

**Title Page**

**MILITARY RULE AND POLITICAL TRANSITION IN NIGERIA:  
AN APPRAISAL OF ABACHA REGIME (1993- 1998)**

**BY**

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**PS/2009/ 267**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
CARITAS UNIVERSITY, AMORJI-NIKE, ENUGU  
ENUGU STATE**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) IN  
POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**AUGUST, 2013**

## Approval Page

This project work has been approved as meeting the requirements of the Department of Political Science Caritas University Amorji Nike Enugu State, for the Awards of B. Sc. Degree in Political science.

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The work embodied in the project is Original and has been submitted in part of any other degree of this university.

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## **Dedication**

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty for the gift of wisdom, knowledge; understanding and the inspiration for making this work a success. To my Dad Mr, Malachi Anitube, my Aunty Mrs. Cecelia Ugwu. My late Mum Mrs. Uzoamaka Anitube.

## **Acknowledgment**

I acknowledge in a very special way, the love, grace, protection and blessings of my creator, the Almighty God, who bestowed on me the wisdom, tenacity and vision to get this far. He has continued to see me through in the midst of natural and man-made obstacles.

May Gods shining light and wisdom continue to guide our present and future actions.

I also thank in a special way my amiable supervisor, Mr. Duhu J.O., who thought strict and discipline but aims mostly at my own success, for your tutelage and inspiring academic leadership, also on the process of my supervision gives me a wonderful and fatherly advice, I thank him so earnestly because of so many knowledgeable things he taught me, I am really grateful for the academic impact you inculcated in me in the course of my study and for helping me towards realization of this work.

My thanks goes to my most one understanding and only Head of Department Dr, Omemma Dilichukwu Anslem who has been a solution to all my academic problems during my stay in political science department,

my able lecturers of the department in persons of Hon. Agu, C.F., Dr. Onwo, D.O., Dr. Eze, M.O., Mr. Ugwu, I.C., Mr. Nwankwo, J.C., and indeed, I say to you all, your collective actions and inactions were the major catalyst for my psychological disposition and sense of duty.

Again, I quite appreciate the immeasurable support of my dad Mr. Malachi Anitube, my Guardians Mr and Mrs Collins Ugwu and the family of Chief G.I. Ogbuinyi (Ochudo 1 of Egede), who has loved, cherished and promoted my scholarship and have continued to be bedrock of stability in my life. My siblings, Onyinye Anitube and Uchenna Anitube for their contributions towards my academic success, and my relatives. Indeed your love and encouragement are immeasurable.

I will not forget my friends Chikezie, Ogechukwu, Samuel, Solomon, wisdom, Joseph, Samson, Ebuka, Arum, Obekpa, Alex, Essien, Jonah, Chidinma, Nelly, Innocent, just to mention but a few, thank you all for your love and understanding, for you all stood by me in good and bad times.

I also acknowledge the academic support of my fellow course mates, George, Blessed (papal B), Collins, Mathias, Godson, Daniel, Adaora, Chioma, Chimamaka, Emmanuel, Innocent, Valentine, Faith, Aisha, Anthony, Jennifer and others

May God bless and provide for you all.

**Anitube Christian Okwuchukwu**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study analyzes military rule and the political transition to democracy in Nigeria. It enquires into how military intervenes in the Nigerian politics in the recent time. The study also examines how corruption induces military intervention in Nigerian politics due to the embezzlement of public funds by our political leaders as well as mismanagement of government properties. This study looks at the major challenges in Nigeria's transition to democratic rule so as to establish the gap in the existing literature by examining the roles played by ethno-political organizations in the country and also the activities of some ethnic militias like OPC in the West, Arewa in the North and Youth organizations in the south.







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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In this study, I examined the relationship between ethno political organisations and the transition from military rule to civilian rule (democracy) in Nigeria between 1993 and 1998. I also inquire into both how ethno political organizations affected the process of democratisation and how the process, in turn, influenced their roles in politics generally, and in exacerbating or ameliorating political conflicts.

Ethno political organizations are pan ethnic formations serving or out porting to serve the political interest of their members, their co-ethnics and ethnic homelands. They could be seen as specific movement organisations pursuing more diffuse and generalized ethnic interests. The political role of ethnic organisations has been well documented by observers of Nigerian politics.

In fact, by the 1920s southern Nigeria was awash with such organizations with immediate and remote political aims, taking their

names from respective communities and clans of their members. Recognising their incipient political aspiration, a 1935 colonial report described them as young men's club of semi political nature.

By the middle years of colonialism in Nigeria, these young men's club were speedily turned into pan- ethnic organisations. Ethno- political organisations such as the Igbo aged grades or unions, the Hausa Fulani Jamiuyar Mutanen (Arewa) and Yoruba Egba Omo Oduduwa, were the main ethno political organisations ravaging our country Nigeria, before the attainment of our independence on October, 1960. These pan ethnic organisations were to become important actors in the democratic struggle of Nigerian people against colonial rule, which culminated in independence in 1960. The salutary roles they played in the first were of democratization in Nigeria, including the dynamics of their relations with the colonialist and another has been articulated by some studies.

Nevertheless, the precipitate decline of Nigeria into authoritarian rule a few years after independence, characterised by nearly three decades

of military rule, has also been blamed on the political intervention of these ethnic organisations.

Consequently, when the military seized power and banned all political parties in 1966, at least 26 tribal and cultural associations were also banned.

Still, ethno political organisations remained central in Nigerian politics generally, and in the recent process of ending authoritarian rule in particular. Some of the organisation that emerged in this process include the Egbe Afenifere, literally meaning persons wishing to protect their interest in association with others and Egba Iloiwaju Yoruba (Association of Yoruba progressive) claiming to represent Yoruba interest, the Mkpoko Igbo (union of Igbo's) for the Igbo, the movement for the survival of Ogoni people (MASSOP) for the minority Ogonis and the northern Elders Forum representing or perceived to represent Hausa Fulani interests. Some of them have coalesced into larger inter ethnic and regional ensembles like the southern Mandata Group with purports to represent all ethnic interest in the south of the country.

The primary objective of this study is to explain the roles of ethno political organisations, in the transition to democracy in Nigeria which began in 1986, when the then military government of General Babangida announced its transition programme. That attempts was botched, perhaps temporarily, with the annulment of presidential election on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1993. Three months later, the military led by General Sani Abacha, a prominent member of the Babangida administration, seized power and promised to return the country to a democratic government which he never did until he died in 1998.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Various studies have examined transitions to democracy in Africa, often situating them within the context of the so called third wave of democracy, which refers to the recent experience of eastern European, Latin America and African countries.

Although there are still many dissenting voices calling for more rigorous examination of the concept of democracy the dominant attitude

is that the democracy on offer is settled, namely liberal / multi-party democracy/ this attitude, in most cases, is both reflection and a result of the renaissance and resurgence of Tocquevillean and Schumpeterian notions of democracy as institutional political arrangement and practices of west, and democratization as the spread of those institutions with them.

This process is also seen as ineluctable, contrary to this position, however the originality of Africa's transitions are undeniable. Surely, extra African influences have impacted on Africa's transition, but to be spread by proselytizing others. To be sure, the reversals already being experienced in democratic transitions in some African countries and recline into authoritarian rule in others, suggest to us the need for a re-examination of the democratic content of African transitions. One factor that many will agree is central to such re-examination is ethnicity. The interface between ethnicity and democracy has been prominent theme in extant literatures. Studies have focused on the reciprocal impact of ethnicity and multiparty democracy. While some argue a negative impact of ethnicity on democracy, others argue positive (or potentially positive)



link. What is still lacking however, are in depth studies of the concrete experience of multi ethnic African societies in the light of transitions to democracy. That is the major concern of this study. In doing this, we must realize that the political interventions of ethnic groups in politics are not spontaneous.

Ethnic groups act in politics through their organizations. In fact, we know that ethnic organisations sometimes help to invent identities in the first place. Such organisations as they functioned in Nigeria's effort to transition to democratic rule between 1993 and 1998 constitute the focus of our study.

In a view to accomplishing this research work effectively, I therefore pose the following research questions:

1. Does corruption account for military intervention in Nigerian politics?
2. Does ethno political organizations induce military intervention?

3. What are the challenges in Nigeria's transition to democratic rule in Nigeria?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objectives or purpose of this study is to examine the problems and prospects encountered by military rule in Nigeria with special references to political transition in Nigeria 1993 – 1998.

The specific objectives are:

1. To examine how corruption accounts for military intervention in Nigerian politics.
2. To determine the roles played by ethno-political organizations in military intervention.
3. To find out the major challenges in Nigerian's transition to democratic rule.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The most important significance of this study is that even in the context of the liberal democratic project, what remains largely lacking in existing studies is analysis of the specificity of ethnicity in on-going democratic transitions in Africa. There is need to analyse the impact of ethnicity not only the process of transition, but also its different phases.

This study is therefore significance because it helps research students or scholars, as well as those who wish to specialise in this area of study, to understand and be in position to analyse the major influence or causes of military interventions in Nigerian politics, again the main roles being played by ethno political organisations in Nigeria whether positive or negative, and finally, to understand the prospects and challenges being faced by the military and ethno political organisations in Nigeria's transition to civil rule.

## **1.5 Literature Review**

Literature review of this work is based on different comments and findings of different scholars on their views and prospects about military in politics.

Ruth First, (1970) explained military intervention in relation think tank theories. One of such the ones was that expounded by Finer. The Finer explains intervention primarily in terms of social environment in which the military functions. According to levels of political cultures, which were determined by the strength or weakness attached to civilian institutions.

Janowitz School (1964) on the other hand, draws attention to the properties of military itself to its hierarchical organisation and its distinctive patterns of recruitment and training, control and discipline.

Huntington, (1964:194) sees military intervention as being apolitical in nature. To him, in societies where social institutions and social forces are highly politicized, such as political universities, political bureaucracies, and political clergy and of course political armed forces, military intervention is inevitable.

According to Alex Thomson (2000:131) he sees coup d etat as sudden illegal displacement of government in which members of the security forces play a prominent role. He says coup can be reactionary or revolutionary, bloody or bloodless. They must however be sudden, lasting a matter of hours or days rather than weeks.

For Steve Egbo, (2001:8) he sees military coup as a situation where the military may decide to overthrow the existing government and assume total control of the apparatus of the state and civil government at its highest level which is commonly known as coup d etat, it is often achieved through excessive violence and bloodshed.

In view of Emezi and Ndo, (1987:37) military rule is generally regarded as an aberration. A generally accepted political system in such a system that is governed directed and controlled by civilian political class which has been recruited by popular choice to the decision making structures of the state.

Ndo further argued that military rule is not a viable substitute to a properly and popularly elected government. A. K. Ocran observed that the

competence of the military in the area of political leadership is unconstitutional. He argued that the soldiers should leave politics alone when they try to run a country. This is regardless of the fact that the military when compared with their civilian counterparts have shown to be more worthy of political leadership.

Isawa Elangwu, (1988:120) in his, *Gowon: the Biography of a soldier*\_ statement takes a look at the political biography of Gowon. He observed that while Gowon demonstrated beyond doubt that he was an effective binder, his energies were soon too taxed by a number of dilemma in Nigerian political system/. This dilemma he argues was later responsible for his dismissal in 1975. They include the inability to implement satisfactorily his nine point political programme. Announced in 1970, Black and African Festival of Arts and culture (FESTAC), Udoji salary awards and inflationary frails, labour strikes and a change for Gowon of his lieutenants who had been in office since 1967.

There was also industrial unrest, abandoned property issue, “Dodam Barracks Politics,” corruption of in high places especially among

the lieutenants. The corruption of this lieutenants attracted public outcry that they should be removed. Yet Gowon remained adamant. He would see no need to primitive measures to check the excesses of his lieutenants.

As regards being more of political leadership as observed by Ocran, one wonders on how an ill-trained person would effectively lead without being eluded. It was against this backdrop that Oyediran stressed that it was only in the areas which are related to the normal functioning of the military as an institution that success has been much achieved. However, Ocran advocated that before political power can be handed over to the military and democratically elected civilian government there should be a transition to civil rule programme which would be lengthy so as to make room for the drafting of a new constitution, established of political institutions and the election of civilians into representative's political positions. He further asserts that there should be a reorientation of the masses Vis –a- Vis their social political psychological and economic consciousness. For Ocran, a complete demilitarization of the political system entails such a comprehensive programme of military transition to

civil rule. He however, cautioned that any lastly transfer of political power would simply encourage the re-emergence of the military.

As laudable as this preposition might seem, it had so far served to perpetuate military rule due to the extensive process of military disengagement which such political programmes requires. To this extent, many military transitions to civil rule programmes tend to prolong military rule, on this issue of political education through state agencies, there tend to be a contradiction because of power can truly educate the masses on the principles of democracy.

A number of writers have their conceptions bout the reason why corruption is prevalent in the military and other developing countries. Verda Eker, (1981:25- 70) in his article published in the journal of modern African studies sees corruption as a wide spread phenomenon in the developing worlds. The term he argued is usually reserved for the practice of using power of office for making private gain in branch of the laws and regulations normally in force or as more simply defined by M. C. Milan, a public official is corrupt if he accepts money for doing



something that he is under duty to do any way, that he is under duty to do or exercise a legitimate discretion, for improper reasons. He says that corruption flourish in Nigerian military because the necessary and sufficient conditions for its existence are prevalent in Nigeria. Among the necessary conditions are the existences of surplus national wealth, the concentration of political and economic decisions making power in official Dom and the high growth rate of national wealth? The necessary conditions are what he referred to as normal code and authority structure.

In order words, Verda is talking about the concentration of political and economic power and accelerated pace of economic development as fertile grounds for corruption. We shall however disagree with Verda because his assertions are highly deficient as an explanation tool for explaining corruption in Nigerian military. In the first place, his assertion that corruption is peculiar to developing countries such as Nigeria is false. Corruption also obtains in the advances western countries. The different is only in terms of degree and scope. And also, the accelerated pace of economic development are not fertile grounds for corruption. Rather it is

the objective basis in the process and the character for which it creates that is responsible for corruption.

Also David H. Barbley (1966:732) in an article contained in western political Quarterly asserted that corruption in developing countries is not necessary antipathetic to the development of modern economic and social system. He argues that corruption has beneficial effects on developing countries, taking into consideration the economic and social cultural values of the area in question. Among the check list of his beneficial effect of corruption are increased in allocation of resources away from consumption into investment, increase in the quality of life of public servant, that corruption and nepotism could be emulated and adopted as norms.

In fact, there is a fundamental flaw and impairment in Barley's argument. His assertion that corruption is beneficial to developing countries and not to developed countries is deficient and fraught with fundamental bias. His works is an attempt to justify corruption in

developing countries which has its origin in the colonial and post-colonial socio economic formations.

Another writer Collins Lacy (1965:1230-230) in his article in the journal of modern African studies sees the state as an arena with a great deal of behaviour are not geared towards the support of a single concept of national interest. He asserts that there are three reasons for this attitude. He says that idea of a national interest is weak because the idea of a nation is new and that the leaders are not aware of the official purpose requires of them. Another reason he argued was the new state because people are generally not aware of what the official roles requires.

Collins analysis is deficient because in the first instance, leaders, in developing countries are not unaware of the official role, required of them. It is also true that people are not aware of what is required of the officials. Many people in developing countries are aware of what the official should do while in office even though these officials and engaged in corrupt practices.

Another writer, Chinua Achebe, (1983:37) in his book: *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Sees corruption in Nigeria as an issue which has an objective basis on the Nigeria leaders. He asserts that corruption is rampant among Nigeria leaders. He goes further to argue that Nigeria is not different from any other country in the world, and that they are corrupt because the system in which they lived is corrupt and that once the system is changed, corruption can be ameliorated. He identified seven deadly ills or maladies of Nigerian political leaders and society which includes the following: tribalism, self-conceit and flamboyance, lack of intellectual rigour, lack of patriotism, indiscipline and corruption.

Achebe's work is deficient because it fails to situate corruption and other ills of society within the capitalist economic system as well as the colonial and neo-colonial character of the Nigerian society. Also, it fails to put corruption within a conceptual framework.

Ankie M. M. Hoogreelt, (1992: 127-137) in his book: *The Sociology of the Developed societies* sees corruption as the evil companion vehicle for negotiation between badly integrated structures of social order.

According to him, corrupt practices in contemporary developing societies are much more pervasive, much more of an everybody pattern of life, and that they disrupt economic life to a far greater than is the case in the advanced countries. Ankie failed to realize that corrupt practices are also pervasive in the advanced countries. Notable examples are the United State Watergate scandal and the British Poulson affair.

Omotunde asserts that corruption exists if there is a diversion of government revenue or national income flow in order to argue the current government members' private wealth, when the latter are not legally entitled to do so, we may have to note that the abuse of state power extends beyond the enrichment of the government officials themselves. It sometimes involves giving undue favours to other people with whom government officials have relationships.

Claude Ake, (1981:2) in his book *Political Economy of Africa*: sees corruption as an issue that has an obligation basis in the production process. He sees corruption as a phenomenon which is created and is dependent on a particular socio-economic condition. He argued that

corruption exist in capitalist and class societies which the capitalist state generates.

Okwudiba Nnoli, (1983:9) in his book, *Introduction to politics*: sees corruption as also having objectives in the production process. He argued that crop of leaders has been producing tends to be corrupt because they play what he called mental and psychological discipline which come to an individual as he uses labour in the production of value. He went further to argue that colonialism created this class of leaders who are a position of dominance in the post- colonial capitalist state like Nigeria. That this class leaders not only become corrupt demonstration but also collude with the international bourgeoisie class in perpetuating corruption in Nigeria.

Jemibewon (1978) in his book, *A combatant in government* observed that under Gowon's regime corruption had reached such a pitch that top public functionaries wallowing in it did not bother to take trouble to concerned he acts of corruption from public gaze. Onigu Otite (1982: 10) has also made some important attempt in explaining the effect of

corruption on the basis of the cost benefits approach. In his constitution, he states that those who accept the positive side of corruption argue that:

- A. widespread corruption would provoke resentment and promote the cause of a revolution beneficial to society in the long run.
- B. corruption can challenge to excel others in competitive bidding and payment of high product efficiency in commodity production.
- C. corruption provides a chance for groups other than political parties to articulate their political process.

The various point often referred to as the benefits of corruption are merely various ways by which those who control state power accumulate wealth for them. On the other hands, scandals associated with corruption could be beneficial to society in the sense of promoting political awareness. However, this has not been the case in Nigeria. The regular experience is that any government – civilian and military alike- that is involved in corruption faces the threat of military coup.

The incidence of corruption which the military had often justified for coming into government is what we have set out to re-examine.

## **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

Theory is an explanatory thought, used in describing different political phenomenon. There are many theories that could explain political events, therefore the suitable theory for this work, military rule and political transition in Nigeria is the Power theory. This approach was derived from the ideas of some traditional thinkers such as: Machiavelli (1469 – 1527) Hobbes (1588-1679), and Nietzsche (1844 -1900) as well as modern writers like Max Webber, Catlin, Merriam, Lasswell, Kaplan, Watkins, Treitschke and Morgenthau. The emphasis of this approach is on the development of formidable military power and the making of wars as according to them the essence of the state power. According to Allen Ball (Modern Politics and Government, 1988), the concept of political power is a key concept in the study of politics. Because if politics is the resolution of conflict, the distribution of power within a political



community determines how the conflict is to be resolved and whether the resolution is to be effectively observed by all parties.

## **1.7 Hypotheses**

The research formulates the following hypotheses based on the statement of the problems of thus:

1. Corruption accounts for military intervention in Nigerian politics such as the embezzlement of public funds.
2. Ethno-political organizations played some roles in military intervention of Nigerian politics through the activities of some political and religious groups in the country.
3. There are challenges in Nigeria's transition to civil rule in terms of the malpractices during elections and the failure of leadership quality by our leaders

## **1.8 Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis**

The method of data collection adopted in carrying out this research work is the secondary data collection.

The secondary data collection refers to already collected data, stored or published. Source of secondary data include Books, Journals, Newspapers, Magazines, Gazettes in related areas.

According to Akindele (1989)

Finding the relevant facts on research  
Projects in variably entails and involves  
Acquiring the capacity to use the library  
Proficiently and effectively.

I therefore consulted the library. The library constitutes the literature review of other scholars.

## **1.9 Limitation of the Study**

Financial constraint of relevant and previous works in the aspect as they were few textbooks on management in the school library as well as journals. Again, the nature of the topic new event involved in the cause of completing this research work.

## **1.10 Definition of Terms**

**Democracy** - A system of government, in which all the people of a country can vote, to elect their representatives.

**Ethnicity** - The fact of belonging to a particular race.

**Transition** - The process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another.

**Independence** –The freedom from political control by other countries, the time when a country become politically independence.

**Apolitical** - Not interested in politics, not thinking politics are important.

**MASSOP** - Movement for the survival of Ogoni People.

**Politics** – According to Max-Weber, it is a means of striving to share power or suiting to influence the distribution of power either among state or among a group within the state.

**Roles** - It is the position that some one has in a situation/organization or society to perform.

**Corruption:** Dishonest or Illegal behaviour, especially of people in authority. `

## **Chapter Two: Military Intervention in Nigerian Politics**

### **2.1 The Major Causes of Military Intervention in Nigeria Politics**

Military intervention in the political realm is viewed as a function of chronic systematic disequilibrium and of the professional characteristics of armies, the precise dimension of which actually differ from country to country.

The disequilibrium may be primarily economic in nature. The army may feel compelled to intervene in order to implement unpopular austerity policies that political elites has been unable or unwilling to undertake or to correct politically or ideologically inspired fiscal imbalances that have led the economy to the brink of collapse. Instability may be the highly disruptive consequence of overly ambitious social mobilization drives that unleash demands and unrest as population is torn from traditional moorings. Politicization of ethnic cleavages and

intra- elite strife in governmental structure may result in political and administrative paralysis, corruption, nepotism, governmental inefficiency

and tribal favouritism may also tip the legitimacy pendulum from discredited civilian elites to allegedly apolitical, untrained military hierarchies that may be trusted to provide competent national leadership, Decalo (1976:7).

These military coups are caused by among other factors include one of the causes of army take-over of government in Nigeria was the regionalization of political parties. The political parties that existed in Nigeria especially during the first republic were regionally based. None of them had a broad national outlook and as a result they leaned on their various ethnic groups in order to get support. This fanning of embers of ethnic consciousness proved injurious to the nation, hence taking over of government by the army in order to save the nation from imminent cataclysm.

The desire to control the federal government especially ethnic politics by nature; generate conflict of varying magnitude with

consequences of different complexities. The desire to control the centre engendered ethnic political competition because the politicians viewed the control of federal government by any political party as rooted.

This will afford them the opportunity to share and get more of the national cake. This acrimonious ethnic political competition attracted the army who acted as unbiased umpire. Tribalising and politicizing of Nigerian army in the first republic was tribalised and politicized. The army was used by the politicians to achieve what they failed to achieve through ballot boxes. Corruption and nepotism that pervaded the first and second republics played major role in the military intervention in politics in Nigeria. These corruptions and nepotism took the form of looting of public treasury, parading of ill-gotten wealth before the hungry and toiling masses, the appointment and promotion of civil servants and distribution of amenities based on ethnic actors, etc.

The above evils prepared the stage and acted as open invitation for military intervention in Nigeria body-polity. Inflation of population in May 1962 and November 1963 census in Nigeria nearly disintegrated the

country as a result of the inflation of population of different areas by the politicians. They did this because; the population was used in the constituency delimitation and allocation of revenues to different regions. The competing civilian ruling classes under the cloak of ethnicity perceive consolidation of power as deriving from large population of their ethnic group, hence, the intervention of politics by the army.

Creation of mid-western region was another ignitor that lit the fire that consumed the first republic via military coup. The creation of region out of western region while other regions remained intact had political motives. It was solely to split the votes of the political party controlling the region. This caused a lot of disagreements within the rank and file of the politician because the Action Group that was controlling the region was contending the fact of dividing only its region. It argued that all minority areas of the federation should be created as regions at the same time. The crisis of 1962 within the Action Group that was controlling the western region was another catalyst that sped up military intervention of 1966. The disagreement within the high echelon of the party led to the

removal of the premier of the region, Chief S.I. Akintola by the governor Sir Aderemi, who appointed Chief Adegbenro as the premier. The premier retaliated by dismissing the governor from office. This personality clash between the leaders of Action Group, caused a lot of disturbances in the western house of assembly, this forced the federal government to declare a state of emergency in the region as the administrator. This crisis was deepened by the quake rein-statement of Chief Akintola with the help of the federal government. The crisis generated by the 1964 federal election was another factor that caused military intervention of 1966 and the collapse of the first republic. The election was meant to elect members of the House of Representatives in Lagos. Before the election, all the political alliances, the Nigeria national alliance (NNA) made up of the NPGNNDP, the mid- west Democratic Front and other minor parties and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) comprising of NCNC, AG and other minority parties from the North.



The political atmosphere in the country became tense after the December election as a result of large scale rigging during the election involving physical prevention of opponent from filling election papers arbitrary arrest, stuffing of ballot boxes with papers, etc. the conflict that arose as a result of the election invited the military to take over the government.

Western regional election of 1965 acted as the last straw that broke the back of the first republic. The election was a straight fight between the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), led by Akintola and the UPGA. The UPGA accused NNDP of rigging the election and its supporters reacted violently by setting human beings, houses and other properties ablaze with petrol. This gave rise to disturbances with looting, arson, murder and other forms of violence as its end product. There was a fatal breakdown of law and order all over the federation and since the different governments were unable to restore order in the country, the army boys intervened on January 15, 1966 coup. Expectedly, the civil war that followed had serious negative consequences for the professional

fabric of the military. In the first place, the civil war led to unplanned rapid expansion of the Armed forces to meet the demands of the escalating conflict. Training period was curtailed and many units were officered by senior non-commissioned officers who were field commissioners and responsibilities sometimes higher than their level of training.

While the performance of these officers was to be applauded in the performances, there was no doubt that command and control suffered seriously with grave consequence for professionalism. The long period of military that followed the civil war did not help matters. During this period, the focus of the military was shifted from purely military chores to political manoeuvring as officers posited for all kinds of political positions instead of purely military posing, as a consequence, the ethos and ethic of the professional were often abused, there was deep disrupt and spirit de corps, the very foundation on which the officer corps rested, was virtually destroyed. To compound the situation, successive military government, refused or failed to make needed investment in the Armed

Forces as regime security took precedence over state security equipment deteriorated and training suffered. The situation was so bad that General Salihu Ibrahim, a onetime chief of Army staff, had to lament in his valedictory speech in 1993 that we were an Army of anything goes.

Speaking on that occasion, the General articulated the ills of the system thus: I hold the strong views that any military organisation that intends to remain professional and relevant to its calling has no business meddling in the political affairs of the country.

It is an open secret that some officers openly preferred political appointments to regimental appointments, no matter the relevance of such appointment to their careers this political; interest group, even though small in number, constituted from into a very powerful pressure group, the end result was the visible decline in professionalism, moral and discipline in the Nigerian Army. We became an army where subordinate officers would not only be contemptuous of their superiors, but would exhibit total disregards to legitimate instructions by such superiors. That was the situation when the new civilian dispensation took over the region

of power on May 29, 1999... Clearly, this development was bound to affect the capacity of the military to perform credibly as a fighting force. Above all, it pretended grave danger for the nascent democracy if nothing was done. To reverse the inflation, the government under Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, inflated a programme of re- professionalization of the Armed Forces.

### **Democratization Process Under the General Sani Abacha's Regime (1993- 1998)**

After the exit of the interim government, General Sani Abacha took over the government of the Republic of Nigeria. On the assumption of office, he disbanded all the existing political parties and political structures throughout the country down to the local government level. He set up another transition programme which would hand over power to the civilians on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1998. With the lifting of ban on political activities and setting up another electoral body known as the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON) under the chairmanship of Chief Dagogo Jack, political parties of associations were formed. Following the

guideline of NECON for the registration of political parties, the following five political parties were registered.

1. Committee of National Consensus (CNC)
2. National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN)
3. United Nigerian Congress Party (UNCP)
4. Grassroots Democratic Party (GDP)
5. Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN)

Election was conducted into the local government councils on December 1997 by these registered political parties. The united Nigerian congress party (UNCP) won more local government councils than the others. Before the conduct of the state and federal elections, the Head of state, General Sani Abacha dies. His sudden death on June 8, 1998 shifted leadership of the federal republic of Nigeria to General Abdulsalami Abubakar on June 9, 1998.

## **2.2. The Establishment of the Nigerian Military**

The visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Nigeria in 1956 led the remaining of the northern and southern regiments to the Queens own Nigerian regiment (QONR). When later in that year, Britain granted Niger autonomy to her dependencies, the Queens Own Nigeria Regiment (QONR) was re designated the Nigerian military (MMF0, and independence in constitution with the management of violence either in defence of a country against external aggression for the sustenance of internal cohesion and stability or for the attainment of any other national objectives as may be determined by the appropriate authority. The utility of this wide definition will become apparent when we consider the roles of the military in the state.

### **Political Development**

One peculiar feature of the development of political parties in Nigeria is that then pre-existing tribal cultural; association group, trade unions etc., metamorphosed into political parties. Till date tribal, traditional or cultural associations or clubs, old boys associations or alumni associations, trade unions, religious bodies, etc., have acted as spring board for the formation of political parties in Nigeria that had since the colonial era adopted multi-party system has followed the past nature of Nigeria federation. Those political parties, whose formation predated political independence of Nigeria, were primarily formed so that they can control their affairs by achieving self-government.

### **2.3 The Military and Political Transition**

Military power adds to a country's ability to prevent national and international threats to a country. The military phenomena and Nigerian in particular did not live to this chid into the fabrics of the state, this was made possible because the military was the then seen as an instrument of attaining statehood and also as a result of their emergence as an elite

group in society. From the conservative prospective, the military is seen as a conservative force and a support base for the status-quo. Advocates of this view hinge their analysis on the professional character of the military whose values and attitude are tied to those of the ruling class.

Both are suspicious and hostile towards rapid changes as exemplified by revolutions the world over, and instead of professional conduct, the military wage suppression and reactionary actions. There is also this perceptive that varied the military as a modernized institution capable of changing societies for good in the U.S. it was the Kennedy administration that gave add impetus to the assistance of third world military elites for the modernization and stabilizing roles they performed. This led to check any upsurge ion communist led guerrilla movement. The response of the U.S.A to the Congo crisis and that of Cuba are cases in point. A military regime is the type of government ruled by decree and is not elected. Democratization is then process of moving from military rule to civilian rule. This research work therefore centres on the military



and political transitions in Nigeria (1993-1999). The military institution is today generally recognized as one of the marks of modern statehood.

Traditionally, the role of the military in any society are essentially three fold, namely aggression, to maintain the territorial integrity of the state and to assist the police in maintaining and restoring social order and security in the event of a serious civil disturbance. A close look at these provisions shows clearly that, unlike in the past when the main purpose of the military in society was eventually the employment of force to produce successful outcome in war time functions in addition. With the growing changes in environment in which state operates, the role of the military has been expanded to accommodate the noble duties of managing varied and complex challenges. Such challenges include peacekeeping operation, humanitarian operations arising from conflicts and natural and manmade disasters like flood, challenges. Such challenges include peacekeeping operation, humanitarian operations arising from conflicts and natural and manmade disasters like flood, earthquake, landslide, air crashes among others.

Also, the military is frequently called upon to assist in the maintenance of internal security, law and order. As a result, the role of the military has now become more central to social good and wellbeing than it ever was. Therefore, the idea and role of the military in modern society has moved from a restricted understanding as a war-fighting organisation to the broader notion of employment of joint component of war, internal stabilisation and peace building. For these reasons, the military as an institution of state is a rich repository of all kinds of professions- engineering, doctors, lawyers, architects, journalists, dieticians- just name it.

In spite of its varied compositions, the military institution is characterized by tradition, procedures and the possession of core technical competences by its personnel imbued with discipline character to win the nations wars, should deterrence fail. These attributes distinguish the military, as a profession whose hallmark is the management of violence to achieve national objectives, from all other professions.

How have we fared in the performance of these roles and what are our current challenges? From when it was an instrument of colonial dominance to its contemporary history, the Nigerian military has always acquitted itself with flying colours whenever duty calls. It fought alongside the British Army in very important campaigns in Burma, the Cameroon's and North Africa during the world War II from 1939-1945.

Immediately after independence, the then Royal Nigerian Army was sent to the Belgium Congo to restore peace to the young nation. Again the army acquitted itself very professionally with Nigeria's General JTU Agui- Ironsi eventually is rising to head of the UN multi-national force. Also, the Nigerian armed force fought the Nigerian civil war from 1967 – 1970 and acquitted itself creditably in spite of its apparent unpreparedness for the war. David M. Jemibewon (1978). The immediate past war years were no less glorious. In the late 1970s to the early 1990s, the Nigerian military through the agency of the NAF was at the forefront of the liberation struggle in southern Africa during the colonial and apartheid era. The Air force flew several missions ferrying arms and other

logistic requirement to freedom fighters in southern Rhodesia, Rhodesia ( now Zimbabwe), south west Africa ( now Republic of Namibia), Angola, Mozambique and south Africa. This reach of air power truly helped Nigeria in establishing herself as a leading frontal state during liberation wars in southern Africa.

When the crisis in the West African sub-region erupted first in Liberia and later in Sierra Leone, the Nigerian military was ones more called to action. Acting through the instrumentality of the Economic community of West African states monitoring Group (ECOMOG) composed mainly of Nigerian military personnel, peace was restored to both countries in an unprecedented peace enforcement operation. The Nigerian military has also participated credibly in several United Nations peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, Somalia and Sudan to mention a few of the more significant ones. In between these operations the armed forces have been called upon several times to undertake important internal security chores, from reverting some insurgents in the North-East zone, and containing religious and civil disturbances in several states of the

country to containing militants in the Niger delta. Eight military regimes seceded, beginning in 1966, interspersed between the fourth and fifth military regime by a return to civilian rule with the second republic between October 1979 and December, 1983. The final military regime left power on May 29, 1999, when the current fourth republic was installed and the president democratically elected president.

It was under the second military regime (July, 1966 to July, 1975) that some of Nigeria's major development programmes were established, such as the extensive expansion and exploitation of Nigeria's mineral resources culminating in the Oil boom, which in no small measure changed the economy, the taste and living standards of many Nigerians. It was also unfortunately a time of war. On August 9, 1967, Nigeria declared full-scale war on "Biafra" after its force had invaded and captured the Mid-West states. With Biafra's collapse in 1970, the region reunited with the federal republic of Nigeria and a period of reconciliation and reconstruction followed.

## **Chapter Three: Ethno – Political Organizations Formed in Different Parts of the Country**

### **3.1 Roles Played by Ethno-Political Organizations Formed in Different Parts of the Country**

The most important gap in existing knowledge about the link between ethnicity and democracy, as well as the importance of ethno-political organisations in Nigeria's recent transition is the under-articulation of the character of the Nigerian state.

The salience of ethno-political organisation in the recent transition from authoritarian rule to democracy in Nigeria has to be located two levels: one remote, fundamental and primary, and the other immediate, exterior and secondary.

The fundamental explanation has to be sought in the character of the peripheral capitalist state, which is how we characterized the Nigerian

state. First, this state has to be understood in terms of the genealogy of capital accumulation worldwide. This state emerged at the stage of existence (rather than intensive) growth of capital. This is the stage of internationalization of capital. At this stage, there is really no need for the complete dissolution of pre-capitalist social forces, symbols and institutions as in the stage of intensive growth of capital.

Consequently, there was a great deal of preservation effect on those social; forces, symbols and institutions in a new symbiosis with capitalism especially where they made it possible for capital accumulation to proceed without hindrance. As a result, the emergence and homogeneity of the market-oriented, formally free and autonomous individual as the subject of economic and political organisation was either blocked or only partially actualised. The next effect of this is that the vast majority of Nigerians, whether in the urban or rural areas, still exist as agents of pre-capitalist social forces, principally, but not exclusively, ethnic groups.

Secondly, resulting from the history of its constitution as a specific moment of global capital, we see that this type of state is not an objective

force standing above society and holding its antagonism in a balance, like the state that emerged from the establishment of capitalism in Europe. Rather it is a state constituted principally for conquering and holding down the people of Nigeria. As such, abinitio there was no question of evolving and routinizing principles for the non-arbitrary use of that state by those that control it. And when in the post-colonial era it passed into the hands of a pseudo-bourgeoisie (petty and comprador bourgeois), reverently decision to become economically dominant, this state become for its controller a powerful instrument for acquiring private wealth, a monstrous instrument in the hands of individuals and their co-ethnics.

Two things emerged logically from the above points. One the state in Nigeria principally deals with its members as social agents of ethnic groups (not as free, individual and equal citizens), and the power of that state exist as prebends parcelled out to the ethnic group instead of a unified, objective and independent entity standing above society and expressing the corporate existence of the people nation. Two, being the exclusive tool of those in power (who are agents of ethnic groups),



defending their prebends become a very fundamental and changed issue, politics become an overriding and war-like exercise waged among ethnic groups. Ethno-political organisation is the phalanx in this war.

There is a second, but less fundamental explanation for the importance of ethno-political organisations in the recent transition from authoritarian rule to democracy in Nigeria. Authoritarian rule is marked by many years of ban on political parties and muzzling of independent organisations and power certain society.

This state of affairs leaves ethno-political organisations as the most potentially effective organisations that could emerge quickly and with minimal prompting as political liberalization is embarked on by an authoritarian regime. This is so for two reasons. For one thing, their recruitment bases exist, fixed and exclusive to them. For another thing, the catalyst for them to emerge is readily present namely, elites preying on the fears and anxieties of ordinary people to mobilize them for political ends of raising the spectre of ethnic domination.

The role of ethno-political organisation varies with different phases of the transition process. Nnoli identifies four phases in the contemporary wave of transition to democracy in Africa, and analyses the character, dynamics and significance of ethnic conflicts during each of the phases. The phases are:

1. The phase of pressure on authoritarian regime by pro-democracy forces.
2. Phase of formulating a programme of transition to democracy
3. Phase of implementation of the programme and
4. Phase of institutionalization of democracy, including the first post-transition election.

According to him, at each of these phases the character of ethnic conflict differs. And so also, we think, the role of ethno-political organisations, which are major purveyors of ethnic interest, even in the same phase their role could differ depending on the course of event. For instance, Nnoli notes that at the phase of formulating programme, their

importance depends on whether the option of constitutional conference or that of sovereign national conferences is adopted.

We propose that in line with the character of the post-colonial state and the role of ethnicity in its politics, ethno-political organisations will be most active at phase involving power sharing. At such phases, the attention of ethno-political organisation turns from the authoritarian regime (its overthrow or maintenance) to one involving the sharing of economic and particularly, political power among ethnic groups, ethno-political organisations are bound to become very active, raising the tempo of both conflict and cooperation among them. These are most likely to be the phases of formulation and implementation of a transition programme. If those phases detail into period of national economic difficulties, the activities of ethno-political organisations will be more marked because of scarcity and consequent competition.

Two factors govern the interaction among ethno-political organisations in the process of transition to democracy. First at the phase of pressure, i.e. Phase 1, the critical factor is the ethnic character of the

authoritarian regime, that is the ethnic group or groups from which the regime draws support. The battle line is most likely to be drawn between ethno-political organisations of the regime and those of the opposition.

Secondly, at the phase of formulation and implementation of the transition programme, an added factor interferes to determine the character of alliances and counter-alliances. That is, the history of inter-ethnic relations in the country. That is to say, an ethno-political movement is likely to take into consideration past political interactions between its ethnic groups and other ethnic groups as a basis for cooperation. However, this factor is less important than the need to capture or retain power. In other words, it is a movement's assessment of its chances in the power play, rather than fixed notions of its relationship with other ethnic groups and their organisations, that is crucial. Finally in pursuing its objectives, the activities of ethno-political organisations and the targets of activities will vary with different phases of the transition to democracy.

At the pressure phase, their activities will be essentially that of sensitization and awareness cultivation, aimed at either pressuring the authoritarian regime to democratize or to sustain the regime. At the phase of formulating the transition programme, activities of ethno-political organisations continue to emphasise sensitization of the public to the need to protect the interest of the ethnic homeland. At the phase of implementing the programme, particularly during elections, their activities tend to emphasise mobilization. The message is usually the need to vote massively for the chosen party and candidate that will protect the interest of members of the ethnic group and the ethnic homeland.

Concomitantly, the target of their activities, that is the social groups or political structures that form the focus of the pressure applied by ethno-political organisations, also vary with different phases of transition. Generally, their target will include the following.

- a. The government/ regime
- b. Other ethno-political organisations
- c. Pro-democracy organisations

- d. Members of the constitutional conference
- e. Co-ethnics in the ethnic homelands
- f. Co-ethnics outside the ethnic homeland
- g. Members of adjacent ethnic homeland
- h. Members of non-adjacent ethnic homeland
- i. Political parties and candidates for election.

At the various phases of the transition process, the targets of their activities in order of importance are likely to be as follows:

Phase 1: the government/ regime Pro-democracy organisation, other ethno-political organisations and co-ethnics outside and inside then ethnic homeland.

Phase 11: members of the constitutional conference, other ethno-political organisations: pro-democracy organisations and co-ethnics outside and inside the ethnic homeland.

Phase111: political parties and candidates, co-ethnics inside and outside ethnic homeland, other ethno-political organisations, members of adjacent ethnic homelands and members of non-adjacent ethnic homelands.

### **3.2 Ethno-Political Organizations in Nigeria: An Ethno-Regional Profile**

The basis of communalism in Nigeria is often unstable and mercurial. This defining factor may be clan, ethnic groups, state, region or religion. However, ethnic identity remains the most political it important factor in communalism. The Nigeria's approximately 250 distinct groups articulate their interest and attempt to fill them politically. Still, often, ethnic identity exists in complex relationship with other factors in defining communalism in Nigeria. Sometimes communalism is defined along the line of ethno-regional identity as kin the case of north, south, and middle belt. At other times it is defined in terms of ethno-regions groupings as in the Moslem north and Christians south. Other defining factors include minority versus majority ethnic groups, and numerous sub-ethnic identities like the Ika Igbo, Egba Yoruba, etc. ethno-;political

organisations in the recent transition to democracy reflects this multi-faceted character of communalism.

The most important factor defining them is clearly ethnic identity. But in some cases, sub-ethnic group and regional factors come into play. For example, there is the Ika National summit and the Ondo central Forum representing sub-ethnic interests, of the Ika Igbo and Ondo Yoruba respectively.

At another level unlike the southern parts of the country, most ethno-political organisations in the north tends to represent the interest of the entire region, rather than the interest of specific ethnic groups, even if the Hausa-Fulani are principal actors in these organisations. Indeed, Sklar has rightly noted that “among the major Nigerian ethnic group, only the Hausa do not as a rule form tribal Unions, which may reflect the primacy of Islam as an integrative factor in Hausa society. In fact, Islam constitutes a powerful integrative factor not only in Hausa society but also in the north as a whole. The dual character of the communalism in the north, which involves both ethnic and religious identities, has had the



effect on how both the north and other parts of the country define the region as an ethno-political grouping.

Sometimes, the north is defined as the Hausa-Fulani, at other times it is all the ethnic groups living in the same areas above the middle-belt and still at other times the North is used in reference to the Old Northern Region, which includes the Middle-belt. Another important but more recent factor in defining communalism in Nigeria is state of origin. States are political administration units that replaced the erstwhile regions from 1967. In that year, 12 states were created out of the four regions. Since then, the number has risen to 36 with the creation of six states in 1996.

State identities interlock with ethnic identities and the political arena. As a result, state of origin could, and does become an important factor in understanding the activities of ethno-political organisations. For instance, during the Babangida transition, among the four Igbo States of Abia, Anambra, Enugu and Imo, only Anambra state consistently voted

for the social Democratic Party. The other three states supported the National Republic Convention.

### **3.3 Ethno-Political Organizations and Phases of Transition**

The role of pan-ethnic organisations in the transition is in contextualised by different phases of transition process. Even in the same phase, the role could differ depending on the course of events. Certainly, the phase of political liberalization by the military is conducive to the emergence of ethno-political organisations. The many gears of ban on political parties and muzzling of organised opposition by the military encouraged the prompt emergence of pan-ethnic organisation during the transition.

During the General Babangida transition, as soon as the ban on political activities was lifted on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1989, about forty political associations emerged. Most of them were linked to existing ethnic organisations. Out of this number, however, only 13 sought registration

with the National Electoral Commission (INEC) as political parties later that year.

The breakneck speed at which these associations emerged had convinced many observers of the activities of ethnic organisations prior to May 1989. Indeed, in refusing recognition to all the 13 associations that applied for registration as political parties, Babangida, the then military Head of state, accused them of operating “underground” prior to the lifting of the ban on political, and of “relapse” into ethnic cleavages. According to him, some of the most disturbing aspect of the political process during the pre-registration period was indeed sonorous echoes of our historical experience. Old lines of cleavages-ethnic, geopolitical, religious and class-surface in bold relief in the new political association.

These “new breed” association, which were expected to transcend those lines of cleavage and promote issue-based politics instead replaced into deliberating in-fighting, each group within itself. However, it should be pointed out right away that even though the ethnic factor remained

strong in the emerging parties during the Babangida transition, many discerning observers believe that he only used it as an excuse to pursue his “hidden transition programme,” which was his self-succession in office.

Nnoli has noted that at the phase of formulating the transition programme their importance depends on whether the option of constitutional conference or that of sovereign national conference is adopted. Indeed, the Nigerian experience strongly suggests that constitutional conference approach to transition in Africa, more than the sovereign national conference, is very conducive to the activities of pan-ethnic organisations and ethnic conflicts. The National Constitutional Conference (NCC) set up by the Abacha government in 1994 quickly adopted an ethnic character as the leaders of various ethnic groups and other constituted ethno-geographic groupings (southern minorities, south eastern minorities, south, middle belt, far north, etc.) formulated their platform for the conferences. The bulk of the Yoruba elite represented by the Egbe-Afenifere and Egbe-Iloiwaju Yoruba, called for a boycott of

the NCC on account of the annulment of the June 12 presidential election won by Chief Abiola. In April 1994, the conference of Yoruba Obas (Yoruba traditional rulers) and leaders of thought met in Ibadan under the chairmanship of Oba S.K Adetona, Awujale of Ijebu Land (ruler of Ijebu Yoruba's). The conference was attended by twenty-four other Obas and representatives of Ire-Akari and other ethnic organisations in Yoruba land.

The communiqué from the meeting insisted that “the June 12 1993 election should be declared, and the winner of the election sworn in, it is only after that has been done that the Yoruba race will participate in any conference, the Yoruba race should present a single memorandum to such constitutional conference.

The Ibadan conference also set up a committee of 18 persons, with Professor Adebayo Adedeji, the former Head of the Economic Commission for Africa, as chairman, to harmonize the positions of the various Yoruba groups. At about the same time, Igbo's were also articulating their positions on the constitutional conference through two

umbrella organisation. Mkpoko Igbo, (the Igbo assembly) and Oha-na-eze, (people's Assembly). Although there were calls for Igbo's to boycott the constitutional conference in deference to June 12, most of the political big-wigs opted for participation and submitted an "Igbo memorandum" to the National conference committee (NCC). At the end of a pre-conference seminar held in Enugu , Mkpoko Igbo resolved to end "Igbo marginalization system, but be reorganized along a six-region structure, reduction of the power and responsibilities of the federal government, review allocation in favour of derivation and the restructuring of the armed forces into regional commands. Supposedly these are the areas that would hit the Hausa –Fulani hardest. Those who attended the conference included Chief Ojukwu, Veteran politician Sam Ikoku, Dr Alex Ekwueme and leader of the Movement for Survival of Ogoni People (MASOP). The same general tone characterised the position of the minority ethnic groups, especially in the south and to marginalization, revenue allocation based on derivation and an ethnic minority presidency.

A sole agenda did not emerge from northern or Hausa –Fulani ethnic organisations. Its position tends to be reactive to those of ethnic organisation. The main reason for this appears to be the fluidity of the north as an ethno-geographical area. Sometimes, it is seen as conterminous with the former northern region, which includes the entire middle belt. At other times, it is used to refer to the old northern region but excluding the belts. Even more find is identification of “Northerners” with the north, sometimes, non-Hausa-Fulani ethnic organisations. But at other times, they are seemly opposed to it. This appears to support Nnoli’s findings about the fluidity of ethnic boundaries and instrumentalist role of ethnic identity by individuals. Still, pan-ethnic organisations from the north, such as the so-called Kaduna Mafia, remain for the Northern solidarity and at other times pursuing separate, ethnic-specific agendas.

It seems clear to us that in line with character of the post-colonial state and role of ethnicity in its politics, pan-ethnic organisations are most active at the phase of transition to democracy involving power sharing. At such phases, the attention of pan-ethnic organisations turns from the

authoritarian regime (its overthrow or maintenance) to one another. Once the democratization process moves into phases involving the sharing of economic and particularly, political power among ethnic groups pan-ethnic organisations are bound to become very active, raising the tempo of both conflicts and cooperation among them. By Nnolis taxonomy, these are most likely to be second and third phases during which a transition programmes is formulated and implemented.

In the period leading up to the 1993 presidential election, there were strong indications that an alliance between Igbo's and Yoruba's would emerge to challenge the Hausa-Fulani: calls for a "handshake across the Niger" were widely made by both Igbo and Yoruba ethnic leaders. This led to the domination of the committee for Unity and Understanding (CUU). Associated with this committee were such names as the veteran politician and nationalist Mokwungo Okoye, Chief C.C Onoh, former Governor of Anambra state, Major General (retired) David Jemibewon, former military governor of Oyo state, Chief Bola Ige, former governor of Oyo state, Chief Michael Ajasin, former governor of



Ondo state, among others. But in 1992, as the presidential election approached, the Babangida government banned the CUU because as many southerners believed; it posed a danger to the political hegemony of the Hausa-Fulani. However, with later development in the transition process, notably the national constitutional conference, attempts to revive the CUU. Other attempts were made to renew the trans-Niger handshake, such as the meeting sponsored by General Obasanjo, the former Head of state, and Chief Sam Mbakwe, former governor of Imo state. The strongest move at the national constitutional conference which was able to force through the principle of rotational presidency against opposition by northern delegates.

In pursuing their objectives, the activities of pan-ethnic organisations and their target vary with different phases of the transition to democracy. At the pressure phase, their activities will be essentially that of sensitization and awareness cultivates, aimed at either pressuring the authoritarian regime to democratize or to sustain the regime.

At the phase of formulating the transition programme, activities of ethnic organisations continue to emphasise sensitization of co-ethnic to the need to protect the interest of the ethnic homeland. At the phase of implementation the programme, particularly during elections, their activities tend to emphasis mobilization. The message is usually the need to vote solidly for the ethnic candidates that will protect the interest of the ethnic group.

Concomitantly, the target of their activities, that is the social group or political structures that form focus the pressure applied by ethnic organisation, also vary with different phases of transition. Generally, their target will include the following:

- a. The government / regime
- b. Other ethno-political organisation
- c. Pro-democracy organisation
- d. Members of constitutional conference
- e. Co-ethnics in the ethnic homeland

- f. Co-ethnics outside the ethnic homeland
- g. Members of adjacent ethnic homeland
- h. Members of non-adjacent ethnic homelands
- i. Political parties and candidates for elections

These propositions are partly demonstrated by the character of party support during the presidential election of 1993.

## **Chapter Four: Nigeria's Transition to Democratic Rule**

### **4.1 The Prospect and Challenges in Nigeria's Transition to Democratic Rule in Nigeria**

If any conclusion can be drawn from the political history of post-colonial Africa, it is that multi-party democracy has been as unsuccessful, as the military coup d' etat has been the favoured mode of regime change. Although one party democratises have held out for much longer, they too have not been immune to military takeovers, and neither have the successor military government. The general instability of political life is evident by the fact that forcible change of government occurred, on the average in between two and three states in Africa every year between 1960 and 1992.

In the 1990s alone, Africa managed to produce seven civil wars and genocide. The kind of international interest generated by these conflicts, and the consequent refuge problem, have tended to portray the states of Africa as politically immature and in need of external decolonization. Even though the idea of decolonisation, whether by the international

community or African hegemony, may appear extreme, the underlying sentiment that things worked better under colonial rule is quit widespread.

Ake (1994:2-3) also concludes that, based on several critical indicators, the average African is worse off today than she was 30 years ago.

More widespread and devastating is the progressive degeneration of economic life in Africa, participating in sub-Saharan Africa. The privatisation of the state with its resources and general economic mismanagement, and the crisis which structural adjustment programme were, theoretically, designed to respond to , have impeded the expansion of a rational private sector and encouraged the growth of a peculiar cash capitalism for which neither production nor a market was necessary. Thus, European refugee camps are littered with refugees and asylum seekers from Africa whose real horror is not political victimization or the scourge of war but decline, or feared decline, in the quality of life.

If the Nigerian problem were to describe merely as an instance of this African situation, it would be because of the common feature of decay, dismalness and helplessness.

But a particular trajectory would seem to be discernible, an almost recurrent of event. When herring concludes that the prospect for democracy in Nigeria were more promising than in most developing countries, he visualised a country where the economic production kept pace with population growth, where the abundance of natural and human resources created the potential for a viable economy, and where the parliamentary heritage from Britain seemed to have taken root. But by 1964, that democracy with all its promises had virtually ceased to exist, paving way for a military coup and three years of civil war. The pattern of collapse would seem to have been replicated in the second democratic regime between 1979 and 1983.

The third attempt of democracy in 1993 was stillborn. It is tempting to make the correlation that, since military coups terminated Nigeria's democratic administrations in 1966 and 1983 and frustrated the 1993

transition, Nigeria therefore has a military problem that the military is “the major obstacle to democracy” (Rotimi and Ihonvbere 1994:685). But this would be too superficial; it implies a certain element of unexpectedness and spontaneity of democratic collapse. What a historical analysis of these democratic episodes will reveal are elected administrations in their death throes (with the state exhibiting sure signs of failure), their lives mercifully terminated through military coups to prevent the state from expiring. In other words democracy has collapsed before the coups, and it was the failure of democracy that inspired the coups.

These observations are important in order to properly characterise the progressive transformation of democratic structure into instruments of authoritarian control. It, as Huntington (1991:29) has noted, democracies always exhibit “moderate and incremental”, and hardly perceptible, changes, the notion of a transition from democracy encapsulates the cumulative degradation of the institutions of democracy.

Supporting of the myth of the military problem is the attempt to establish a distinction between civil or political and military elites (Onimode, 1983:193-200, Ihonvbere and Shaw, 1988; 135). But in terms of political behaviour and the structure of the relationship with the masses, a clear out distinction cannot be sustained between civil and military administrations in Nigeria. They have both been characterised by arrogance, violence, poor managerial capacity, predation and inter-ethnic rivalry.

Originally, hailed as corrective as helping to reset the democratic clock, military rule in Nigeria has always been personal rule. But the dictatorship of Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993) and Sani Abacha (1993-1998) represented its culmination. Real and imagined sources of challenge were eliminated, private's armies and assassination squads were created and the revenue of the state becomes the revenue of Nigeria's dictators, who also became grand patrons of organised crime. The poverty bracket widened commensurately, while individual liberties were in a abeyance. The Nigerian state has been feudalised. I no time, and with



predictable alacrity, intellectuals, and political scientists were in the forefront. Oyediran (1993) and Salih (1993) consider only the idealistic dimension of the production of legitimating ideas by Nigerian intellectuals. But the motivation for involvement of social scientist in the administration of Babangida and Abacha was at the same time pecuniary, opportunistic, denigrating and predatory. They expanded on ideology of “Nigerianism” which was anti-outsiders, supportive of the new dispensation and extolled the virtues of Nigeria’s traditional political values of complete obedience to authority (and elders), and advertised an indigenous crafted political technology. But Abacha died suddenly and, with the dream of crafting a peculiar Nigerian state form.

A qualification could be appended to the conclusion that so called democratic administrations have been an “unrepresentative” and violent as their military continuation. In the very early days of these administrations, with as intense and almost aggressive desire amongst Nigerians for democracy, there was real democracy to the extent that pledges of accountability, justice, equity, personal liberties and good

governance were made by administration officials. But as they settled in and predation began, quickly followed by pressure of retaining power, the democratic state become distant from its mass base and progressively ceased to be democratic. No wonder there was so much jubilation whenever a democratic administration was unseated by the military. Indeed it was the delegitimation of the democratic administrations, in the eyes of both the public and their operators, which provided the initial legitimacy for the coups and subsequent military rule.

This also indicates that military administrations on their early days held out hope of better deal. However, the recent experience under the Babangida and Abacha administrations how easily military rule can degenerate into tyranny. If only the liberal momentum of the early days of elected administrations could be sustained, then the democratic regime would be certainly preferable.

It is this hope that has made the continued resources to democracy alluring in spite of its very many imperfections in Nigeria. Joseph (1991:4) has argued that the pursuit of democracy is driven by the urge

from government. However this problem has traditionally been expressed in federalist agitations.

The direction of the development of democratic ideology in Nigeria since the “no taxation without representation” phase of anti-colonial nationalism has, therefore, been towards individual liberties and government and empowerment. How can these and the umbrella democratic regime be guaranteed beyond the inaugural phase of an elected administration? How can the drift towards inter-group conflict and state collapse characteristic of elected government in Nigeria be avoided? These questions are in urgent need of answers if the current momentum of democratization is to be sustained.

The approach adopted in the study is to generate an early warning sequence, very feasible since the transition from democracy have not been sudden. Outlining the processes by which this transition occurred twice in the past is, possibly to be able to anticipate and monitor contingent occurrence and, hopefully, safely and deliberately steer Nigeria away from the now tradition trajectory. Such a possibility is premised on the

existence of fairly stable and recurrent patterns of political mobilization and competition of inter-group relations, and of the relationship of group to the state. A genetic analysis of the collapse of elected government in Nigeria would reveal five stages in the transition from democracy: deppluralization, state appropriation, regime delegitimation, inter-hegemonic conflict and military coup. It is in their succession and culmination, however, that they acquire an almost irreversible fatality. These components of the state and inter-group configuration, have been recurrent and, therefore, also components of an early warning analysis.

#### **4.2 A structuralist History of Transitions From Democracy in Nigeria.**

Between independence and May 29, 1999, Nigeria had two democratic administrations. The first, modelled, on the British parliamentary system, was headed by Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, (1 October 1960 to 15 January 1966). The second, an adaptation of the American presidential model, was headed by Shehu Shagari (1

october1979 to December 1983). Although the demise of these administrations appears to be the consequence of a struggle for control of the state by Nigerians major ethnic groups (and coalitions) based on the assumption that colonialism introduced capitalism into Nigeria, these transitions from democracy have been attributed to conflict among bourgeois factions (Sklar, 1971, Nnoli, 1978, Lawal, 1972, Dibua, 1988). This class perspective has tended to view the symptomatic ethnic mobilization as merely instrumental, thus splitting what were but regional elites, instead of economic production class, from their empirically inseparable masses. But Nigeria's political problem derives from ethno-regional configuration generated by the territorial framework for British colonial political administration.

### **The Colonial Prelude**

The single most important conclusion of structural political historians of colonial Nigeria is that the pattern of relationship among the British colonial officials of the north and south of Nigeria, and the socialization of the emerging Nigerian leaders to this pattern have been at

the root of political conflict in Nigeria since independence (Heusslar, 1968: 80, 170-174, Nicolson, 1969:302-304, Okonjo, 1974: xvi). The extent of the impact of colonial administration practices has been dramatically expressed by Kirk-Greene (1963:37, n.37), who, recalling the antagonism between northern and southern colonial officials, remarked that “if all Nigerians had withdrawn from the country, there would have been a civil war between the groups of Europeans”. Class and nationality differences among the British officials have been adduced for the bifurcation of colonial administrative practices in Nigeria. As Nicolson (1969:126, also p.42) described this phenomenon as, “the projection into Nigeria of the great schism in British or, specifically, English life, with northern Nigeria attracting the attention of the consciously “superior” class, the officers and gentlemen- and that helped to repel and antagonize the rest, the traders and missionaries busy and influential in the south.

Although Nigeria was amalgamated in 1914, the north and south continued to be administered as separate territories. In 1937, southern

Nigeria was split, by Bernard Bourdilion, into western and eastern provinces. But it was Arthur Richard who in 1945, thought that the ensuing three regions were Nigeria's natural divisions and, therefore gave the "purely administrative arrangement" constitutional recognition (National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon's 1945:12). While this decision might have had an innocuous intent, the fact that the second half of the 1940 represented the period of the crystallization of ethnic nationalism in Nigeria, particularly in the south, meant the home base of each of Nigeria's three main ethnic groups. The west became conterminous with the Yoruba ethnic group, the east with the Igbo, and a residual north with the Fulani-Hausa ethno-political cluster. These three territorial regional identities, with the Igbo federal union (to become the ethnic organisation basis of the east while nationalist party, the National Council of the Cameroon's which dominated in the east) and in 1949, the Jamiyya Muitanem Arewa (the pan-northern cultural association that became the northern people's congress- NPC in 1951, and the party of the north). They were the conflict units with which the Yoruba, Igbo and the

Fulani struggled for the exclusive domination of the Nigerian state, the control of which was soon to be relinquished by Britain, thus emerged the most significant structuring factor and basis of continuity in Nigeria's political history. Early consequences of this pattern of relationship were the successful Yoruba conspiracy to exclude the Igbo Azikiwe from going into the central legislature from the electoral college of the western House of Assembly and the apparent alignment of the east and west against the north on the question of self- government for Nigeria in 1953.

The constitutional review exercise of 1954, a response to the latter problem, weakened the centre importantly by giving residual power to the regional governments. Nigeria virtually became a federation of the Igbo, Yoruba and Fulani and the stages in the transition from democracy became the stages in the crystallization of ethno-hegemonic conflict.

### **The First Transition From Democracy, (1960-1966)**

The result of the federal election of December 1959, by which power would be transferred from Britain to a Nigerian government,



confirmed the tri-ethnic framework of Nigerian politics. Of which 312 seats contested, the NPC won 134, all of them won from the northern region, the NCNC won 89 seats, 58 from its eastern region base, and 31 from ethnic and political minority groups in north, west and Lagos, the AG won 73 seats, 33 from its ethnic support base in the western region, 25 from northern minorities, 14 from eastern minorities, and 1 from Lagos, other parties and independent candidates took the rest 16 seats.

The British governor General, James Robertson, thought the north would not accept a government made up from a coalition of the southern parties and so, asked the NPC to form a government (Robertson 1974:234). Nevertheless, the AG active support for minorities in the north and east already made a coalition of the NPC and NCNC. The NPC went into coalition with the NCNC and AG became the opposition. By the pattern of thinking about politics, this meant an Igbo-Fulani coalition against Yoruba opposition. Considering the animosity between the AG, on one hand, and the NCNC and NPC on the other hand, the pattern of the AG was possibility of using central executive power to intervene in the

western undermine its ethnic and political base. It was to forestall such an eventuality that the executive council of the AG in mid-September of 1960 established a tactical committee. While this move represented a tendency to consolidate the status of the AG as a regional force with the hope of capturing central power, another tendency, symbolized by the deputy leader of the AG, Samuel Akintola, emerged that favoured cooperation with the coalition government and partaking in the distribution of political and economic resources.

A wide ideological gulf separated the NPC and NCNC. The NPC was conservative and isolationist, the NCNC socialistic and pan-Africanist. However, they had the resentment of AG, with its leader, Obafemi Awolowo, in common. That was the true basis of the coalition.

Two developments followed from this. The conflicting tendencies within the AG created factional problems which led to a political crisis in the western region in May 1962, and the opportunity for the coalition to intervene and eventually confirm its AG supporter, Akintola, in power. By mid-1963, with the conviction of Awolowo for treasonable felony, and

the excision of a mid-west region from the west, the influence of the AG in regional and national politics had been virtually destroyed (Sklar, 1991).

An initially quite struggle for supremacy between the coalition partners had become evident by the beginning of 1961 (Dudley, 1982:63, 64, Lugham, 1990:72, 73ff). As the AG went down, this became progressively pronounced and came to determine the direction of the politics and stability of the Nigerian state. Their disagreement over the 1962 census figures, the proposed basis for delimiting constituencies for the 1964 federal elections, heightened and nationalized this rivalry and, ultimately, led to the formation of two broad alliances the united progressive Grand Alliance and the Nigerian National Alliance.

Although representing the south and north respectively, they thinly concealed the struggle between the NCNC and the NPC or, more accurately, between the Igbo and Fulani, to control central executive power. The federal elections of 1964/65, contested on the platform of the

alliances, were as uncompromisingly fought as they were manipulated. The NNA and thus the north, won.

It was in the midst of the clamour for eastern secession and the violent aftermath of the election in the west that the military struck on 15 January 1966.

### **The Second Transition From Democracy, (1979-1983)**

The tri-regional configuration of Nigeria was first altered in 1963 with the establishment of a mid-west region and then in mid-1967, a 12 state structure emerged. Ten years later, the states became 19, a situation that seemed to Diamond (1990:365) ‘likely the firstly Republic and to generate a more fluid and shifting pattern of alignment, with state interest representing an independent and, at least occasionally, crosscutting line of cleavage’. But identities, once constructed, do endure, since the state established were not sovereign, the sense of peoplehood has been trans-territorial and residual. The 1979 election result demonstrated this.

Awolowo and Azikiwe, two key players in the 1959 elections, again emerged as leaders and presidential candidates of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP), respectively, of the 4.9 million votes pooled for Awolowo nationwide, 4.2 came from the successor states of the western region (or 84 percent of total votes cast in the states). Azikiwe pooled 2.2 million of the 3.7 million vote's nationwide from the successor state of the eastern region (or 58 per cent of total votes cast in these states). While Awolowo polled 53.2 percent in the non-Yoruba, but western state of Bendel, Azikiwe got only 11 percent of the votes from the non Igbo areas of the former east. The three other parties, Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP), Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) and the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) were led by persons from the north. But the NPN most represented the outlook of the northern political elite. Its candidates were Shehu Shagari, a Fulani and NPC minister in the early 1960s.

He got 3.9 million of his 5.7million votes nationwide from the successor state of the northern region (or 48.3 percent of the total votes

cast in these states) the other two northern candidates had a total of 39 percent of northern votes). The old tripod had re-emerged and the voting pattern in 1979 was as ethno-regional as in 1959.

Although Shagari won, a formal alliance was deemed necessary to facilitate the passage of presidential nominations and bills through the federal legislative houses. On 27 September 1979, the NPN-NNP accord, providing for the sharing of ministerial, board and legislative positions between the two parties, was signed. It took effect from 1 October when Shagari was inaugurated as president. Awolowo again acted out then role of opposition for which the government of the western succession states were “victimized” by the federal administration. A semi-formal association of the nine UPN, PRP and GNPP governors, the “progressive” emerge in response to the NPN-NNP accord. It was this association that formed the basis of a fleeting anti-NPN alliance, the progressive Parties Alliance (PPA), when the accord was terminated amidst mutual recreations in July 1981.

Although the NPN won 20.3 percent of southern votes, accounted for in particular by votes from two non-Igbo and former eastern regional states of cross river and rivers (25 percent of all votes cast in the eastern states), it was essentially a northern party, a re-creation of the NPC, According to Nnoli (1989:104).

The NPN began in various forms and names in 1978 to mobilize first and foremost the Hausa-Fulani petty bourgeois within and outside the ethnic homeland for support. The core of that mobilization effort was the so-called Kaduna Mafia-the group of civil servants now turned businessmen who served under the late Sardauna of Sokoto. Their perception of Nigeria is patently ethnic-oriented with the consideration of the interest of the Fulani in particular and the rest of the petty-bourgeoisie of other northern peoples uppermost in their minds. The formation of the Yoruba solidarity front within the party over the frustration of Moshood Abiola's bid for the party chairmanship and candidacy was a response to its regional character (Okoli, 1983).

With a poor economic management record and tenuous control over his appointees who privatize and openly pillaged the state, Shagari was redennominated as party presidential candidate in June 19882. Although, at its summit meeting in October 1982, the PPA agreed on general principle to share federal electoral offices among its four parties, ethnic and personal animosities, particularly between Azikiwe and Awolowo, prevented the emergence of a fully-fledged electoral coalition. Yet the fact that the UPN was the least factionalized party made Awolowo to provide the most potent electoral challenge to Shagari. Meanwhile, the desperation with which the parties fought against political exclusion for their candidates made the exercise to review the voters list in the second half of August, at best, farcical. At the end of the review exercise, an incredible 35.7percent increase over 1979 was recorded; Kaduna and Rivers states recorded the highest change (93.6 per cent and 89.1 percent respectively).

Months before the August 1983 presidential election, it was already feared that there was going to be a succession crisis via election rigging



and thuggery. Okoli (1982: 31, 95) had observed the nervousness with which Nigerians prepared for the 1983 election and two general; fears about the election aftermath, “a total breakdown of law and order as a result of election-rigging” and “,military intervention as a temporary measure”. Both of these to pass (Diamond 1988a: 71-78). Like the 1979 election, voting in the presidential election of 1983 followed an ethno-regional pattern. Shagari was again declared winner and inaugurated president but the air was thick with political conspiracy and rebellion. On 31 December 1983, the military again struck, completing another process of transition from democracy.

### **4.3 Ethnic Politics in Nigeria**

In the pre-colonial era and since the independent of Nigeria, ethnicity played manifest and latent roles in the body of politics in Nigeria. As Otite (1990) observed and quit rightly too, the ethnic virus has been one of most important causes of social crisis and political instability in Nigeria, and ethnicity has been perceived in general as a

major obstacle to the overall politic-economic development of the country. Nnoli (1978) defined ethnicity as “a social phenomenon associated with interactions among members of different ethnic groups:.. He further explained that ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries and that an ethnics group may not necessarily linguistically or culturally homogenous. Osaghae (1995) defined ethnicity as “the employment of mobilization of ethnic identity and difference to gain advantage in situations of competition conflict or cooperation”.

However, Azeez (2004) views ethnicity as a sense of peoplehood that has its foundation in the combined remembrance of past experience and common aspiration. Nigeria is a plural society and it made up of over 250 ethnic groups with many sub-groups three ethnic groups- Yoruba, HAUSA, and Igbo dominate the political landscape. All other ethnic groups are swept under the carpet. This has created sub-nationalism.

Ekeh (1973) has argued that ethnicity has flourished because the Nigerian elites who inherited the colonial state have conceptualized

development as transferring resources from the civil public to the primordial public it is against this background that this writer would x-ray in a laconic manner the interplay of ethnicity in the body of politics of Nigeria in pre-independence era and from independence till date.

In pre-independence era, party politics in Nigeria was based on ethnic factor thus one can say that it was during this period in question that the seed of ethnic politics was sown, germinated in the first republic and then product started spreading during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> republic. For example, the Action Group as a party developed from a Yoruba Cultural Association, Egba Omo Oduduwa, and the NCNC was closely allied with the Igbo Union while the NPC developed from Jamiyyar Arewa. Thus the leadership of the aforementioned parties was along ethnic cleavages. The AG was led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, a Yoruba; the NCNC leadership fell on Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, an Igbo while NPC was led by Sir Ahmadu Bello, the sarduna of Sokoto, a Fulani. Even to a large extent, the colonial administrative arrangement in Nigeria during the colonial period encouraged ethnic politics.

The 1946 Richards constitution had divided Nigeria into three regions for administrative convenience which are directly associated with the three major ethnic-groups Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo. It is not surprising therefore that the first political parties were formed along ethnic lines.

During the first republic, was organised in the same way as during the pre-colonial era. The three political parties that existed during the pre-independence era also came into lime light and dominated the landscape, although other parties sprang up. These included Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) by Aminu Kano, United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) led by Joseph Tarka and NPC by Sir Ahmadu Bello, AG by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and NCNC led by Dr. Nnamdi Okpara. There was a radical departure from those of the pre-colonial era as the parties had ethnic colonization in terms of leadership and regional applications.

However, it was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> republic that regionalisation was played down a bit. The 1979 constitution stipulated that for a political party to be registered, it must be national in outlook i.e. wide geographical spread

across the country. The new political parties that were registered had their leadership replicated along ethnic lines as in the first republic. Thus, Obafemi Awolowo retained the leadership of AG which metamorphosed into UPN; Nnamdi Azikiwe controlled the Igbo speaking areas under NPP which is an offshoot of the old NCNC. NPN dominated the Hausa-Fulani areas, PRP in Hausa speaking while GNPP led by Ibrahim Waziri controlled the Kanuri speaking area. Therefore, ethnic colouration and affiliation played out in political party's formation and operation during the 2<sup>nd</sup> republic. Voting pattern followed ethnic lines in the election.

It should be pointed out that political party's formation had a different dimension in the third republic which was midwives by pertinent (Ibrahim Babangida government). Two political parties were formed and funded by the government. These were the social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republic Convention (NRC). Even though these parties were established by government, ethno-religious cleavages were visible in the membership and composition of the two parties. While the SPP

favoured the southerners, NRP was a party for the Hausa- Fulani North as could be observed from their operation.

In the current political dispensation of the fourth republic ethnic colouration has reared its ugly head. With ANPP considered as a party predominantly occupied by the Awolowo`s Action Group and the Unity Party of Nigeria and as a result dominated the six Yoruba speaking states of Lagos, Ekiti, Ogun, Osun and Oyo until 2003 when it lost all the states except Lagos. The ruling People`s Democratic Party (PDP) is being perceived as to have deviated a bit from the usual ethno-religious domination party politics of the past with their membership and formation cutting across the clime of Nigeria. However in the 2011 general election, ethnic and regional politics started to play itself out.

With the demise of Alhaji Umar Yar`adua some people in the North felt power should not shift to the south and they started kicking against the presidency of Dr. Good luck Jonathan. The new parties on context like APGA, is seen as Igbo party, CAN as a reincarnation of AG or UNP which is Yoruba based, CPC and ANPP are seen as the party of Hausa –

Fulani affiliations. It is only the PDP that to some extent has national outlook but the insistence on certain party of the country to produce the 2011 presidency has shown that ethnic and religious politics is still with us and will continue to plague the body politics and unity of Nigeria as a sovereign state.

## **Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation**

### **5.1 Summary**

In summary, this research work is on MILITARY RULE AND POLITICAL TRANSITION IN NIGERIA (1993 – 1998).

It is pertinent to know that this research work was conducted without objectivity as I aim to fill a gap and add to existing knowledge.

Division and specialization has been an integral part of man's existence. I made use of division and specialization to portray the true essence of my research work. I divided my work into five major chapters. Each chapter introduces and dealt with different topics and each topic having sub-heading or sub-topics.

The method of division and specialization were adopted by me to aid understanding and enhance comprehension of the research work.

Chapter one otherwise known as the substantive part is the main text or the body of the research work like the back-ground of the study



which highlight the relationship between ethno-political organizations and the transition from military rule to civilian rule (democracy) in Nigeria between 1993 and 1998.

And also inquire into how ethno-political organizations affected the process of democratization and how the process, in turn, influenced their roles in politics generally, and in ameliorating political conflicts. Others includes the statement of problems, objective of study, significance of study, literature review, theoretical framework, hypotheses, method of data collection, limitation of study and definition of terms.

In the problem of study I raised three questions which I later gave answers to in the objective of study and significance of study. The objective and significance of study formed the hypotheses of my research work. I raised the following questions.

1. What are the major causes or influence of military intervention in Nigeria politics?
2. is there any role or roles played by ethno-political organizations formed in different parts of the country?

3. Are there prospects and challenges in Nigeria's transition to democratic rule in Nigeria?

The three questions raised, made my chapter two, chapter three and chapter four of my research work.

In chapter two, I discussed about the major causes of military intervention in Nigeria politics. In this topic, I talked about how and why the military intervened in Nigerian politics and what was their major reason why they intervened. One of the causes of army take-over of government in Nigeria was the regionalization of political parties. The political parties that existed in Nigeria especially during the first republic were regionally based. None of them had a broad national outlook and as a result they leaned on their various ethnic groups in order to get support. This fanning of embers of ethnic consciousness proved injurious to the nation hence, the taking over of government by the army in order to save the nation from imminent cataclysm. And also, other sub-topics were discussed are about the establishment of the Nigerian military and finally the military and political transition.

Chapter three, answered and investigated the second question raised by me on the role or roles played by ethno-political organizations formed in different parts of the country. Under this topic I talked about the roles and the contribution of various ethno-political organizations such as: Movement for the survival of Ogoni people (Mosop), Arewa, MEND and OPC etc. towards the growth of the political system in Nigeria.

One of the importance or roles of ethno-political organizations in the recent transition from authoritarian rule to democracy in Nigeria. Authoritarian rule is marked by many years of loan on political parties and muzzling of independent organizations and power centres in society.

This state of affairs leaves ethno-political organizations as the most potentially effective organizations that could emerge quickly and with minimal prompting as political liberalization is embarked on by an authoritarian regime.

Other sub-topics been discussed include the ethno-political organization in Nigeria and ethno-political organizations and phases of transition.

Chapter four is all about the prospects and challenges in Nigeria's transition to democratic rule in Nigeria. From past experience, Nigeria has undergone so many challenges from military rule to democratic rule, under the military rule, there have been many coup d' et at that occurred during the military rule, and due to the military instability and change of power or regime made democratic rule (democracy) to take over from the military.

Chapter five which is the last chapter comprises of the summary, conclusion and recommendation.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study has argued a number of points about the role of pan-ethnic organizations in the recent transition to democracy in Nigeria. First, the post-colonial character of the Nigerian state and the centrality of ethnicity to this state explain the prominence of pan-ethnic organizations in transition to democracy in Nigeria. Second, in Nigeria's transition to democracy, ethno-political organizations were most active at

the stage involving the power distribution. That means the stages of drawing up and implementing the transition programme. Third, because the Hausa – Fulani of the North are perceived to be the ethnic group of the military regime in power, and by extension beneficiaries of power, alliances tend to be formed between ethno-political organizations of the Yoruba and Igbo against them, notwithstanding the problematic history of relations between the Yoruba and Igbo.

Finally, behind the front of solidarity and common interests of the ethnic homeland that Nigerian ethno-political organizations put up, class and personal political calculations are central to their *raison d'etre*.

However, ethno-political organizations as they operated in Nigeria's transition distorted the democratization process, and this effect is still being felt in the persistence of ethnic alliances and agitations against ethnic marginalization. By professing and pursuing the bogus interests of ethnic groups, they mask the personal interests of their leaders and distort the profoundly exploitative character of social relations in Nigeria, not only among ethnic groups but also among classes.

This is not to suggest that the struggle of ethno-political organizations is always devoid of social justice. Rather, what is suggested is that the dominant form of their struggle is the pursuit of the interests of ethnic leaders, deflected as the general interests of ethnic homeland.

In the final analysis, what we call for are two fold. First, there is need for a clear-cut ethnic policy for Nigeria based on equity and equality of ethnic groups. And second, there is need to address and redress class inequalities across ethnic boundaries. These are the fundamentals of true democratization in a multi-ethnic society like Nigeria.

### **5.3 Recommendation**

Consequent upon these conclusions above, the following recommendations are deemed necessary to catapult stable democratic rule in Nigeria.

Firstly, a democratic state like Nigeria with so many ethnic groups should at all point through the government of the day uphold the fundamental human rights of the citizens and also provide basic social

amenities so that all citizens from any part of the country will have a sense of belonging and not in the way, otherwise mean to cause or destabilize the day to day economic and political activities of the state.

Secondly, men with unquestionable character and integrity should occupy the major post in government so as to avert the endemic corruption in the state i.e. people who are very patriotic should see to the affairs of the state.

Thirdly, ethnicity is one major impediment that brought the military intervention into Nigerian politics and the autocratic nature of the military has affected the development of the Nigerian politics, even to the present time, therefore, civilian government must discourage ethnicity (ethnic politics) because the averse effect is to the detriment of Nigeria's development.

Fourthly, for Nigerian's to enjoy the dividends of what democracy preaches, the need for the government of the day to involve ethno-political organizations in law making and implementation is very

necessary because their grievances that would have prompted them to result to violence must have been addressed when they are involved.

Lastly, for the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria policies that would be of mutual benefit for the citizens should be enacted and not exploitation, subjugation and suppression policies.



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