MILITARY LEGACIES IN NIGERIA POLITICS: ECHOES OF THE NORMS, VALUES AND STYLE IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE, 1999-2015

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Abstract

This paper explores the growing influence of the military in Nigerian politics through the activities of retired military officers. This is most exemplified in General Olusegun Obasanjo's regime as President of Nigeria. As more and more retired military men leave the barracks into the executive and legislative arms of government, they bring with them their military disposition and code of conduct thereby changing the face of democracy into a hybrid Milito-democracy, a term I adopt to portray militarized democracy. This is clearly evidenced in campaign tours of the 2003 and 2007 elections. Largely through the use of case study method and primary sources, this paper examines this growing trend from a historical perspective. It argues that militarized style of governance has become entrenched in the Fourth Republic and this is demonstrated in government utterances, application of court orders and the preference for the use of force rather than dialogue as occurred in the invasion of Odi community in Bayelsa State and Zaki Biam in Benue state.

INTRODUCTION

The political history of Nigeria has been one of interplay of Military rule and democratic dispensations. Out of approximately fifty-six years of Nigeria's independence, civilians have successfully ruled the country for twenty-six years, while the military have ruled the country for about thirty years. While Nigeria has had seven Military regimes, it has had

just four civilian regimes (Shonekan's Interim Government inclusive). A democratic system is one where rules are held accountable to the ruled by mean of a variety of political arrangement. The universal acceptance of democracy as the best system of government is incontestable. The year 1999 is an historical one with the return of representative democracy in Nigeria as well as Olusegun Obasanjo once again as the head of government after prolonged years of military interregnum. Upon the return, Nigeria heaved a sigh of relief that at last they are liberated from the Shackles of unilateralism and arbitrariness that characterized military rule. This new Vista of democracy elicited much hope and expectation from the masses in the face of the realities of the preceding years of dictatorship and near anarchy. The decades of Military rule in Nigeria has created a legacy of lawlessness, ethnic animosities, mass poverty and communal violence. Each of these legacies can sap the energies of any serious administration and they constitute monumental challenges. The practice of democracy in Nigeria in the last fifteen years has raised considerable issues, one of which is the overt display of militarized political culture in the democratic space. Consequent upon the long years of military governance, the obvious outcome would be militarized political behaviors' of the dramatis personae in the democratic arena. The Nigeria civic culture was eroded, and militarized culture imbibed. Thus, the rule of operation became that of order, combat rather than dialogue, disregard of court orders, and violation of rights became the tenets of militarized civic culture in a democratic dispensation. These values and norms are unknown to democracy. Since 1999, democratic appetite started driving Nigeria with its own character and political formation. It evolved a brand of leadership that propelled all the retired soldiers to stage a comeback to politics. This time it is the contest of the elders flooding the political space with looted funds from state treasuries meant for development which they systematically failed to carry out. It became a deviation from military rule to gerontocracy with its prevailing military mentality. I refer to in this paper as Milito-democracy.

In our recent experience, President Muhammadu Buhari is up to keep the process going with other past heads of state and some retired Military and Paramilitary officers are all out to partake in. The paper is segmented into six sections. The first is abstract which captures the central thesis of the paper, the section is introduction explore the general background of the title of the paper, third deal with our understanding of the concept used the paper, then the fourth discusses the military style, norm and values in general administration, the fifth is an analysis of militarized democracy by retired military men and six is conclusion.

CONCEPTUAL EXPOSITION

Democracy and the military have undergone various exposition by different scholars. Democracy is used in three distinct senses. In the general sense, it is used to describe a system of government in which ultimate power (or sovereignty) rests with the people. In the institutional sense, it is used to describe a system whereby power is divided amongst different institutions of the state such that some institutions are responsible for making laws, while another is responsible for executing the laws and yet a third may be responsible for mediating or adjudicating in disputes. In this context, the presence or absence of such separation of powers is taken as a major indicator of the presence or absence of democracy. Lastly, in the procedural sense, democracy will mean a political system of government which subjects essential decisions to a popular election, a plebiscite or a referendum. The essence here is that the dominant position expressed by the majority is adopted. 1 Which ever sense we chose to adopt does not take the meaning of democracy far from what Abraham Lincoln epitomized democracy to mean" as the government of the people, by the people and for the people". 2

In the same vein, Oyovbaire, views democracy as a system of government which seeks to realize a generally recognized common good through collective initiation, and discussion of policy questions concerning public affairs and which delegates authority to agents to implement the broad decisions made by the people through majority vote. 3 Democracy has been examined in both classical and contemporary contexts. In classical context, democracy is linked with the small city state of Athens in Greece, where all adjudged male adult citizens were allowed to directly participate in decision-making and implementation. Political philosophers articulated this form of democracy as a revolutionary antidote to dictatorship, monarchy, oligarchy, aristocracy and feudalism; 4 Ake asserts that, democracy involves the opportunity to participate in decision making in the political process. It repudiates arbitrariness and authoritarianism. It extols the consents of the governed and it protects human personality and values. 5 Democracy whether liberal or African or modern includes fundamental recognition of popular sovereignty, equal opportunity for all, majority rule, representativeness, minority right, right of choice between alternative programs, popular consultation, consensus on fundamental issues and more essentially periodic election. 6

Our general knowledge of military rule is based on our experiences of various military administration and experiences Nigeria underwent. In the common parlance military entails the specialists in the use of ammunitions for the essence of warfare. Ake, perceive the military as the specialists of warfare. 7 To that extent, it would be stating the obvious to argue that military rule is a rule championed by military personnel. The chronological account of their involvement in Nigeria politics is enough to provide us with a clear picture of what military rule purports since the independence of that way, their stay in power provides us with a convincing podium that it is a government where uniformed men that are trained to secure the state decide to withdraw themselves from their oath of office in

order to reap the bountiful economic endowments of the state. They have struggled with this posture throughout their stay in office and beyond. The military confers on itself a broad array of powers under which it can abridge rights and ensure compliance with its policies. The regime progressively obliterates or degrades the institutions, rules and processes that protect the civilians against abuse, thus leaving the citizens at the mercy of a despot.

Dent opines that, the military is as a corrective regime, he submitted that Nigeria had twice as many solders as teachers who affected all aspect of the polity. 8 According to Butts and Metz the Nigeria military was trained in the "British notion of military professionalism that stressed civilian control of the military". 9 The military system in Nigeria comprises Army, Navy and Air force.

MILITARY NORMS, VALUES AND STYLE IN ADMINISTRATION

From historical perspective, the foundation of Nigeria's political life was laid by military leaders under colonial and neo-colonial rules. Cecil Rhode, Frederick Lugard, Richardson, Clifford's, Bourdilon, Littleton, and McPherson all were retired Colonels and General of the British war machine. They were all compensated with postings to the British colony now Nigeria as Governor Generals, Lt Governor or Residents. 10 Their styles of governance were military oriented. They did things with command and they implement policies and programmes with dispatch without minding their implications on the public. The military as an organization has its values and norms, which has made it a unique organization. These values and norms are transferred to the larger society during military governance. The adoption of these style, values and norms without a democratic set up is hereby referred to as dialectics of military governance.

It was observed that the military is a puritanical organization, and that the training which men receive in this institution and subsequent military experiences imbues them with austere attitudes and a high sense of discipline and responsibility: 11

Otedola opines that, the military universalistic character of achievement and orientation in the award of honors and promotion is said to be endemic: Thus, the values of puritanism, discipline, rationality and achievement orientation of the military are assumed to be much more directly relevant to change and development 12 He further argues that, it is against the ascriptive value of the orientation of the rest of the social organizations of African societies. It is perhaps these values which enabled the military in Nigeria to be able to execute the various national development plans in Nigeria. 13 He went further to say that, the education and training which soldiers receive make them professional men. It is also assumed that such acquired values or attributes are transferrable into situations or occupational roles, which may not be entirely military. In the process of governing a civilian society, these military values are transmitted to the rest of the society in a way that regulates societal behavior and consequently changes the society. 14

A military regime is a socio-political aberration built on the Austinian theory of legal Positivism- by force, rather than the consent of the governed. Military regimes are essentially dictatorial and by their modus operandi incompatible with constitutional democracy. Two dominant factors shape military administration in Africa:

1. The need to dominate the civil society
2. The desire to secure its power base.

These factors engender a strong dictatorial mindset in governing the nation, the military is omnipresent, unchecked b any constitutional restraints. Military regimes have a disturbing contempt for law and legal rules; they care only about achieving their stated objectives. Military regimes which perceive themselves as above the laws that governs the society have systematically erased society's lines of authority that promotes accountability and respect for citizen's rights. This corresponds to the Marxist notion of law as instruments of domination and oppression. Laws promulgated by federal military government are called decrees. Under a military regime, decrees are enacted by the highest legislative organ of military administration. Laws enacted by the state are called edicts. The constitution is suspended or modified, and a decree confers plenary power on the military to ignore or dismantle existing legal and political institutions. 15 In the next section of the paper, we evaluate the manifestation of militarized politics by retired military men in Nigerian politics in the period of study.

MANIFESTATION OF MILITARY NORMS, VALUES AND STYLE IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE: THE ROLE OF RETIRED MILITARY MEN

In this section of the paper, the militaristic nature of the Nigeria's political culture by the retired men will be exposed. This section of the study is conceived to address the pressing issue of political dynamism of which the Nigerian state can hardly rid itself of. Right from the inception of this paper, the pendulum of the research has continued to revolve around military and the roles of retired men and the evolution of elderly government known as gerontocracy. Here, we shall be looking at the formative Milito-democracy in Nigeria. This could easily be analyzed from their norms, values and styles.

One of the most pernicious legacies of military rule in Nigeria is the culture of violence that it has created. Military rule placed premium on force as earlier pointed out in the conceptual exposition. Dialogue, bargaining, compromise; all essential elements of effective governance style were de-emphasized by military officers. Instead, Nigerians were compelled to submit to senseless military commands. Even speech patterns in Nigeria seem to have been militarized. Rude, violent and foul languages now characterize the mode of public discourse in the country.

The year 1999 is conterminous with the return of representative democracy in Nigeria as well as the return of Olusegun Obasanjo once again as head of government after prolonged years of military interregnum. The military government of General Abdulsalem Abubakar promulgated Decree No.24, 1999 known as the 1999 constitution. This decree was published less than one month to the inauguration of the civilian government on 29th May, 1999. The implication was that the transition from military to civil rule was not based on any democratic constitution. 16 This is why the 1999 constitution, upon which the Fourth Republic operates, is commonly referred to as "the military Decree of 1999". Again, the preamble of the constitution which reads "we the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria do hereby make and give to ourselves the following…" is not only incorrect, but a pathological lie and which lawyers referred to as a constitution that lied against itself. It is against the foregoing that Fayemi observed that the packed nature of Nigeria's 1999 transition to civil rule produced a "post-transition configuration which looked more like a re-packed space for militarily controlled politics that a fundamental restructuring of power relations". Consequently, Fayemi revealed extremely that the outcome of the democratization project in 1999 is such that;The dominance of the political party hierarchy by retired military officers and civilians closely connected to the military elite set the tone for the party development that pays little attention to ideology or programmes. It is no

surprise therefore that four of the key political parties in 2003 elections, including the ruling party, had retired Generals as their candidates: General Obasanjo for the PDP, General Buhari for the ANPP, General Ike Nwachukwu for the NDP, and General Emeka Ojukwu for the APGA. In 2007 elections, the brother of an erstwhile major military figure emerged the candidate for the ANPP and APGA while the AC ended up with a retired para-military officer as its own candidate. 17

Even in the 1999 presidential election, both the candidate of the PDP and the APP/AD alliance and their running mates had strong attachment to the military and para-military establishment. While Olusegun Obasanjo (PDP) was a General and a former Head of military government, Chief Olu Falae (APP/AD) served as Secretary to the Federal Military government of General Ibrahim Babangida. In the same vein, while the vice-presidential candidate of the APP/AD alliance, Umaru Shinkafi, was a former Director of National Security Organization (NSO) under the military administration of General Muhammadu Buhari. The domineering positions of retired military officers and their acolytes in political parties and its attendant consequences on democratization cannot be lost if it realized that political parties are building blocks of democracy, and that parties cannot promote strong democratic order unless their leadership, by their orientation, are committed to democratic operations.

Fayemi also revealed that a retired Army General emerged as the President of the Senate in 2007, just as some governors, members of the National and State House of Assembly, and local Government Chairman are also ex-military and paramilitary officers. It is also instructive that the Speaker of House of Representative, Dimeji Bankole, had military training at British Royal Air Force, just as the House Leader, Tunde Akogun, is a retired colonel. Ibifuro reinforced this reality when he wrote that some key actors in the "Abacha personalist rule" have emerged as Governors,

Ministers, Ambassadors, and Party Chairmen, Members of the Senate and House of Representatives between 1999 and 2015. 18

The culture of the Milito-democracy and intense militarization of politics was more or less institutionalized in the ruling PDP between 2003 and 2007 when four retired military/police officers superintended its administration. They included Olusegun Obasanjo, retired General, as President and leader of the party, Ahmadu Ali, retired Army colonel, as the National Chairman. Olabode George, retired Navy Commodore, as Deputy National Chairman and Tony Anenih, a retired Assistant Commissioner of Police, as Chairman Board of Trustees (BOT), Joshua Madaki, a retired Colonel, as National Legal Adviser.

President Olusegun Obasanjo in the year 2000, authorized the deployment of military troops to "Odi" Bayelsa State to massacre innocent citizens without recourse to National Assembly contrary to Section 217 (2) C of the 1999 constitution which requires first for some conditions to be prescribed by an Act of National Assembly for the use of military in that regard. 19 In the year 2001, the President without lawful authority authorized the deployment of military troops again to "Zaki Biam" Benue State which occasioned the brutal murder of innocent citizens and the destruction of properties, contrary to Section 217 (2) C of the 1999 constitution as amended which requires firstly for some conditions to be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly for the use of military in this regard. 20 Under the culture of neo-militarism, the civilian administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo engaged in reckless operational use of the Armed Forces to carry out genocidal attacks on the people of Odi in Bayelsa State, and Zaki Biam in Benue State, for allegedly killing some Soldiers and Policemen. The former President, by his actions, made violence the principal instrument of dialogue in a democracy. It was reported that over 2,000 and 1,500 people in Odi and Zaki Biam

respectively were killed in the dastardly acts sponsored by a democratic government. 21

The dominance of retired military men in what Fayemi described as "entrenched militarism" in the leadership of key democratic institutions sowed seeds of aggression, warfare, intolerance, impatience, coercion, oppression and military conquest, to the extent that political and electoral contests are conducted within the prism and framework of "do-o-die" "capture" and "garrison-command" political philosophy. 22 Okonta also alluded to this culture of Milito-democracy when he wrote that, the PDP, following its victory in the general elections of 1999, was transformed "into the instrumentality of the will of a chosen few who barked out orders and expected them to be obeyed without question." 23 He further noted that "this parade ground mentality" permeated the rank and file of the party and also spread out to infect the states and local government areas. 24

It is therefore not by accident that the democratization process since 1999 continues to suffer from what Amuta described as "massive invasion of the People Democratic Party (PDP). For instance, in February 2007, former President Obasanjo went to the extent of declaring to his party members, at the PDP campaign rally in Akure that the 2007 General elections would be "a do-or-die affair." He also vowed that he would not handover the reins of power to anyone who he believed would not continue his so called economic reform agenda even if the person wins the election. 25 Gani Fawehinmi, most human rights activist, civil society organizations, opposition political parties and pro-democracy groups considered the former President's statement as treasonable.

On May 18, 2004, President Olusegun Obasanjo unilaterally imposed a state of emergency on Plateau State following series of civil disturbances in Yelwa-Shedam Local Government Area of the state. It must

be noted here that the ethnic and religious crisis began three months before the imposition of emergency rule. 26 In this scenario, the crisis was between Hausa/Fulani on one hand pitched against the indigenes over primordial sentiments bordering on indigene/settler difference. This was the general picture of things on ground when President Olusegun Obasanjo announced the imposition of a state of emergency in Plateau State. In his broadcast, the President adduced the following as reasons for his action.it was the only way to quell the ethno-religious crisis that had rocked the Yelwa-Shendam area of the State and keep it from spreading further…The situation in Plateau State to say the least, constitutes a challenge to our democracy...we need to take very serious action to stem the tide of what has become a near mutual genocide. 27

The President declared state of emergency in Plateau State and appointed retired General Chris Ali as Sole Administrator. Even in Ekiti State such a scenario played out when, the President declared state of emergency and appointed General Tunji Olurin (Rtd) as Sole Administrator for Ekiti State. One cannot fault the President's desire to maintain law and order and protect the citizenry of Nigeria in general and in Plateau and Ekiti States in particular. The concern here is the modus operandi in achieving the objectives. As articulated earlier, constitutionalism and Rule of law are central to democracy and good governance. Hence, the abuse, misuse or misapplication of any constitution or constitutional provisions becomes the order of the day and suggests not only a drift toward authoritarianism and weakening of democracy but also an absence of good governance. Besides, these are persons with largely undemocratic pedigree, at least by their orientation and training. This seems to have been the case in the way and manner President Olusegun Obasanjo handled the Plateau and Ekiti States issue.

The retired military men see the democratic arena as an extension of the barrack. This explains the behaviour of politicians since 1999. The behaviours are direct correlates of the dialectics of military governance. The example herein will suffice this argument. Sometimes between April and July 2002, the president amended the capital provisions of the 2002 Appropriation Act by reducing the capital budget to 44% without forwarding the said amendments to the National Assembly for passage in violation of Section 80 (4) of the 1999, constitution. That an act of gross misconduct. 28 About the month of July 2002, a presidential order was issued purporting same to constitute an amendment to the revenue allocation Act which action amounted to the violation of Section 162 (1) and Section 315 of 1999 Constitution, which equal to a gross misconduct and a violation of the constitution as amended. 29 From 1999-2002 the government had consistently indulged in extra budgetary expenses contrary to Section 80 (2), (3) and (4) of the 1999 constitution which is a clear violation of the constitution which going through the due process; with the expenditure on the National Stadium in excess of appropriated sum excess expenditure on the national identity card from 5.5 billion to 9.5 billion above the sum approved in the 2001 and 2002 Appropriation Acts respectively. The authorization of the purchase of 63 houses and their furnishing for Ministers in the year 2002 to the tune of ₦3, 019, 153, 178.06 without any budgetary provisions in the 2002 appropriation Act. 30 This was when the National Assembly was not on recess. The militarization of the electoral process in the country has been subjected to public scrutiny. A critical picture of democratization and electoral process is presented by Iwu:Here is a system in which individuals primitively acquire such enormity of resources that embolden them to challenge the state and become laws unto themselves with their own army; a system in which political parties brazenly deny their members who won primaries the tickets they won and allocate same to others for one reason or another, … a setting in which majority of the political aspirants do not believe there is any

benefit in campaigning and convincing the electorate, but that with money and massive arsenal of coercion the electorate will be subdued; an environment in which politicians are perpetually bidding to buy electoral officers, often times at sums of money that could transform a whole town; a system in which the very laws guiding elections are not known until few months to the election. 31

These remarks underlined democratization in Nigeria as being marked by rampaging primitive accumulation, deployment of state resources to access political power, weak institutions, contempt for rule of law, a political leadership that is predatory in attitude and aloof in conviction, huge appetite for power and violence. The scenario employed in Anambra State on July 10, 2003 and in Bayelsa State against DSP Alamieyeseigha are good examples. Nigerians were jolted with the news of the abduction of the elected executive Governor of Anambra state, Chris Ngige by unknown assailants. 32 Events unfolded further to reveal that a prominent politician from the state, Chris Uba who was also a supposed political godfather of Ngige was the brain behind the abduction. 33 Reports informed that Uba utilized his influence of having "sponsored" the governor, Chris Ngige, his deputy and 29 out of the 30 members of the Anambra State House of Assembly to dictate the pace and direction of governance in the state. He was clearly, "the seen hand behind the throne". Indeed, it is said that in the removal of Ngige, Uba collaborated with his other godsons in the House of Assembly to hatch and execute the abduction and forceful removal of Ngige as Governor of the state. 34

By the time the dust settled at Anambra, it became evident that the whole drama was an attempted coup by a few disgruntled politicians bent on teaching Ngige a lesson for his lack of loyalty to his political benefactors. Even though Ngige survived the intrigues to continue as Governor, the ugly episode threw up several questions which begged for

explanations and answers. Some of these are: first, what was the position of the Presidency in the unfolding scenario? Can a serving Governor with immunity just be removed by a pack of coupists? What are the constitutional implications of the whole episode?

For instance, the 2014 governorship elections conducted in Ekiti and Osun States witnessed heavy presence of military men and women. Security operatives were present in strategic locations across the states. In Ekiti State, 30, 790 Policemen, Soldiers, DSS officers and members of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps were deployed to the state a few days before the election while over 70, 000 persons of the same agencies were actively involved in the August 9, 2014 Osun election. Like a war zone, the troops took their positions. At every 100 meters from the entry point of the states, police officers and soldiers mounted various check points, with blood-hound dogs sniffing for any likely breach of peace by supporters of the various political parties. Such massive deployment of security agencies has been variously described as militarization of the state by the Federal Government. As noted by Frank:The militarization of the Nigeria polity of the Presidency portends dire consequences for our democracy. It is being done to give the PDP undue advantage so as perpetuate Jonathan in power. This is totally antithetical to our collective aspiration as a nation and directly negates the humorous sacrifices made by pro-democracy activists to restore democratic rule in 1999. 35

It suffice therefore that the electoral process since 1999 were so manifestly manipulated that they eroded democratization, which is anchored on the popular will, choice and power of the electorates. Akinyemi capture it all;To classify this a democracy is to lay a very a wrong foundation for the debate on the unfolding events in our fatherland. And to endure the unfolding perfidy is to dig a deep grave for the democratization vision. 36

This comment is informed by regular manipulations of formal democratic institutions in Nigeria including political parties, police, military, the judiciary, the electoral commission and the legislature to achieve selfish political ends. For instance, on January 1, 2012, the Federal Government announced the withdrawal of fuel subsidy. The Government declared the decision to deregulate the downstream sector as part of its economic reforms programme. This action caused fuel prices to jump more than 100%, from ₦65 per litre to ₦141 per litre. Tens of thousands of Nigerians protested the removal of the subsidy and Nigeria's major labour unions, under the auspices of the Nigeria Labour Congress and the Trade Union Congress, organized industrial actions shutting down businesses, schools, and air travel for 8 days. For many Nigerians, the fuel subsidy removal is merely a symptom of deeper-rooted problems that exist within the system. With a stagnant economy, high levels of corruption, very low minimum wage, little or no investment in health, education or other social amenities, and weak infrastructure, the reaction of the population did not come as a surprise.

Government responded harshly in its quest to clamp down the protest. Military and police officers were deployed all around protest cities and some states imposed curfew. Security officers used tear gas and batons and in some instances, lethal weapons against protesters. Time Nigeria reported that at least 20 people were wounded and 3 killed in Lagos when police opened fire on protesters. In Kano about 300 people were reportedly injured and 19 arrested during the protest. Other protesters were killed in Uyo, Kaduna and Niger States, amounting to over 25 persons. Several pictures and videos showed police assaulting protesters. Media houses, notably CNN offices in Lagos were raided and journalists and human rights activists like Femi Falana were arrested and detained. Other detainees were

arraigned before magistrate court for alleged breach of peace and robbery. 37

IMPLICATIONS ON DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

In sum, it is germane to capture the central thesis of the paper in line with the view that there is so much desire by retired military men to dominate democratic governance in Nigeria no matter the approach applied in wielding the diverse interests in contention. It defiled every spirit and letters of state orderliness where the political space and power are forcefully assumed and dominated. The style and pattern of their emergence leave one to ponder in continuum of what becomes the motive behind their massive involvement in politics. The worst is that at their retirement, they tend to possess an unquestionable drive to conquer and control the state just as they did in the barracks. The vast majority of Nigerian citizens still do not enjoy civil liberties. This is because government lacks a general monopoly on the use of force as well as the political will or judicial control. This means that security forces, militias, vigilantes, religious fundamentalists and criminal gangs regularly violate civil liberties.

In addition, torture and ill-treatment in police custody and extrajudicial killings are still part and parcel of law enforcement operations. The state lacks the ability to protect women and girls, particularly those of lower status, from violence, rape, and spousal abuses. This is one of the outcomes of Milito-democracy psyche which cherish obedience without complain. This was captured by Frank and Ukpere, in the wake of the attack which was unleashed on Odi community in Bayelsa State by a detachment of the Nigerian troops in November 1999, the National Assembly failed to call the President to order, but kept mute in complicity.

The invasion of Zaki Biam in Benue State took place shortly afterwards, both houses of the National Assembly also kept mute on the issue. This was what the National Assembly in violation of democratic principles did and said nothing of these warrior traditions in civil dispensation. 38 The principles of extra budgetary expenditure, a dominant phase of the democratic setting is but a legacy of profligacy bequeathed to the civilian regime by retired military men. In a democratic dispensation, such must give way to budgets that seriously address the crisis of grinding poverty in the midst of plenty. While assessing the era of former President Olusegun Obasanjo in relation to his style of governance and Milito-democracy of the politics. Tinubu asserts that:The grandest irony of General Olusegun Obasanjo's much vilified administration was that whereas he succeeded in the formal depoliticization of the Nigerian military, he came spectacularly unstuck in the demilitarization of the democratic polity. To ensure his self-survival, the ruthless purge of the political elements in the military, which the media hailed as the purge of "IBB boys" was perhaps the most lethal tactical move to rid of political careerists clothed in military fatigue. Since the forced exit of officers who had had more-than-decent exposure to politics and all it plums during the military era, all appear to have been calm on the military front. The Army itself appears to have taken fresh pride in reprofessionalizing itself and taken political power as sweet poison. But in the more strategic turf of implanting democracy ethos and effectively purging the polity of ruinous militarization, General Olusegun Obasanjo as Civilian President fell flat. He not only had anti-democratic temper, with a penchant for viewing dissenting views as enemies to be crushed, his authoritarian streak vaporished his putative authority. 39

Military personnel always demonstrate their cultural skills whether retired or not. On this note, Col. Madaki Yohanna laments on the activities of his colleague Rtd General Olusegun Obasanjo. He laments, I am worried because things have not gone the way we thought they would if the military

vacated. The military has been replaced by another set of people; lions and tigers in sheep's skin. That is the unfortunate thing. In view of this, no military personnel whether retired or not should be allowed to contest for any contestable position both at local, state and federal levels. 40

CONCLUSION

The paper has examined the situation of the militaristic aura in the policies, actions and inactions of the government in the Fourth Republic. The paper has demonstrated the examples of Former President Olusegun Obasanjo and some retired Military men turned state governors, senators, members of the house of representative laud the prepositions and the crude manner that drive their style of leadership in Nigeria, where everything is done undemocratic. Late President Umaru Musa Yar' Aua who with military dispatch closed down "This Day Newspaper" which reported that Mr. President was, sick and may resign from the Presidency. The President could not practice the rule of law, which had become his ideology. This is a relic of the long years of the military rule. The lack of strong institutions in Nigeria notwithstanding the manner with which retired military men undermined democracy and good governance by not respecting the rule of law and through constitutional illegalities in politics remains open sores in Nigeria's democracy. Most disturbing is the direct involvement of the Presidency in sagas.

NOTES

1. See C. Ake, *Democracy and Development in Africa*, (Ibadan: Spectrum, 1996), 40. Also see D. Beetham, *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, (London: Sage Publications 1994), 20.
2. U.S President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) defines democracy as: Government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Democracy is by far the most challenging form of government-both for politicians and for the people. The term democracy comes from the Greek language and means "rule by the (simple) people." This statement was taken from his famous speech, The Gettysburg Address.

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