and successfully complete a programme of transition and leave the scene; otherwise, the apocalyptic collapse of the country was already in the horizon. Indeed, no mature person that

192 [bbc.com/news/world-africa-54929254](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54929254). Downloaded on Friday, 01/07/2022 at 04.00 Hours.

193 [vanguardngr.com/2020/03/abacha-loot-how-much-did-the-late-head-of-state-steal/](https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/03/abacha-loot-how-much-did-the-late-head-of-state-steal/). Downloaded on Thursday, January, 06, 2022 at 05.00 Hours.

experienced the short reign of Abacha regime of about five years should ever hanker after it. This was what Abubakar regime did and within a period of less than one year, he constituted a committee which reviewed the Second Republic 1979 Constitution and recommended a new version for approval. This was heeded and, thus, began the transition to the Fourth Republic that was birthed since May 29th, 1999 to date. The approved constitution that ushered in the Fourth Republic has gone through several reviews since then; but what is however amazing about the Nigerian political class is the current, *ex post facto*, belated cry at the moment that the constitution is an imposed piece of **ground norm** that was not sanctioned by the “Nigerian people.” To a large extent, the constitution was imposed as it was not subjected to any constituent assembly to ratify before its promulgation by the departing military dictatorship. Wouldn't this be an after-thought, as already argued above? Wouldn't this have been challenged when the military was still at the helm of affairs, when it was quite vulnerable? That this step was not taken when it would have mattered most speaks volumes about the argument that consistently have been made that the transition of 1999 to date should be seen as a mere change from a military dictatorship to, at best, a civilian administration that is very much lacking in democratic credentials. We should therefore not beholden to the notion that a constitution can inherently and adequately envisage, contain and/or solve all the problems that shall emanate from the myriad of political processes in the polity.

Even well-designed constitutions cannot, by themselves, guarantee democracy [not to talk of a faulty one written by mischievous and virtually humiliated military regime]. For one, constitutions are always incomplete. Like any set of rules, they have countless gaps and ambiguities. No operating manual, no matter how detailed, can anticipate all possible contingencies or prescribe how to behave under all possible circumstances.¹⁹⁴

The Nigerian people still have a long way to go in understanding the nuances of the process of democratic institutionalization and consolidation.

On the whole, to sum up on military rule in Nigeria generally, governance by the institution, for as long as it had lasted, was not only anti-democratic; it was not only useless and reckless in resource management; but was quite adept negatively in the non-prioritization of the various departments of governance for development, some of which hackneyed western social science theory unscientifically has

194 Levitsky, S. and D. Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2018, p.99.

vouched for. (See above, again, the earlier strictures against this pseudo-theory of western social science.) For instance, what should have been the priority concerns of the military in budget allocations to the key ministries of education in comparison to defence from the end of the civil war in 1970? (See table 22 below.)

In the said table, budgetary allocations to both the ministries of education and defence are examined and compared from available figures from 1977 to 2022. This is to find out whether or not it is education ministry or defence that has been more favoured. What has emerged from the table is that from 1977 to 2022, the budgetary total stands at ₦122,390.93 billion. Out of this sum, defence got, within the period, the sum of ₦7,513.35 billion, equivalent to 6.14%. On the other hand, the ministry of education was allocated the sum of ₦7,170.60 billion, amounting to 5.86%. (In parenthesis, we discounted the figures allocated to the two ministries in the years 2008 and 2013, as they do not appear credible.)

Be that as it may, it is apparent to an analyst that the allocations to the two ministries are minimal; what is more, the difference between the two in percentage term is equally insignificant. But, considering that until the regime of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (2010-2015) and the subsequent and current Buhari regime when insurgencies, banditry and terrorism have become rampant and issues of going concern, defence should not have been rated higher than education – however inconsequential such allocations may be construed to be. Not being a military expert and since, within the African landscape at least, Nigeria is not at war currently with any country; and is not likely to be at war with neighbours in the foreseeable future; spending on defence should not be rated higher than education, at least. The other point about the quantum that is being spent on defence has not, unfortunately, translated to better kitting of the military as evidenced by the poor performance of the institution in the war against insurgencies, terrorism, and other intra-state skirmishes from 2011 to date.¹⁹⁵ It may also need stressing that when it comes to releases there is always a fundamental difference between what is budgeted and what is disbursed, which may also reduce what could eventually be spent by each ministry and the departments therein.

195 One is not going to be bogged down by the prevalent insinuation in the public space that the pervasive corruption in the polity had been the major reason for the poor performance of the military in the war against terrorism and insurgency in the country, as sums allocated for the purchase of military equipment were mis-spent and/or embezzled by the higher ranks. Much as we may wish to leave the pursuit of what is actually the true situation, there is no doubt that a time will still manifest in the future (a day of reckoning) when the truth shall come to the fore.

If we leave aside the comparative analysis of the two ministries in relation to the issue of prioritization, what about the comparative thrusts of the “Asian Tiger” countries – such as Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia (and the latter-day modernizing and innovating United Arab Emirates)? The Asian countries, in particular, were either at the same level of development in the sixties and seventies with Nigeria or Nigeria was slightly ahead of one or two of them. How did we get it wrong but they got it right? Plus, or minus, the long spell of military governance in Nigeria whose philosophy of governance was *ab initio* undemocratic, which was complemented by a thorough lack of intellectual acuity to select a development trajectory, and, most regrettably, very corrupt in grand and historic manner, may be the explanatory answer to the question. It is a pity that because the emergent rulers since the 1999 transition to civilian governance have not been desirous to create the necessary conditions that can catalyze and accelerate development ahead now or in the foreseeable future, wholesome development of the political economy of the Nigerian society has been stunted, due to the extremely poor allocations to the education sector, over the years. It is going to remain so, most unfortunately, because prebendalism is what drives the politics and the economy of the country. Added to this type is the untrammelled violence that has hugely been wasting human assets that could have contributed, one way or the other, their quotas to political and democratic development of the polity.

From the professional angle, too, military incursion into the governance of the country could perhaps be considered as one of the greatest casualties not only to the institution’s procedural mode of conducting its activities and professional pecking order, but also the governance culture that has completely circumscribed democratic politics. How and why should the institution’s intervention in politics be a major factor? Could it also have had an impact on the democratic process? It definitely had had such impacts, which can be analyzed as follows: The race for primitive accumulation by the officer cadre and the hankering after military postings to either some lucrative military units and/or political appointments led to a complete breakdown of seniority and hierarchy. In most cases, political appointments took precedence over hierarchy to the extent that senior officers who were not considered for political appointments could easily find themselves belittled whenever they found themselves going to the offices of their colleague political appointees, who were most likely to be juniors to and/or of the same with them. As Kukah has painfully found out when he served as a member of the Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission (HRVIC), set up by the Olusegun Obasanjo Administration between 1999 and 2002, I would like to quote liberally and *in extenso*:

The next phase of the show of shame that had come to characterise the military was the assault on the office and person of the chief of army staff. It would seem that from the outset, many military officers were not happy with the appointment of Lieutenant General Ishaya Bamaïyi as the Chief of Army Staff (COAS). Barely two years after his appointment, a massive campaign was launched by a section of Muslim senior military officers. It is very significant that General Abacha refused to bow to these hypocrites who sought to deploy religion and other similar instruments to further their ambitions. When it seemed to the detractors of Lt. General Bamaïyi that the Head of State would not succumb to their machinations, the group decided to change strategy. They resorted to writing the most scurrilous memoranda in a bid to destroy the person, image and reputation of their boss. These officers deployed an arsenal of religion, character assassination, allegations of disloyalty, alleged involvement in coup plots, exploitation of family feuds and media campaigns of calumny to achieve their aim. I will quote rather copiously from their documents so as to illustrate the points being made here. I will do this because these materials constitute part of the greatest indictments against the military. For, as we shall see, the quality of language is enough to force one to ask, how did these men find their way to the top? On their admission, the military had become a haven of moral fugitives, the place was reeking with smugglers and witchcraft. Witch doctors became important components of military intelligence. Although set to destroy one person, these documents succeeded in destroying the military itself.¹⁹⁶

Furthermore, in relation to the process of appointing Brigadier General Marwa as the military administrator of Lagos State, one of the shenanigans in the military institution in governance was exposed as follows by General Bamaïyi:

I did not know much of Brigadier General Marwa until he was appointed the military administrator of Lagos State. When General Abacha was to appoint military administrators, he directed me to get the list of combatant officers showing their states of origin and the Arm of Service. Beside this time, General Abacha had told me that no officer who had held any

196 Kukah, M. H., *Witness to Justice: An Insider's Account of Nigeria's Truth Commission*, Ibadan: Bookcraft, 2011, p.184. Readers may also like to look at the details that Revd. Father Kukah in the quotation above promised to provide in the following pages: 185; 186; and 187.

political appointment was to be appointed a military administrator, a view I completely agreed with [*sic.*]....

He stated that he wanted Col. Marwa to be appointed a military administrator. I drew his attention to his earlier directive that officers who had held political appointments were not to be appointed as military administrators. When I returned the following day, he told me that he had made up his mind to appoint Col Marwa as an administrator. That was an order. I however drew his attention to the fact that officers would ask questions on appointing one officer as a military administrator twice. Officers did that on several occasions and I had to find a way of defending the decision. This was an act of loyalty to the C-in-C, I did not show any dislike for Marwa. I was however opposed to the reappointment of Marwa as the military administrator of Lagos State during General Abubakar regime. This I did because Gen Abubakar wanted all the military administrators to be deployed except Marwa....The appointment generated serious argument at the Defence Council where these appointments were made. Marwa's appointment split the members of the council [*sic.*] into camps. The Head of State, the Chief of General Staff, Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), and the Inspector General of Police (IGP) were on one side, while the CDS, and myself were on one side. **For the first time in my career, the posting of an officer on military duties was put to vote. Before the voting, the Head of State, the CGS, the CNS and the IGP retired to the Head of State's office. When they returned, the Head of State directed that the appointment of the then Col Marwa be put to vote. We immediately knew that they had met and decided to vote for Marwa's appointment. This was an unnecessary because the C-in-C would only need to tell us his decision and that would have become binding. I however made the point that we would not be able to explain the retention of only one military administrator. So more administrators had to be retained. We must have principles and keep them as leaders. My relationship with Marwa is more cordial than cordial than what has been painted by General Sabo before this Commission. I am sure that General Sabo is a mere interloper, a busybody.**¹⁹⁷[Emphasis mine.]

Finally, on routine military procedure with respect to seniority, which should be observed as a matter of professional requirement, it is expected that:

197 *Ibid.*, pp.192-193.

...given the discipline within the military, an officer of the rank of Brigadier General Marwa...would normally not be in position to wield the kind of power he did. However, the involvement of the military in politics changed all that. Ranks became subordinate to office, position and hierarchy. Thus, **to be a governor of a state like Lagos carried with it more power than being a general behind a desk**¹⁹⁸. [Emphasis mine.]

As we have tried to demonstrate throughout the Lecture, three variables – corruption, political violence, and military dictatorship – have been responsible for the lack of democratic culture, its development politically as well as the overall institutionalization of its process. As democracy is also being assaulted left, right, and centre globally, as well as being confronted with and embroiled in crises of legitimacy and faithlessness in the genuineness of election results, especially in the so-called bulwark of democratic governance and institutionalization, i.e., the United States of America (USA), by a key participant, Donald Trump, scholars of democracy as a system of governance have also begun to draw attention to how democracy could be protected and brought back to the front burner. They have specifically looked at the usefulness of the concepts of guardrails and gatekeepers in this regard. We will proceed to examine what the application of these tools can entail, in combination, for the attainment of genuine democracy of Nigeria's dreams. As we now embark on concluding the Lecture, attention will also be given to the issue of mindset that the Justice Muhammed Uwaisu's Committee on Electoral Reform, which, to us, is so central to democratic development in the country, shall be harped upon. As of now, to reiterate, and if truth must be told, Nigeria is still a long shot from being a democratic polity and it behooves on every patriotic Nigerian to wake up, tighten their belts for the greater battle of institutionalizing democracy that is the chosen governance system.

198 *Ibid.*, p.196.

Table 22: BUDGET ESTIMATES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA: 1977-2022

| YEAR | TOTAL NIGERIA BUDGET (N'BILLION) | RECURRENT BUDGET DEFENCE(N'BIL LION) | CAPITAL BUDGET DEFENCE (N'BILLION) | TOTAL BUDGET DEFENCE (N'BILLION) | RECURRENT BUDGET EDUCATION (N'BILLION) | CAPITAL BUDGET EDUCATION (N'BILLION) | TOTAL BUDGET EDUCATIO N (N'BILLION) | TOTAL BUDGET ESTIMATES (DEFENCE AND EDUCATION) | % OF DEFENCE TO TOTAL ESTIMATE | % OF EDUCATIO N TO TOTAL ESTIMATE | % OF DEFENCE AND EDUCATION TO TOTAL BUDGET ESTIMATE |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1977 | 15.33 | 0.82 | 0.10 | 0.92 | 0.24 | 0.50 | 0.74 | 1.65 | 5.97 | 4.82 | 10.79 |
| 1978 | 12.45 | 0.60 | 0.04 | 0.64 | 0.27 | 0.30 | 0.57 | 1.21 | 5.11 | 4.57 | 9.68 |
| 1979 | 8.38 | 0.72 | 0.04 | 0.77 | 0.37 | 0.53 | 0.90 | 1.67 | 9.17 | 10.77 | 19.94 |
| 1980 | 26.34 | 0.65 | 0.13 | 0.78 | 0.60 | 0.95 | 1.55 | 2.33 | 2.96 | 5.88 | 8.84 |
| 1981 | 11.41 | 0.73 | 0.10 | 0.82 | 0.54 | 0.44 | 0.98 | 1.81 | 7.20 | 8.63 | 15.83 |
| 1982 | 12.86 | 0.66 | 0.08 | 0.75 | 0.65 | 0.49 | 1.14 | 1.88 | 5.79 | 8.83 | 14.62 |
| 1983 | 12.09 | 0.54 | 0.20 | 0.74 | 0.62 | 0.35 | 0.97 | 1.70 | 6.09 | 8.00 | 14.10 |
| 1984 | 15.97 | 0.57 | 0.04 | 0.61 | 0.72 | 0.14 | 0.86 | 1.47 | 3.81 | 5.39 | 9.20 |
| 1985 | 17.75 | 0.66 | 0.03 | 0.69 | 0.67 | 0.18 | 0.85 | 1.54 | 3.87 | 4.79 | 8.66 |
| 1986 | 11.08 | 0.74 | 0.21 | 0.95 | 0.65 | 0.44 | 1.09 | 2.05 | 8.59 | 9.88 | 18.46 |
| 1987 | 15.51 | 0.72 | 0.02 | 0.74 | 0.51 | 0.14 | 0.65 | 1.39 | 4.75 | 4.21 | 8.96 |
| 1988 | 20.29 | 0.83 | 0.27 | 1.10 | 0.80 | 0.28 | 1.08 | 2.19 | 5.43 | 5.34 | 10.77 |
| 1989 | 27.12 | 0.96 | 0.12 | 1.08 | 1.72 | 0.22 | 1.94 | 3.02 | 3.99 | 7.16 | 11.15 |
| 1990 | 36.26 | 1.41 | 0.20 | 1.61 | 1.96 | 0.33 | 2.29 | 3.90 | 4.43 | 6.33 | 10.76 |
| 1991 | 35.17 | 1.83 | 0.41 | 2.25 | 1.27 | 0.29 | 1.55 | 3.80 | 6.38 | 4.42 | 10.80 |
| 1992 | 52.04 | 2.02 | 0.68 | 2.71 | 1.68 | 0.38 | 2.06 | 4.77 | 5.20 | 3.96 | 9.16 |
| 1993 | 112.10 | 3.09 | 1.09 | 4.17 | 6.44 | 1.56 | 8.00 | 12.17 | 3.72 | 7.14 | 10.86 |
| 1994 | 110.20 | 4.21 | 1.29 | 5.49 | 7.88 | 2.41 | 10.28 | 15.78 | 4.98 | 9.33 | 14.32 |
| 1995 | 153.50 | 5.34 | 2.03 | 7.38 | 9.42 | 3.31 | 12.73 | 20.10 | 4.81 | 8.29 | 13.10 |
| 1996 | 189.00 | 11.43 | 2.67 | 14.10 | 12.14 | 3.22 | 15.35 | 29.45 | 7.46 | 8.12 | 15.58 |
| 1997 | 276.72 | 11.61 | 3.82 | 15.43 | 12.14 | 3.81 | 15.94 | 31.37 | 5.58 | 5.76 | 11.34 |
| 1998 | 367.92 | 15.13 | 6.15 | 21.28 | 13.93 | 12.79 | 26.72 | 48.00 | 5.78 | 7.26 | 13.05 |
| 1999 | 358.10 | 28.09 | 4.86 | 32.95 | 23.05 | 8.52 | 31.56 | 64.51 | 9.20 | 8.81 | 18.01 |
| 2000 | 664.74 | 33.12 | 6.95 | 40.07 | 44.23 | 23.34 | 67.57 | 107.64 | 6.03 | 10.16 | 16.19 |
| 2001 | 1,018.03 | 47.07 | 16.40 | 63.47 | 39.88 | 19.86 | 59.74 | 123.22 | 6.23 | 5.87 | 12.10 |
| 2002 | 1,188.71 | 86.05 | 22.09 | 108.15 | 100.24 | 9.22 | 109.46 | 217.60 | 9.10 | 9.21 | 18.31 |
| 2003 | 1,225.96 | 51.04 | 10.68 | 61.72 | 64.76 | 14.68 | 79.44 | 141.16 | 5.03 | 6.48 | 11.51 |
| 2004 | 1,302.23 | 65.40 | 10.66 | 76.06 | 72.22 | 21.55 | 93.77 | 169.83 | 5.84 | 7.20 | 13.04 |
| 2005 | 1,799.94 | 90.33 | 21.54 | 111.87 | 92.59 | 27.44 | 120.04 | 231.90 | 6.22 | 6.67 | 12.88 |
| 2006 | 1,900.01 | 83.67 | 14.69 | 98.36 | 129.42 | 35.79 | 165.21 | 263.57 | 5.18 | 8.70 | 13.87 |
| 2007 | 1,940.39 | 102.60 | 14.72 | 117.31 | 137.48 | 48.29 | 185.77 | 303.09 | 6.05 | 9.57 | 15.62 |
| 2008 | 2,647.49 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 168.65 | 52.33 | 220.98 | 220.98 | 0.00 | 8.35 | 8.35 |
| 2009 | 2,276.69 | 176.22 | 46.80 | 223.02 | 184.67 | 40.01 | 224.68 | 447.70 | 9.80 | 9.87 | 19.66 |
| 2010 | 4,427.24 | 216.82 | 47.38 | 264.21 | 196.27 | 74.98 | 271.25 | 535.46 | 5.97 | 6.13 | 12.09 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----------|--------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------|----------|------|-------|-------|
| 2011 | 4,226.19 | 288.68 | 25.19 | 313.87 | 304.39 | 35.09 | 339.48 | 653.35 | 7.43 | 8.03 | 15.46 |
| 2012 | 4,877.21 | 314.30 | 45.44 | 359.74 | 342.70 | 66.83 | 409.53 | 769.27 | 7.38 | 8.40 | 15.77 |
| 2013 | 4,924.60 | 0.00 | 51.80 | 51.80 | 367.38 | 60.14 | 427.52 | 479.32 | 1.05 | 8.68 | 9.73 |
| 2014 | 4,695.19 | 314.35 | 35.36 | 349.71 | 373.53 | 50.78 | 424.31 | 774.02 | 7.45 | 9.04 | 16.49 |
| 2015 | 4,493.36 | 338.80 | 36.70 | 375.50 | 459.66 | 23.52 | 483.18 | 858.68 | 8.36 | 10.75 | 19.11 |
| 2016 | 6,077.68 | 294.53 | 134.57 | 429.10 | 446.67 | 37.00 | 483.67 | 912.76 | 7.06 | 7.96 | 15.02 |
| 2017 | 7,441.18 | 330.54 | 139.29 | 469.84 | 398.69 | 56.81 | 455.50 | 925.34 | 6.31 | 6.12 | 12.44 |
| 2018 | 9,120.33 | 418.68 | 157.72 | 576.40 | 439.26 | 102.91 | 542.16 | 1,118.56 | 6.32 | 5.94 | 12.26 |
| 2019 | 8,916.96 | 430.83 | 159.13 | | 463.40 | 58.69 | 522.09 | 1,112.04 | 6.62 | 5.85 | 12.47 |
| | | | | 589.96 | | | | | | | |
| 2020 | 10,810.80 | 784.04 | 115.87 | 899.91 | 479.58 | 75.17 | 554.75 | 1,454.66 | 8.32 | 5.13 | 13.46 |
| 2021 | 13,588.03 | 838.56 | 127.85 | 966.41 | 545.24 | 156.17 | 701.41 | 1,667.82 | 7.11 | 5.16 | 12.27 |
| 2022 | 17,126.87 | 996.09 | 204.62 | 1,200.71 | 593.47 | 159.66 | 753.14 | 1,953.85 | 7.01 | 4.40 | 11.41 |

Grand

Total: 122,390.93

7.513.35

7170.60

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, January 2022.

Notes: a) The figures in the 2008 row are not calculated in the grand total.

b) The figures in the 2013 row are not calculated in the grand total.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Perhaps we should begin the conclusion to this Lecture by quoting extensively from one of the latest attempts made at analyzing the malaise that has or that continues to buffet democracy in the polity that is generally alluded to be the “bulwark of democracy – the USA, in the book: *How Democracies Die* by S. Levitsky and D. Ziblatt (2018). Although the similarities of the crisis or challenges of the democratic systems in both the USA and Nigeria are definitely not going to be of the same magnitude; all the same, highlighting the US’s challenges under the toxic regime of Donald Trump may shed a light or two on what efforts should be made if Nigeria is truly determined to be a democratic polity in the foreseeable future. Their argument on this contemporary feature, which is probably assuming the most likely and unremitting fate of the American democracy, is magisterially stated thus:

Democracies work best – and survive much longer – where constitutions are reinforced by unwritten democratic norms. Two basic norms have preserved America’s checks and balances in ways we have come to take for granted: mutual toleration, or the understanding that competing parties accept one another as legitimate rivals and forbearance, or the idea that politicians should exercise restraint in deploying their institutional prerogatives. These two norms undergirded American democracy for most of the twentieth century. Leaders of the two major parties accepted one another as legitimate and resisted the temptation to use temporary control of institutions to maximum partisan advantage. Norms of toleration and restraint served as the soft guardrails of American democracy, helping it to avoid the kind of partisan fight to the death that has destroyed democracies elsewhere in the world, including Europe in the 1930s and South America in the 1960s and 1970s.

Today, however, the guardrails of American democracy are weakening. The erosion...began in the 1980s and 1990s and accelerated in 2000s. By the time Barack Obama became president, many Republicans, in particular, questioned the legitimacy of their Democratic rivals and had forbearance for a strategy of winning by any means necessary. Donald Trump may have accelerated this process, but he didn’t cause it. The challenges facing American democracy run deeper. The weakening of...democratic norms is rooted in extreme partisan polarization – one that extends beyond policy differences into

an existential conflict over race and culture. America's efforts to achieve racial equality as [the] society grows increasingly diverse have fueled an insidious reaction and intensifying polarization. And if one thing is clear from studying breakdowns throughout history, it's that **extreme polarization can kill democracies.**¹⁹⁹ [Emphasis mine.]

From this quotation, one is acquainted with the fact that extreme polarization, the want of tolerance and forbearance (all of these fault lines are endemic in Nigeria) are very damaging to any attempt at developing and/or sustaining democratic culture and practice. Just as these impediments to the development of this democratic culture are in Nigeria, it is now being regarded as a creeping culture in a number of democracies in not only the USA, but also in the European and Latin American countries. Because Nigeria's attempts at democratic politics have not even developed as to equal or come near enough to what exists in the mature democracies of the western typology and from the analyses that have been carried in this Lecture, the country has had some bouts of "democratic cankerworm and regression." Perhaps, the most ridiculous of these was during the general elections of 2007 in which a retiring president shamelessly announced and urged stakeholders, particularly his recruited thugs, that the election process should be a "do or die" undertaking! The understanding by Nigerians of this war song and the accompanying mobilization then were choreographed to ensure that the anointed candidate of the departing president must win by hook or crook or else mayhem would descend on the polity. At the end of the elections in which the departing president's candidate did win, the "elected president," Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, probably in order to demonstrate his higher moral political value than his patron, confessed that the election failed to meet the minimum standards of fairness, transparency and accountability. He immediately went ahead and set up the Justice Muhammadu Lawal Uwais Committee to find the extent of the assaults on the elections and to make appropriate recommendations to stem such tides in subsequent elections.

In an article that is due for publication in the autumn of 2023, entitled "Quasi-Democracy and Autocracy as Governance System in Nigeria: An Examination," in the *Journal of Global South Studies*, we have noted that the Committee made some recommendations based on their findings and the most important of the latter, in our view, puts the matter of electoral trading cum of democratic erosion in the polity very correctly, as follows:

199 Levitsky, S. and D. Ziblatt, *op. cit.*, pp.8-9.

Election mindsets are the critical elements that determine electoral practices and behavior and therefore the failure or success of democracies....

In Nigeria today, election mindsets are not only largely negative; they are also largely irrational. Without changing these mindsets, we cannot limit violence and riggings in elections; we cannot stop political assassinations before, during, and after elections; we cannot move to a form of politics that places the interests of the country above those of the individual; we cannot build lasting political institutions that will promote peaceful change and democratic governance and a nation that has one destiny. Without changing mindsets, politics would not only continue to be “business as usual”, it will ultimately undermine the very foundations of the Nigerian State. There is therefore a sense of urgency about the need to change the mindset of Nigerians.²⁰⁰

The recommendations from these observations were quite many, thematically arranged according to the motley terms of reference given to the Committee. First, among the general recommendations that one thinks are germane to the thrust of the arguments of this Lecture, one would like to quote as follows:

[The country] should reverse the **democratization of violence**, and allow only the State to wield legitimate violence....

There is the need to ensure proper and adequate training of all personnel involved in election matters, both permanent and *ad hoc* staff. We have cogent lessons to learn from places such as India, which has a very small number of permanent elections staff and deploy enormous numbers of *ad hoc* staff in short periods of electoral duties, train yet with requisite professionalism, decency, honesty, and neutrality in the management of elections.²⁰¹ [Emphasis mine.]

What the Committee calls “the democratization of violence,” if it could be eliminated, could go a long way to create the situation whereby political contestants are “weaned” from the necessity to maintain “election militias” whose financial responsibilities they have to shoulder before and during such elections. Even after the elections, the “election militias” nuisance values shall have to be sustained like “Frankenstein Monsters” (who can come back to devour the sponsors if and when the terms of engagement are not adhered to) – hence the resort to self-

200 *The Uwais Committee Report...., op. cit.*, p.248.

201 *Ibid.*, pp.250-252.

help by the politicians who now indulge in stealing the country's resources mercilessly, to meet a legion of commitments. Stopping the "democratization of violence" and at the same time enhancing the democratization of politics in truth and, in reality, is likely to be one development this Lecture would like to recommend to stamp out both corruption and political violence – two of the triple drawbacks of democratizing the Nigerian polity. The third leg of the triple drawbacks – military incursion into the political arena – shall be tackled if greater professionalization of the institution is deliberately embarked upon. As has been alluded to in the Lecture, the coming into governance by the military has had the greatest impact on the military professionalism. One has seen this lack of professionalism playing out in the lackluster performance in addressing terrorism and insurgency in the last ten years in the country.

One is inclined to argue that the variables focused upon in this Lecture are just a microcosm of the deep-seated societal malaises afflicting this country. For instance, the Nigerian nation-state is bleeding because it is terribly under the yoke of banditry and terrorism, at the moment. This is apart from the inter-communal conflicts that are also taking their toll on the lives and properties of Nigerians, without any visible and manifest counter-response from the indolent and clueless leadership at the helm of affairs. We also have the problem of huge and awesome debt overhang that both current and future generations are going to face enormous challenges to repay in both near and distant futures. Since the three variables we have addressed in this Lecture are within the ambit of politics (there is no intention to downplay the other aspects/segments of societal solidarity, particularly the economy), the need to constantly rejig the country's politics cannot be overlooked. Not just because I am a Political Scientist that the three variables have been selected for this Inaugural Lecture, it is because the discipline is the one that can, from time to time, come up with solution at the highest level of authority. It is therefore of paramount importance to, after digesting the import of this Lecture, come up with the appropriate recommendations for charting our politics aright. This, principally, is the need to get the right leadership and jettison the contemporary miasmal rulership, to take the country out of this *cul de sac*. A mechanism should be, therefore, promptly put in place to recruit leaders who are intelligent, visionary, patriotic, honest, decisive, imbued with zero-tolerance instincts against corruption, be also imbued with democratic instincts, outwardly and inwardly, and be cosmopolitan in outlook and policies, friendly and not haughty. Ultimately and based upon the various scenarios discussed in the Lecture, leadership and followership

deficits are simply the Achilles' heel of this country. Both must be pursued very vigorously.

Table 23 : Five Key Indicators of Authoritarian Behavior to Fight Against in Trying to Develop and/or Protect Democracy

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Rejection of (or weak commitment to) democratic rules of the game</p> | <p>Do they reject the Constitution or express a willingness to violate it?</p> <p>Do they suggest a need for antidemocratic measures, such as canceling elections, violating or suspending the Constitution, banning certain organization, or restricting basic civil or political rights?</p> <p>Do they seek to use (or endorse the use of) extra constitutional means to change the government, such as military coups, violent insurrections, or mass protests aimed at forcing a change in the government?</p> <p>Do they attempt to undermine the legitimacy of elections, for example, by refusing to accept credible electoral results?</p> |
| <p>2. Denial of the legitimacy of political opponents</p> | <p>Do they describe their rivals as subversive, or opposed to the existing constitutional order?</p> <p>Do they claim that their rivals constitute an existential threat, either to national security or to the prevailing way of life?</p> <p>Do they baselessly describe their partisan rivals as criminals, whose supposed violation of the law (or potential to do so) disqualifies them from full participation in the political arena?</p> <p>Do they baselessly suggest that their rivals are foreign agents, in that they are secretly working in alliance with (or the employ of) a foreign government---usually an enemy one?</p> |
| <p>3. Toleration or encouraging of violence</p> | <p>Do they have any ties or armed gangs, paramilitary forces, militias, guerrillas, or other organizations that engage in illicit violence?</p> <p>Have they or their partisan allies sponsored or encouraged mob attacks on opponents?</p> <p>Have they tacitly endorsed violence by their supporters by refusing to unambiguously condemn it and punish it?</p> <p>Have they praised (or refused to condemn) other significant acts of political violence, either in the past or elsewhere in the world?</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4. Readiness to curtail civil liberation of opponents, including media</p> | <p>Have they supported laws or policies that restrict civil liberties, such as expanded libel or defamation laws, or laws restricting protest, criticism of the government, or certain civil or political organizations?</p> <p>Have they threatened to take legal or other punitive action against critics in rival parties, civil society, or the media?</p> <p>Have they praised repressive measures taken by other governments, either in the past or elsewhere in the world?</p> |
| <p>5. Pervasive involvement in historic cases of corruption as well as making the affairs of state more often than not based on impunity</p> | <p>Have the members of the ruling class indulged in embezzling public funds such they are not capable of meeting their obligations through good governance?</p> <p>Do they, by their action and inaction, regard the state as a private property that can used and abused with reckless abandon?</p> <p>What is the fate of the citizens with regard to prompt payment of salaries and other entitlements, especially the payment of pensioners?</p> <p>Has rule of law suffered intermittently from the officers of the state?</p> |

Source: Rows 1 to 4 are from the work of S. Levitsky and D. Ziblatt, *ibid.*, pp.23-24; while the fifth row is added to see the extent to which the assault on democratic governance could be examined in the Nigerian setting.

Secondly, the excerpts from the Uwais's Committee Report tend to correspond to the point made above by Levitsky and Ziblatt about forbearance and mutual tolerance. These virtues of democracy have not been developed and because the institutions of the state that are supposed to have reined in everyone so that political participants can exercise some restraints have been destroyed by the prolonged periods of intermittent military intervention in politics. It therefore becomes problematic to institutionalize democracy in the country where the institutions have been vandalized. Indeed, impunity that is at the roots of military governance appears to be inexorably leading to the emergence of full-blown civilian dictatorships, just as it has been described by the authors of *How Democracies Die*, even in polities hitherto seen and regarded as democratic. In table 21 above, we have borrowed and adapted the schematic indicators of how the instances that could have referred to as democratic politics are inevitably leading to full-blown dictatorship in Nigeria. How this is likely to emerge may take the following form: from the failure of the attempted civilian rule (because of the death of democracy that is still in gestation), to the re-emergence of the military in governance and the eventual emergence also of a dictator, in the manner that Abacha wanted to practicalize the schema before he suddenly died in 1998.

It is this monster of dictatorship that can crop up on the heel of democratic erosion or regression that we should try to avoid. Eternal vigilance is the price we have to pay to bring about and nurture ceaselessly democracy. We should also always take to the advisory that “losing democracy is far worse than losing an election,”²⁰² especially when such election lacks the essential ingredients of free choice, equity, transparency and accountability. Equally important we should accept the good and cold logic that: “The cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy!!!”²⁰³ Let us therefore invest more in building solid foundation for democracy by avoiding the dregs of the governance system in existence; while, at the same time, we resolve to strengthen the blocks that can solidify democracy.

Thirdly, since we have stressed the essence and importance of norms such as the recommended mindset issue by the *Justice Uwais Committee Report* that contain guardrails of democracy, which unfortunately has been left to gather dust due to the carelessness of government officials and even the politicians who are characteristically more comfortable by the situation where it is always “business as usual.” Efforts should indeed be directed towards strengthening them so that the fitful steps that have been taken since independence to build a democratic polity can gather momentum now that the drawbacks of democracy have been comprehensively analyzed under different contexts: from the inks of scholars, both Nigerians and non-Nigerians; administrative panels; the legal scholars cum interpretations of the nature of the country’s politics from court rulings that often probe deeply in causative factors of political crises, accompanied by comprehensive and incisive explanations and recommendations on the way forward; and the sordid empirical manifestations of the kind politics that the citizens witness with awe from time to time. Paying attention to and taking steps to stem the tide of corrupt and violent politics are likely to be the panacea against military dictatorship and misadventure in governance. From all indications, one can indubitably argue that it is the combination of corruption and political violence that are triggers for military intervention in politics. There are other factors quite alright, particularly praetorianism, that tag on to these two primordial factors to bring forth putsches.

Fourthly, it could be recalled that we went into the field of economic science and picked its theory or framework of opportunity cost and tried to subject the triads of the humongous cost to democratization that this country has experienced – particularly, to determine how far it can fully

202 Levitsky, S. and D. Ziblatt, *Ibid.*, p.68.

203 Quoted in S. Levitsky and D. Ziblatt, *ibid.*, p.50.

explain how the triads might have individually and/or collectively affected the primary research concern of this Lecture. As stated earlier, opportunity cost, by definition, is, in one sense, said to be **“problem of choice by measuring the cost of obtaining a quantity of one commodity in terms of the quantity of other commodities that could have been obtained instead;”** and, in another related sense, “as the cost of an action measured in terms of the benefit foregone by not pursuing the “best or the worst” (because either good or bad could be inherent in the) alternative courses of action embarked upon or the choice made” (see pp.19-20 above). Opportunity cost is a very weighty conceptual tool that has helped one in these theoretical cum empirical thrusts of this Inaugural Lecture. Both the Nigerian state and her citizens, through their life trajectories, have had to endure losses that were not their making; that they didn’t bargain for; that they were not desiring and/or did not deserve to encounter had an alternative course of action had been taken. What was and still is the course of action that individually and collectively that the two entities should have deserved? What both the Nigerian state and people earnestly desire and deserve is, interestingly, the same. It is how to construct a state in which democracy flourishes, which system can also conduce to the strengthening of both the state cum the nation and the people inhabiting the territorial space. This ding-dong affair of no statehood of reckoning, of no nationhood, and the want of democracy has gone on for more than half a century since independence was achieved from British colonial exploiters. The pernicious aspect of the cumulative loss of all the paraphernalia that should define the political society of the 21st century is the likelihood that Nigeria shall not make it at all as a nation-state; what a frightening nightmare for all stakeholders and, most unfortunately, for the rest of Africa! With respect to how the absence of democracy is robbing off Nigeria’s “Manifest Destiny” in Africa, Nelson Mandela also postulated and, at the same time, recommended that:

The world will not respect Africa until Nigeria earns that respect. The black people of the world need Nigeria to be great as a source of pride and confidence....²⁰⁴

Mandela however observed the following impediments to the attainment of this status as follows:

[Nigerian] leaders have no respect for their people. They believe that their personal interests are the interests of the

204 Oloja, M., “Let’s keep Nigeria together for Mandela, Part 2,” Quoted in guardian.ng/opinion/lets-keep-nigeria-together-for-mandela-part-2/. Downloaded on Saturday, 26/11/2022 at 1.55 Hours.

people. They take the people's resources and turn it [sic.] into personal wealth. There is a level of poverty in Nigeria that should be unacceptable....I cannot understand why Nigerians are not angrier than they are.²⁰⁵

Finally, the soundness of Mandela's observation informed his recommendation to the Nigerian people that:

...[they] should encourage leaders to emerge who will not confuse public office with sources of making personal wealth. Corrupt people do not make good leaders....²⁰⁶

From these advisories from an African, nay global, Icon, who, despite his incarceration and deprivations for 27 years by racist and apartheid regimes, came out of jail to become the President of South Africa and ensured that democracy, good governance, as totems of the modern society should be carried out, with stringent attack on corruption. Without doubt, the good record of accountable governance that he bequeathed to South Africa, after just serving for one term must have been responsible for some stability in governance and zero tolerance for corruption in his country. There is indeed a correlation between his good example that has been sustained and the prosecution and conviction of Jacob Zuma whose indulgence in corruption led to his removal from office and sent to jail. From this South African reality, it becomes very obvious that there are missing links (if you like, call it opportunity costs) that have made the triad of corruption, dictatorship of all hues, and the lack of democracy in Nigeria's governance system.²⁰⁷

Fifthly, we spent some time analyzing the phenomenon of godfather in the Lecture. One was quite frightened about one of the components of the meaning of godfather. The fright comes naturally because of the way and manner the godfathers of politics act akin to the meaning of

205 *Ibid.*

206 *Ibid.*

207 The situation is unfortunately like this in Nigeria because of the approach to politics by both the anti-democratic civilian forces and the military autocrats both of whom do not mischievously understand anything about the norms of democratic politics – such as accountability, transparency, electoral integrity – and that, ultimately, politics is about service to those who routinely confer the mandate on office holders, less the military maladministrators, who actually steal the people's mandate! The political elites should be informed about the seminal address to the Ghanaian Parliament – an address actually meant for all dictators and anti-democratic forces in Africa – on the critical need to have strong institutions rather than strong men and women who are likely to be no more than straw and trifling entities. For the quotation of the aspect of the Speech of President Baraka Obama to the Ghanaian Parliament on July 11th, 2009, see Professor (Ambassador) Ibrahim A. Gambari, *Nation Building or Nation Fragmentation: Reflections on 20 Years of Post-Military Rule in Nigeria*, Abuja: Uniabuja Press, 2019, p.18.

the concept. In other words, godfathers have been acting like criminals against the political development of democracy. What makes their pattern of behaviour is, one, its noxious impact of political development of democracy; and, two, the fact that it is already made a significant part of the political culture of members of the political class. The proteges of the godfathers are indoctrinated to the idea that Nigerian politics is one in which an incumbent should make fake promises to the electorate; cheating during elections is the stuff by which elections are won and that this could be done regardless of its cost: in the words of Obasanjo: the Election of 2007 “is a do or die affair!!!” Consequently, all manner of indecorousness is introduced into the democratic process – elections are fought like in a war situation and governance emerging out of the victory is a recrudescence of stone-age civilization administrative mechanism, which cannot fit into the digital way of doing things in the 21st Century. The godfather phenomenon must be stamped out so that candidates with ideas and who can operate independently can come up, plan how to advance the country from the position of a Third World to that of the First World status. Lessons from the magical transformation can be taken from the book of President Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore as well as the other “Asian Tigers!!!”

Sixthly and lastly, let us assume, for the sake of emphasis, that the problem of the Nigerian people, generally, and the political class, in particular, is in not wanting to adhere to secular rules, procedures, and sentiments in their political strategies and activities, why wouldn't they, on the other hand, stick to God-given rules of conduct by strictly observing them and fearing Almighty God that decreed them for us? In this Lecture, at least, we made several references to the injunctions in the Holy Qur'an that frown at corruption, embezzlement, injustice and oppression. (Without being as conversant in the Christian rules of behaviour towards other fellow human beings as we are with such Islamic injunctions, but we would still like to assert that, *mutatis mutandis*, similar injunctions are also contained in the Holy Bible.) That being the case, therefore, it is amazing that the Nigerians' etiquettes that generally drive our daily behaviours are insincerity and craftiness. It is indeed quite sad that our precepts are several millions of miles away from socially and globally accepted ways of conduct. The preachments of the clerics – whether of the Christian or the Islamic religious persuasion – that the wages of devilish plans and activities normally come back in double or greater measures to us mortals; these should be taken seriously, with a view to dissociating ourselves therefrom.

However, the practical examples given which somehow demonstrate that this country is becoming very famous for deepening religiosity

manifest glaringly in the very act of putting up of religious structures – churches and mosques – which are unique and incomparable with similar places of worship (in other climes) are, unfortunately, at variance with standard levels of such religiosity. In other words, the Nigerian people outwardly demonstrate that they are religious; but, unbelievably, what they learn and take away from such religious texts and edifices in practice are at variance completely with the contents of the Holy Books. Do they ever bother themselves by reflecting on asking why they do not move one qualitative inch towards progress with respect to the cherished aspirations of country and self? No, such question doesn't scratch beyond the surface of the skin. Further, the other questions one would like to pose at this point is: why do they prefer the rules of lucifer to those of God – Who is the Ultimate in creation? How much depth do they want our sense of morality to fall before they can reclaim their sense of judgment and God's spiritually ordained injunctions? As far as this Lecture is concerned, they should hearken to the Spiritual Laws and couple these with the sense of morality so that the practice of democracy shall also be conducted in the most acceptable manner. It is therefore imperative for the Lecture to stress that the leadership of the country and the other stakeholders, particularly the civil society organizations and other democracy-inclined social forces, should come out to lend support to adopt and implement the Uwais's Committee Report so that they can have and/or put in place a change of mindset – from the bad to the good behaviours and in combination with God's Decrees on Righteousness – to get political practices right! Analogically, it is only bandits who, after numerous successful conducts leading to killings, maiming, stealing, etc., from their victims, remain unsatisfied and are, therefore, still keen to perpetuate their stocks in trade. They remain bandits *qua* bandits. The nature of the Nigerians is akin to that of the bandits; they can leave or set aside the politics of violence, corruption, and the variants of civilian dictatorship. Like the bandits' behaviour of not wanting to leave bad means of livelihood and awaiting when violent death shall come their way, what is in there for their choosing bad politics over good and democratic politics other than material poverty of the people and violent culture of politics. The unfortunate thing about this kind of sordid politics, the gain of the politicians simultaneously translates into abject existence for the bulk of the population.

It requires no soothsayers, given the analysis in this Lecture, to arrive at the conclusion that, for both the politicians and the electorate in particular, to realize the fact that Nigerians still have a long haul to cover before standard democracy, which inheres in peaceful, accountable, transparent, responsible and responsive political

practices, with their accompanying consolidation, can be put in place. It is time to reduce the cost of developing and consolidating democracy in Nigeria by extirpating the triad of corruption, political violence, and the likelihood of the military take over power in the polity. We should not be thinking that because the semblance of democracy has been or is being attempted since 1999 in the polity that the spectre of militarization is gone for good. Time, most unfortunately, is not waiting for the citizens of this country; now is the time to pull the bull by the horn, having listened to this Lecture!!!

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