

**CORRUPTION AND AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT CRISIS:
PROMOTING THE HUMANITIES AS AN ANTIDOTE**

Erionosho, T.O,

Niyi Ogunkoya

&

Osiyale, B.O

Department of History and Diplomatic Studies,
Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State.

ABSTRACT

Africans were full of hopes and aspirations at the threshold of independence. They were forward looking as they believed that their own kith and kin who were to succeed the colonial rulers, would usher in the progress they desired in terms of overall development of all the sectors of Africa's economy. However, the euphoria that greeted attainment of independence was short-lived due to the corruption cankerworm that percolated politics and governance of vast majority of the newly independent African States. Corrupt practices being by African ruling classes have had debilitating effects on developmental efforts across the continent. This unsavoury situation has led to terrible socio-political ferment and cleavages engendered by crises cutting across Africa. The non-challant attitude of the ruling classes who have engaged in looting the treasury and appropriating public properties for personal use has inflicted much oppression on the masses. This study therefore explores the conceptualization of corruption, dimensions of corrupt practices in Africa and how they have impeded development as well as instances of virulent reactions of the oppressed toward the corrupt leaders. The discourse is rounded off by proffering possible solution to this social monster called corruption so as to pave the way for development in the near future on the continent of Africa. This is done by highlighting the relevance of the humanities which



emphasize morality but which have been relegated to the background by both the leadership and followership.

Key words: Africa, Corruption, Development crisis, Socio-political cleavages, Ruling classes

INTRODUCTION

Africa faces developmental crisis arising from the abuse of power by those at the helm of affairs on the continent. The attitude and behaviour of the political class which has spread like gangrene to the bureaucratic echelon and bottom rung of the civil/public services has done a lot of damage to the advancement of the continent. Corruption has taken the center stage of the political cum administrative machineries of the African States, and this has taken its toll on the countries that are finding it extremely hard to recover from the shock they have received as a result of the corrupt practices being unleashed (on them) by those occupying political offices, whether elective or appointed and the bureaucracies across the region.

This deleterious monster was not part of the indigenous pre-colonial African societies as Africans practiced transparency, accountability and public probity. Egalitarianism was held in high esteem as those who occupied public offices did so in trust. They were accountable to both their departed ancestors and their principals, i.e. the people they governed. Hence, their offices were as a result of social contract or charter emerging from the rulership conferred on them by the ruled. It is important to state that the process of taking public office was highly ritualized with oath taking and this helped to safeguard the interests of the citizens or the governed. The pre-colonial power brokers were guided by the rituals and oaths they took in their conduct of the public offices they held because, “The gods of many indigenous religions were gods of justice, ready to inflict pain if necessary”¹.

Before the intrusion of Western Powers whose influences have corroded the once pure and highly cherished African



transparent cultural heritage, the public office holders were conscious of their roots or family backgrounds. Apart from running away from attracting the wrath of the gods of the land, they valued their family names more than the offices they occupied especially as they operated in close communities. Consequently, they did their best to preserve the good names their lineages had built over the centuries. Indeed, apart from the kings, most of the people who formed councils of states or cabinets in Tropical Africa were representatives of their lineages or quarters. The kings only ratified their appointment as their people had the right to recall them if they misbehaved. The kings had no power to remove them from office and any attempt to do so would incur the wrath of the people.²

The powers of the traditional political/public office holders particularly the potentates were restrained through checks and balances. For instance, the *Alaafin* of the Old Oyo Empire was not expected to be autocratic and despotic as he would be forced to commit suicide³ while among the Egba, an *oba* never ruled but reigned before the imposition of colonialism. The *oba* “had only spiritual but no political power or privilege as the *Ogboni* was the political powerhouse of the Egba nation”⁴. Apart from Islamic theocracies where the *Sharia* vested the *Emirs* with wider political power, Dahomey was probably the only West African state where the king was an absolute monarch or ruler and this was sequel to the *realpolitik* of the 19th century revolutions and counter revolutions⁵. Egypt was another state where Africans had no say regarding the governance and administration of their country which were handled by foreigners and this culminated in Muhammed Ali Pasha’s seizure of political power and he emerged as an absolute ruler prior to the British colonial rule⁶. Aside these illustrations, African societies valued democratic principles which were briefly flouted during the 19th century sequel to the socio-political ferment of the time which produced mighty warriors in Africa such as Dingiswayo, Shaka the Zulu, Samouri ibn Lafiyya Toure, Ogunmola and Latosa of Ibadan, Ogedengbe of the Ijesha,



and Lishabi of the Egba to mention but a few. However, the old order was reverted to immediately the prevailing tension subsided.

The above exploration establishes the fact that most pre-colonial African states, kingdoms and societies imbibed the culture of veracity and accountability which political and other public officers were conscious of. Unfortunately, things began to be turned upside down with the imposition of colonialism as the colonial masters and their African successors saw (and still see) themselves as tin-gods and exploited the masses to their own selfish fullest advantage.

Connotation of Corruption

The concept of corruption has received considerable attention from numerous writers, scholars and researchers. However, due to space challenge, the concept shall be briefly considered. According to Jain (2001), corruption is “an act in which the power of the public office is used for personal gain in the manner that contravenes the rules of the game”⁷. This definition is in consonance with the ugly development pervading African public sector. A more comprehensive meaning has been put forward by Mbaku, (cited by Desta, 2006) who avers that corruption is an outright theft, embezzlement of funds or other misappropriation of state property, nepotism and the granting of favour to personal acquaintances and the abuse of the public authority to exact payments and privilege”⁸. This conceptualization indicates that corrupt practices are not limited to illegal acquisition of public properties and looting public treasury for the selfish use of public office holders. It also embraces the inter-personal relationship between those holding the offices and their favourites who benefitted from the former’s position. Scott (1972) quoted by Osiyale describes corruption as a:

...behaviour which deviates from the formal duties regarding (persons, close family, private clique) wealth or status, gain that violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence. Furthermore, as involving, asking, giving,



*taking a free gift or favour in exchange for the performance or legitimate task, hoarding, collusive price fixing, smuggling, inflation of prices, election rigging, illegal arrest or harassment for intimidation purposes, abuse/misuse of office, position or power, diversion of public, corporate or other person's money or property to direct or indirect personal use.*⁹

Dwivedi (1967) cited by Osiyale regards corruption in terms of bribery, nepotism, graft, cheating and other unfair means adopted by government employees and the public alike to extract some socially and legally prohibited favour.¹⁰ Given the fact that those occupying public offices do so as representatives of the masses, it means those being represented are at the losing end. It is against this backdrop that Filaba defines the hydra-headed monster called corruption as people in power exploiting the position, being dishonest for personal gain, depriving the populace of their entitlements, getting the system rotten by introducing undesirable changes.¹¹

A critical analysis of the above definitions reveals that corrupt practices and corrupt individuals portend a grave danger to the development of their societies, nations, states and continents. This is because the ulterior motive of such public office holders is to enrich themselves at the expense of the sovereign (the masses/people) who actually possess authority which they delegate to the public officers. It is rather sad that Africa has been caught by this retrogressive societal web. This is one of the unhappy legacies of colonialism which now attracts our attention.

Corruption and Stagnation of Africa's Development

The Africans across the continent were hilarious, optimistic and confident that the emergence of their newly independent countries would lead to the positive transmutation of Blacks in their own continent. They had the belief that the white rulers' successors would bring new hopes and aspirations, and serve as a reprieve from the hardships the Africans had suffered in the hands of the departing imperious colonizers. After all, the new rulers



were their own kith and kin, who were regarded as being responsible and were sensitive to the yearnings and expectations of the masses. This was the perception of the governed who were expectantly looking forward to the economic advancement, job creation, qualitative medical care, good housing, qualitative education, sound fiscal policies, social justice, flourishing trade and commerce, as well as maintenance of law and order with standardized security outfits, among others. However, the masses' hopes and aspirations started evaporating soon after the attainment of political independence as the new African rulers began and brazenly engaged in widespread corruption to the chagrin of the electorate.

When the new rulers that emerged in Africa in the 1950's, early 1960's and in the 1970's when the erstwhile Western colonial dependencies threw off after breaking the imperial yoke, took charge of the continental affairs often than not earned almost universal contempt for their corruption, profligacy and lack of real concern for those they ruled and who had elected them. The insensitivity of the politicians towards the plight of the teeming populations of the emergent African States and their inordinate political ambition as well as gross propensity for looting public treasury and diverting public properties for their selfish ends among other things aroused the anger of the military officers and men who staged coups to ease the politicians out of power. Beginning from Egypt in 1952, the intrusion of the military into politics spread like a wildfire as from 1958 when Sudan experienced this unhallowed political innovation. In West Africa, Togo recorded its first military coup on 13 January 1963 and Dahomey (Benin Republic) in the same year.¹² The wave of military dispensation became a recurrent decimal across the length and breadth of Africa. As S. Ademola Ajayi remarks:

Indeed, by the mid 1980s, Africa had had more than 70 military coups and military or civilian-cum-military groups were ruling no less than half of the then independent African States. Besides, during the 1980s military coups were witnessed in a number of



*African countries such as Sierra Leone, Ghana, Sudan, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Somalia, Niger, Nigeria, Liberia, Algeria, Lesotho and Burundi among others.*¹³

The military commanders that emerged to rid Africa of its terribly putrefying and much vilified political environment were initially welcomed by the masses who regarded them as saviours. But the euphoria that greeted each military coup or counter coup soon fizzled out as the new rulers in khaki uniform appeared to be more corrupt, brutal and got involved in fundamental human rights abuses. At the same time, it is imperative to note that most of the military coups and mutinies were bloody that claimed many lives among the politicians and military personnel. This implied that many who would have contributed to the development of Africa in diverse ways became casualties in the political game involving the political class and military elite. Secondly, the attention of the military became diverted from the protection of the territorial integrity of the numerous African States because the military top-brass discovered that politics was a juicy venture. Consequently, there was intense rivalry between the political class and the military who were supposedly established to be subservient to civilian authority and control. Ali Mazrui graphically and rightly captures the struggle for power between the political class and the military in his comment regarding civilian-military relations by writing: “In politics in Africa the pendulum sometimes swings between a meritocratic elite this year and a militocracy following a coup next year. The African intelligentsia is in command of western verbal and literary skills; the African soldiers are trying to be in command of western military know-how”.¹⁴

Rivalry was not limited to the one that permeated the civilian-military relationship as there were terrible cracks among the military boys themselves. Ethnic rivalries became rife in terms of recruitment, promotion, discipline and redeployment of officers and men. The situation got worsen when African soldiers got involved in politics, as ethnic tendencies manifested in the appointment of military administrators/governors and other key



political/professional appointments. The unsavoury situation often led to counter coups and mutinies in which many officers got killed in their prime, thereby robbing their respective countries from tapping from their rich intellect and professionalism. The heavy loss of middle ranking officers in the 1960s in Nigeria in the wake of the January 15, 1966 bloody coup as well as the gruesome murder of Gen. Murtala Ramat Mohammed in 1976, and the sudden extermination of Major Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso in 1987 confirm this claim of manpower wastage in Africa. The fierce competition, fuelled by ethnicity at times snowballed into civil wars in Africa led to the further depletion of manpower and other resources that should have been harnessed to develop the countries where such wars had broken out. Consequently, “A high proportion of African nations fell under the control of people who were to all intents and purposes, tribal warriors wearing modern uniforms”.¹⁵

The corruption syndrome demonstrated by the political class and later military leadership soon spread to the public/civil servants. Hence, practically all bureaucrats and technocrats as well as members of the junior cadre in Africa’s civil/public services got involved in corrupt practices. In Nigeria for instance, the late General Murtala Ramat Mohammed carried out a mass purge in the Federal Civil/Public Service in 1975 due to corruption while Flight-Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings of Ghana during his administration publicly executed corrupt officers in his country.¹⁶ The late Major Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) had to carry out sanitation of the government business from corrupt practices. When Master Sergeant Samuel Doe of Liberia seized power in 1980, his administration executed public officers some of whom were allegedly found guilty of corruption. It is unfortunate that Doe and his lieutenants deeply soiled their hands in corruption when he was military head of state and civilian president, thereby causing the country to relapse into terrible official corruption of higher proportion. Across Africa, corruption and corrupt officers have become part and parcel of life in the governments, government agencies, parastatals, the police,



universities and other educational institutions, the armed forces and para-military agencies without sparing the private sector and even religious establishments.

Africa has been infested with political raga-muffins who emerged and many are still emerging as leaders. This has arisen as the art of governance and professional politicking have been regarded as the surest and easiest way of becoming rich, popular and influential. Consequently, most of African rulers, whether elected (or rigged to power) and military dictators who emerged in the post-independence Africa up to the end of the 20th century found it difficult to quit the political rostrum. Some of them are still in power in this 21st century while those who have been ruling since the threshold of this century cling to power even when bereft of idea and vision on how to move their respective countries forward. Many of them appear very advanced in age, physically frail and mentally ill-equipped to handle state affairs. The 20th century African leaders (some of whom still parade themselves as presidents today) in this category include late Dr Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Emperor Haile Sellasie of Ethiopia who became so powerful as a result of their unrestricted access to state resources and turned themselves into despots and autocrats. The socio-political cleavages of the Democratic Republic of Congo which consumed General Laurent Kabila were not unconnected to utter misrule and corruption. Still on the list of corrupt African leaders who were reluctant to quit office are the late Dr Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Paul Biya of Cameroon, the late Muammar Gaddafi of Libya, Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone, Idi Ami Dada (Uganda), Gnassingbe Eyadema (Togo), Matthew Kerekou (Benin Republic), Laurent Gbagbo (Cote d'Ivoire), Joseph Desire Mobutu (Zaire), Blaise Compaore (Burkina Faso) and Yaya Ja'meh (The Gambia). In Nigeria, rulers like Yakubu Gowon, Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha (all of them military heads of state) were reluctant to abdicate power. In fact, one of them, Abacha, died while in office. In the current Fourth Republic, former President Olusegun Obasanjo tried to return to the presidency for the third term after serving the maximum two tenures in office



which the Nigerian Constitution stipulates.¹⁸ Many of the African civilian presidents tinkered with the Constitution of their respective countries and as a result arrogated wider powers to themselves. Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone siphoned his country's treasury to the extent that he became richer than the nation to which he granted loans. He and his fellow greedy African brothers who occupied the presidencies of their respective countries amassed wealth that made them power-drunk and therefore not prepared to quit power. Instead, they resorted to constitutional manipulation. For instance, in Sierra Leone, it was reported that the Executive arm was excessively powerful and "the legislative and judicial branches took their marching orders from the State House" when Stevens was president. Hence,

By 1977 Stevens had successfully and effectively turned the country into a one party state which granted him unlimited power. This he used to his fullest advantage by seeing to constitutional amendments and laws which were enacted at the pleasure of the President. For example, he changed the constitution to allow Momoh to replace him as Head of State without consulting those to whom he was answerable in order to cover his shady deals. The constitutional manipulation continued under Joseph Momoh despite the country's descent into anarchy and corruption.¹⁹

In South Africa where Black majority rule was achieved through blood and iron before the shackles of Apartheid were broken, former President Thabo Mbeki sought a third term as African National Congress, ANC, President but was thwarted by the country's constitution which stipulated a maximum of two terms. More worrisome was the case of former President Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma which was very pathetic that a dogged freedom fighter of his calibre could betray the trust reposed in him by the once politically and racially oppressed South Africans. Having held a wide range of sensitive and strategic positions in the ANC before emerging as Deputy President and later President,



Zuma was alleged of, and prosecuted for involving himself in an illegal arms deal, racketeering, money laundering, corruption, and fraud. Aside from the bribery allegation levelled against him and his financial advisor and a Durban businessman, Schabir Shaik in the course of purchase of Valour class frigates for the South African Navy, there was the proposal on waterfront development in Durban, and lavish spending on Zuma's residence in Nkandla. His economic mismanagement and financial recklessness is estimated to have cost the country R1trillion (an equivalent of US\$83). Thabo Mbeki removed him from office as his deputy on 14 June 2005 and he subsequently resigned from being a parliamentary member. The legal loopholes surrounding his trial led to the corruption charges against him to be dropped but he was not acquitted. This gave him the opportunity to contest for presidency and he won; he was sworn in 2009. However, his case was re-opened in 2017 and the legal fireworks consumed Zuma and he had to resign as President on 14 February 2018.²⁰

Many military officers and men who were thrust into power by the socio-political disorder prevailing in Africa transformed themselves into civilian rulers through dubious means while the rest of them that remained as military leaders used brutality and cracked down on dissidents who challenged their authority. In a nutshell the leaders, whether civilian or military or a combination of both, applied naked force and brutalized groups and individuals who had the courage to challenge them. This sit-tight syndrome was/is adopted by these corrupt rulers to cover their dirty deals as they looted the public treasury with impunity and similarly enriched themselves through the extraction of mineral resources in their respective countries.²¹

Nigeria's experience seems to be the worst given the priority and intensity of the attention being paid to partisan politics which has become the easiest way of amassing wealth with the commencement of the Fourth Republic. That is why every Tom, Dick and Harry seeks either elective or appointed political office. It is not new that the maddening crowd consisting former state governors always seek election to the Senate of the National



Assembly. It is not surprising that by the time the late President Umaru Yar'Adua assumed office in May 2007, Eng. Hamman Tukur, Chairman of the Revenue Allocation and Fiscal Commission “revealed that the total national wage bill for political office holders at the three tiers of government amounted to #13trillion per annum, a sum more than twice the nation’s capital vote for any given year”.²² Aside this whopping monetary figure are illegal financial inducements like those meant for constituency projects that are diverted into the personal accounts of the rogues in power. The bad example of the selfish leaders adversely affected (and affects) African civil/public servants, many of whom steal government monies and properties with impunity. The unpleasant developments in Africa must have prompted Mr. Kofi Annan, the erstwhile UN Secretary General to comment in relations to African politics thus:

*It is frequently the case that political victory assumes a ‘winner-takes all’ form with respect to wealth and resources, patronage and the prestige and prerogatives of office... where there is insufficient accountability of leaders, lack of transparency in regimes, inadequate checks and balances, non-adherence to the rule of law, absence of peaceful means to change or replace leadership or lack of respect for human rights, political control becomes excessively important, and the stakes become dangerously high. This situation is exacerbated when, as often the case in Africa, the state is the major provider of employment and political parties are largely either regionally or ethnically based.*²³

Unfortunately, the corrupt tendencies and their demonstration by the ruling class had caused (and still causing) chaos, disorder and socio-cultural as well as economic and political problems in Africa. As the Africans- politicians, bureaucrats, the military officers and men, para-military personnel, students, businessmen and women as well as artisans- felt discontented, frustrated and marginalized, protests, strikes,



armed struggles and civil wars broke out. The situation became worsened by ethnic cum sectarian cleansing, persecution of the opposition and illegal arrest, torture and deaths of those found problematic by the presidents and their fellow political criminals.

Most African leaders have failed the masses and only paved the way for the emergence of new Africans that could be rightly said to belong to 'a wasted generation'. These are frustrated and disgruntled elements particularly the youths who are unemployed, poorly educated as most of them are unemployable while millions are stark illiterate and unenlightened as a result of larceny and financial recklessness of the leaders. It was/is from these hordes of marginalized and afflicted generation that the various militant groups and political factions conscripted their fighters and most of them became bullet fodder in the war zones.²⁴ It is pathetic that the political rulers and top civil/public servants engaged and still engage in elite reproduction as their family members, political associates and highly connected public servants have their favourites, children and relations succeeding them thereby widening the chasm between the influential/rich and those from non-influential and poor families.²⁵

Given the high corruption profiles of African leaders and the personnel of all cadres in the public service, in the various countries on the continent, they colluded with contractors they used as conduit pipe in looting the treasury, thereby causing the continent to be economically raped in the 20th century. The continent has become worsened with corrupt practices wrecked on it by the so called leaders and their fellow travellers in crime since the threshold of the 21st century particularly with politics and governance being regarded as the easiest way of making billions of dollars and acquire fleet of exotic cars, buy mansions worth millions and billions of Dollars and Pounds Sterling abroad and throw parties lavishly.

The selfish and rapacious disposition of the vandals in power has led to a number of socio-economic, political and developmental crises. The cabals in power have subjected their



respective countries to raw material producers as no concerted efforts have been successfully made to industrialize the economies of African States. Lack of industrialization implies making them economic dependencies of the industrialized or developed nations of the Western World. Asia has produced quite a number of countries including Japan and China as leading industrial nations while their African counterparts have been fatally weakened and paralyzed economically by the insensitive and greedy individuals and groups who are parading themselves as the rulers and government staffs.

African peoples have had chequered experiences as far as the provision of, and access to, social services are concerned. Consequent upon the highly polluted African societies reeking with corruption are poor health services, underfunded education that lacks basic facilities, epileptic power and energy supply, bad road networks, unpredictable and unreliable aviation services and the menace posed by unemployment across the length and breadth of the region. Worse still is the fact that Africans live below poverty level, premature retirement of workers while the majority of those being disengaged are not paid their severance allowances, gratuities and monthly pensions. In the long run, most of the dependants of the unfortunate senior citizens have engaged in social vices and criminal activities like prostitution, kidnapping, rape, drug peddling, human trafficking, armed robberies, hired assassinations and so on. Due to the poor social services, Africans die in thousands daily while hundreds die of hunger and malnutrition. The overall spill-over effect is that the continent suffers from security threats of the frustrated, highly impoverished, marginalized and angry mobs who are denied of their fundamental human rights. With this ugly development, Africa has been robbed of untapped human potentials, natural resources and the ability to produce nations that would join the club of industrialized countries and those that can boast of weapons of mass destruction because the countries are technologically backward. It is rather disappointing that African leaders shamelessly approach the Western Powers where they



repatriate stolen monies from Africa for economic and financial aids. In his reaction to this, the late erudite historian and Nigeria's Ambassador to the United States, Professor Ade Adefuye has this to say:

You cannot continue to oppress your people, steal their money and ask the international community to be indifferent while you ask for foreign aid and investment. Corruption has been the root of our problem in Africa...²⁶

Curbing Corruption through the Promotion of Humanistic Scholarship

African nations especially Nigeria, have relegated the teaching and study of humanities to the background. They have forgotten that the experts in Humanities particularly those that belonged to the first generation of professional/academic historians that the continent produced in the 1940's and 1950's championed the nationalistic struggles through their research and writings.²⁷ Literary icons similarly teamed up with their historian colleagues, while specialists in religious studies became conscious that the colonial masters did not implement the equality of human beings creed as enshrined in the Holy Bible. The white imperial lords loved themselves while they contemptuously looked down on the Africans both in the colonial service and the church. Consequently, the educated elite that emerged during 'the wind of change' mantra encouraged the professional politicians who used the former's writings in combating the whites and eventually sent them packing.

The humanities have been and can be utilized as an efficacious antidote to the social malaise that Africa and her peoples suffer from corruption. Humanities especially religions – African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity emphasize morality. History also stresses the need for morality and uprightness while philosophy does not underplay equity and egalitarianism. The pre-colonial Africans in their wisdom utilized



religions and belief systems in sanitizing their societies. As Erinosho remarks:

Wholesome societies were maintained then as punitive actions were taken against erring members of the society who broke any of the rules of ethics guiding societal operations. Unfortunately, because of the neglect of the humanities in our educational system especially at the senior secondary school and tertiary levels, most cherished aspects of our cultural heritage have gone into extinction. Consequently, bad governance characterized by looting public treasury... laziness, electoral irregularities, political assassination, extra-judicial killing... now permeate our national life, thus promoting moral bankruptcy.²⁸

It is therefore advised that the humanities particularly history, literature and religious studies be resuscitated and given quality attention in the various educational institutions. The teaching and study of the humanities should be used to emphasize what Africans cherished in the past, namely, the need to nurture responsible citizens (the Yoruba called them *Omoluwabi*). The concept of *Omoluwabi* values the names people bear and their roots (i.e. family backgrounds) rather than ill-gotten wealth acquired by a few individuals who subject the vast majority of their fellow citizens to wallow in abject poverty. Sensitization of the general public across the continent while promoting the humanities can be carried out in market places, religious gatherings, electronic media, social media, schools and by creating associations and societies saddled with campaign against corruption. The family as the primary agent of socialization must be awake to its responsibility, however, with the parents demonstrating good example.

Finally, the utilization of humanities in sanitizing the continent could be in the form of blending the two universally acknowledged religions – Christianity and Islam with African Traditional Religion (ATR) which stands for instant justice. If and



when citizens become conscious of the terrifying power and efficacy inherent in ATR and the symbolic objects of the deities and gods of the indigenous African societies are used to take oath while being inaugurated to take political/public official positions the African leaders would desist from their diabolical and treacherous behaviours. Through this, a new Africa will be ushered in as nobody wants to die a sudden and premature death.

CONCLUSION

Corruption has been a disservice to Africa and her peoples. The entrenchment of corrupt practices in politics and governance on the continent has led to the emergence of oppressive leaders who are repressive in their official activities and socio-cultural conducts. At the same time, revolutionaries (like Murtala Mohammed and Thomas Sankara) who stood for the truth, transparency and accountability were cut down in their prime while Jerry Rawlings was incarcerated for many years. Inter-ethnic rivalries, coups and counter coups, bloody civil wars and insurrections, general insecurity, economic paralysis and derelict social services have become the order of the day in Africa. This paper has explored how Africa embraced egalitarianism and transparent governance in the pre-colonial days and the way corruption has bastardized and shattered the hopes and aspirations of Africans who have been betrayed by their fellow Africans who hold political or bureaucratic powers. The study suggests that the humanities be re-entrenched in the continental educational systems because of the potentials that they possess and which can be tapped in reforming Africans and transforming Africa while those who steal public funds and properties should be publicly executed after recovering all the looted monies and other properties from them. It is high time that the continent especially Nigeria eschew time wasting and fruitless legal fireworks in prosecuting those who are known to have actually enriched themselves through ill-gotten wealth.



END NOTES

Ali A. Mazrui. *The African Condition; A Political Diagnosis*, USA and Canada, Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1980, 52.

For instance, consult, G.O. Oguntomisin; “Power-politics in Old Oyo Empire, 1754-1796” In G.O Oguntomisin and S. Ademola Ajayi (eds) *Readings in Nigerian History and Culture*, Ibadan; Hope Publications, 2002,226. Here, the author wrote about the power of the Oyo Council of Ministers (the *Oyomesi*) who were appointed by their own people and the *Alaafin* could not remove them from office. in his own contribution regarding traditional politics among the Egba, F.I. Sotunde comments that the various *Oba* among the Egba only reign(ed) and not rule(d). See his work *Egba Chieftaincy Institution*, Revised Edition, Ibadan: Chief F.I. Sotunde, 2012, 145.

G.O. Oguntomisin: “Power-Politics”, 226.

F.I. Sotunde: *Egba Chieftaincy Institution*, 144.

A. Adu Boahen: *Topics in West African History*, London: Longman Group Ltd, Reprinted 1980, 86.

For a detailed account on this, consult Michael O. Ogbeidi (ed): *Egypt and Her Neighbours: A General Survey*, Lagos: Publishers Express, 2005, 43-86.

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S. Ademola Ajayi: *Yahya Jammeh and The Gambian Revolution 1994-2001*, Ibadan: Stirling Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd, 2003, 24.

S. Ademola Ajayi: *Yahya Jammah*, 25.

Ali A. Mazrui: *The African Condition*, 64.

15 Ali Mazrui: *The African Condition* 124.

Martin Meredith: *The States of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence*, UK: Simon and Schuster Ltd, 2011, 219.

For Samuel Doe's maladministration, consult Timothy O. Erinosh "Nigeria and ECOMOG Peace-keeping Operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone, 1989-2004", Unpublished PhD Thesis, History Department, University of Ibadan, 2010, 82-88.

Segun Adeniyi: *Power, Politics and Death: A Front-row Account of Nigeria under the late President Yar' Adua*, Lagos: Kachinfo Limited, 2011, xxiv.

Timothy O. Erinosh: "Nigeria and ECOMOG", 144.

Jacob Zuma-Wikipedia about: reader?url=https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob_Zuma accessed 1/9/2020

In Nigeria, political and military leaders in power used crude oil for their selfish advantage while in Liberia and Sierra Leone, diamonds were stolen by military officers and men as well as the rebel warlords and their troops.

Segun Adeniyi: *Power, Politics and Death*, xxiv.



Cited in Timothy O. Erinoshio “Nigeria and ECOMOG,” 88.

Such unfortunate children and young men and women formed child soldiers in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the Niger Delta militants and Boko Haram in the the South-South and North Eastern Nigeria respectively.

This is much more true of Liberia where the Americo- Liberians dominated the social, economic and political society for 133years before the Armed Forces of Liberia struck in 1980 under Sergeant Master Samuel Canyon Doe who remained in power until September 10, 1990 when he was brutally killed by the killer squad led by Yommie Johnson. In Nigeria, the Northerners cling to the presidency as they have imbibed the idea that they are born to rule.

Tell, 27 June 2005, 63.

For more information, see T.O. Erinoshio: “The Humanities and Their Relevance to National Development in Nigeria,” *Journal of Social Sciences*, Government College University, Faisalabad, Vol. 5, No.1, august 2012, 36-50.

T.O. Erinoshio: The Humanities and Their Relevance,” 44.

