

DRAMA AS REMEDY FOR A NATIONAL MALADY: CORRUPTION AND ITS ANTIDOTE IN “HENRY HIDDEN TREASURE AND UBE REPUBLIC”.

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ABSTRACT

The injurious consequences of bad government in most African States cannot be overstressed. The sad realities are reflective in Nigeria body politic; which is characterized by maladministration, vicious economic recession, electoral manipulation, armed insurgencies, terrorism, insecurity, poverty, internal displacements, violence and deaths. Thus making Nigeria look like a failed state. This paper therefore reassesses the effects of bad governance on Nigeria using Henry Leopold's two short plays: Hidden Treasure and Ube Republic as moral critique of the unwholesome state of affairs in Nigeria. Utilizing Vilfredo Pareto's Political Elite Theory as theoretical framework the paper avers that some unscrupulous Nigerian politicians pursue their cause with desperation and egocentrism devoid of democratic ideals. This paper finds the need to engage in a contextual reading of Henry Leopold Bell-Gam's play-texts; The Hidden Treasure and Ube Republic as a moral compass to negotiate the anomie in the country. The findings reveal that the failure in government has led to disillusionment and apathy with deleterious consequences, such as violent crimes and militancy and kidnap for ransom. The paper recommends that Nigeria urgently needs detribalized and democratic political leadership to transcend the hoi polloi to a peaceful and egalitarian society where everyone would be proud of. And Nigeria can rightfully take its place in the comity of developing states.

Keywords: Africa, Politics, Governance, Nigeria Elite theory, and Henry Leopold's Hidden Treasure and Ube Republic.

INTRODUCTION

Drama is active letters of the alphabet, it is active literature. Drama is an active literature because it teaches the mind, engages the audience with the seriousness and the urgency it requires, it talks and addresses diverse subject matter while it interacts and connects with the society, and above all, affecting the society's psychological dispositions in creating, recreating and sanitizing it, even as it actively entertains. Because the power of

drama travels throughout many endeavours of life, it becomes very imperative to convincingly submit that conceivably sophisticated around arrays of incommensurable ideas, the emperor of Ethiopia and Social Reformer in his advocacy for equality and transparent leadership, His Imperial Majesty, Haile Selassie (1892-1975) who reigned from 1930 to 1974 once articulated what can be considered the worse for mankind.

We all wish to live. We all seek a world in which men are freed of the burdens of ignorance, poverty, hunger and disease. And we shall be hard-pressed to escape the deadly rain of nuclear fall-out should catastrophe overtake us. (<https://www.quotetab.com/by-haile-selassie>).

The thought of Selassie's dooming foreshadowing is without arguments a dreadful endeavour to engage in. Thus, the need to circumvent such horrific likelihood may have been the major motivating force that have since caused the world the pulls-and-pushes to fight and advance and create the required changes for the better. Such exertions are of course multidimensional and have nonetheless been cost-effective hence, the progression of the world over centuries and still counting. With this standing, the gloriousness of the changing, growing and advancing world of man that we all enjoy today is as one cannot otherwise suggest, rightly credited to the unceasing edginess and stiff determination of mankind to see to its furtherance since the beginning of time.

In spite of this standard establishment, one should not forget that the ordeals facing man are as old as man himself. Factually speaking, these ordeals are like curses or worse still, everlasting afflictions as they are not only unending but, relentless, and unquenchable yet surfacing multi-dimensionally like the skin of a chameleon. Consequently, as the result realized following a recycling mechanism formula, men's ordeals do not just change but they however evolve from time to time. If there is any disapprobation to this throbbing truth, then how come throughout all of history, man has not been able to identify a single dispensation where the world or any society in particular can be said to be problem free? As a matter of fact, the best that could be said is that for example; the immediate past generation is better than the present because, this dispensation is clothed with far more problems than there ever was in the previous one. Judging from this universal instance, it is therefore safe to submit that; no matter how good and conducive an era is or was, the truth of the matter is that no dispensation is completely free of crisis.

Attaining unity for instance is one challenge that humans have failed to overcome from day one. Racism, greed, religious intolerance and extreme power hunger are some principal mothers of disunity, while mountainous efforts have been directed over time to challenge this unending menace, unity cannot be completely achieved. It is not strange that Selassie once shared a strong sentiment thus; 'Peace is a day-to-day problem, the

product of a multitude of events and judgments. Peace is not an 'is,' it is a 'becoming.' (<https://www.quotetab.com/by-haile-selassie>). Selassie's schmaltziness here is not just a resourceful metaphor but some sort of confirmation of the fore proposition. Reclining the peace/unity phenomenon for the purpose of a broader outlook permeates the saying that; the world would have been a much better place if those ill-feelings melted out by man against one and another were long perished, if man's conscience was not slayed since the day one in place of inhumanity, and if selfishness was traded for selflessness.

These chronic attitudes of mankind are literarily the reasons man's efforts to move from stage one to stage two continually experiences sluggish growth and sometimes, no growth at all. In many cases, what can be viewed as the worse becomes the startling result(s), as attempts towards global improvements and developments give birth to anti-productive and counterproductive fallouts. With this standing, man is nonetheless the very weed amongst his beautifully constructed wheat field. Even Selassie held credence to the fact that man is blameworthy for his ordeals when he opined that:

Throughout history, it has been the inaction of those who could have acted; the indifference of those who should have known better; the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most; that has made it possible for evil to triumph.
(<https://www.quotetab.com/by-haile-selassie>).

The credibility of this standing does not mean that people would or should cease from making efforts to improve the world. After all, the world has since held credence to the widespread adage that; 'the fact that someone goes to the stream and drowns there, does not stop others from going to the same stream'.

The validity of this *raison d'être* might have been the main magnetism that steered Henry Leopold Bell-Gam to employing his dramatic proficiency in an earnest attempt to heal the world as scientists, philosophers, and doctors' etcetera, have been moved since time immemorial to do likewise through their professional expertise. Thus, with his profound creative aptitude, Bell-Gam's dramatic thoughts have created many plays preoccupied with a wide range of thematic concerns. And whereas all of them cannot be cited here and now as it will amount to a shift in focus, Bell-Gam's *Hidden Treasure* and *Ube Republic* will be studiously looked upon; there reactions and reflections vis-à-vis the Nigerian political landscape is the thematic concern of this paper.

Conceptual Update: Politics/Governance

Fundamentally speaking, politics is a worldwide phenomenon that essentially involves policy making, implementation and the constitutional procedure of fluctuating high

public office holders. Its existence inclusively accommodates every nation of the world; however, it appears to be run differently according to the culture, doctrines and constitution of individual nations. In a strict sense, politics can be defined as a methodology and activities associated with running a government, an organization or a movement.

In further light, politics conjures the maneuvers and diplomacy between people as it involves power, influence or conflict. Being a relative term, the World Bank Institute (WBI) in 2012 holds that governance:

Consists of the traditions and institutions by which authority is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced, the capacity of government to effectively formulate and implement policies; and the respect of citizens and the state institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.(Cited in Coker & George-Genyi, 1122)

Relationally, the concept of politics or governance is much nearer to the sense of the affairs of statesmen/stateswomen in gaining high governmental positions as well as how they operate therein in performing their civic mandates as well as improving and maintaining their portfolios. Apprehending the already said, Jakob Norberg expansively and of course, aptly conjures that:

The expression “political concepts” refers to a set of concepts essential to any serious reflection on political life. This set includes authority, democracy, equality, freedom, justice, power and further concepts that represents fundamental political values and principles. Indeed, dictionaries of political thoughts in no small part consist of entries on terms that signifies such central concepts. An expanded list would comprise conservatism, socialism, representation, the separation of powers, the welfare state, multiculturalism, public opinion and numerous other concepts in the realm of ideologies and institutions. They, too, form important building block of modern political thought. (Norberg, 2014, p.1)

Advancing from the concept of politics, citing Ogundiya, Kola et al. (2017), suggest that ‘governance is the way in which governments exercised power for the management and distribution of a country’s social and economic resources’. Seconding the above, Kola et al. expound the idea by asserting that:

It is the process by which a state's affairs are managed effectively in the areas of public accountability, fiscal responsibility, administrative and the political responsibility, responsiveness, and transparency, all of which must show the interest of the governed and the leaders. The basic features of good governance include the conduct of a comprehensive management wherein all the critical stakeholders are allowed to have a say in the decision-making process. (Kola, Gana & Olasumbo, 2017, p.1039)

Having guaranteed a conceptual update above, it suffices to say therefore that the very rubric and tenets premeditatedly designed in relation to the structural entreaty of politics are constructed to ultimately earn a tenacious goal. In the thinking of Coker & George-Genyi (2014), good governance, peace, security and development that are sustainable are veritable values every nation desires to cultivate. This sentiment of this statement therefore entices the saying that the concept of politics in its envisioned sense is supposed to be a fine and clinical preoccupation for development. However, only a few nations who practice it in fairness prove so. The U.S.A, Germany, Japan, Britain, France etc. are archetypal nations that practice a mature, fair, democratic and a recommended kind of politics while Nigeria amongst more than a hundred nations in similar likeness are sagaciously otherwise.

The Nigerian State and Politics

The detrimental effects of bad government institutions are well obvious. Nevertheless, with the consideration of both practical and studious realities, the state of Nigerian politics cannot be disentangled and exonerated from maladministration on the path of politicians and consequently bad governance. As a consequence, in the words of Coker and George-Genyi (2014), 'bad governance has been understood to reflect a general tendency of a public institution not being able 'to manage public affairs and public'. Furthermore, the latter appraises that bad governance becomes more pronounced when a state or government fails (abysmally) to meet the needs of the society even when it makes use of the best of all the resources at their disposal.

Whilst this standard position, surfing through history, it will amount to a case of overstating the obvious when we say that since the British government left the Nigerian state to allow for independence, Nigerians has never ceased from enduring insalubrious politics and consequently bad leadership. It is not out of place to state that clean, unprejudiced and proficient government institutions are innermost to deal with some of the most significant issues of our times, such as poverty reduction, climate change and mistrust.

Whereas, the foregoing position contends to be a conventional makeup, the Nigerian political situation especially of present is typically and contextually an epitome of all

sorts of feared realities that can conceivably emanate from the playability of clandestine politics. Espousing this thought, Yagboyaju and Akinola stress that:

Over the decades, there has been a recurrent and sustained argument that the Nigerian state, like its counterparts in Africa and other countries of the developing world, underperforms due to state capacity to deal with the contemporary complexities of governance. (Yagboyaju & Akinola, 2019, p.1)

Thinking in equal capacity, the latter apprises that the nature of the state, the public institutions through which legitimate power is exercised and enforced, is germane to the study of politics in any state. Sequel from the foregoing provision, Okoi and Iwara (2021) heartily nurse the thought that the failure of governance in Nigeria manifests in the declining capacity of political leaders to recognize systemic risks in various capacities. Hence, with the same pace, the latter alert that election fraud, terrorist attacks, herder-farmer conflict, armed banditry, and police brutality are pertinent areas necessary measures should be positioned in order to address these basic challenges. Be that as it may, it is although uninteresting to say, hitherto valid to apprise that with the current systemic leadership trend which is founded on bribery, tribalism and nepotism, god-fatherism and intimidation and violence, the Nigerian state and the people therein will hardly keep away from enduring insecurity, poverty and truncated living standards. The intensifying apprehension with reference to the governance project in Nigeria cannot be elucidated outside the country's chronological familiarity, one that has laid the unyielding underpinning for the current wave of ethno-religious and politico-economic catastrophe in the terra firma. This state of affairs outstandingly raises some solemn concerns about the question of good governance in Nigeria where the politics of deficiency and malpractice of resources appears to be taking over the principles of answerability, lucidity and dependability.

This is an additional red alert, but to spur furthered alerts is to state the fact that for a sustainable period of time now, the very nature of Nigeria's political landscape has caused many Nigerians and even non-Nigerians to paint the situation generally as a show of shame.

Whereas in the year 2020, out of 180 countries, Transparency International rates Nigeria 149th in the corruption rank against 146th in 2019; this appalling depiction of the Nigerian state is also expressed by The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) in a statement thus:

Nigerians poor socioeconomic performance, human right abuses, widespread poverty, insecurity, corruption and lack of trust in the

political system have led to disenchantment amongst the electorate, especially the youths who make up 51% of the 84 million register voters. (<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2020/12/18/bad-good-governance-political-selection-in-nigeria-election-human-cost/>)

The validity of this position can be easily linked to the growing establishment of heated revolutionary groups. Apart from the remarkable 2020 radical exploit shockingly fronted by crestfallen and embittered Nigerian youths in a nationwide “End SARS” protest, the renown Biafra sect otherwise known as “The Indigenous People of Biafra” (IPOB), the various militant groups in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria and the Oduduwa movement seeking for a Yoruba nation are common cliques making serious petition(s) to the federal government of Nigeria. Of course with the employment of several revolutionary attitudes and techniques, the assertiveness of these aforementioned groups show clearly that many Nigerians has long lost faith in the government. Empirically defending this point, Mohammed N. Suleiman and Mohammed A. Karim courageously avowed that:

One of the vexing issues bedeviling Nigeria in recent years has been the violent militancy in some corners of the country. The emergence of many of these militant groups such as the Odua People’s Congress (OPC) and the Niger Delta militants is the result of poor governance by the various military juntas that reigned for decades in Nigeria. (Suleiman & Karim, 2015, p.1)

Expounding on this thought, Suleiman and Karim make a necessary inference that the absence of relevant projects and other basic needs have been responsible for the increase in economic and social gaps between the rich and the poor. By implication, this has led to a massive vacuum in infrastructural development and as such, there has been a continued level of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment within the ranks of average Nigerians, thus creating the perfect arena for breeding violent militancy in Nigeria.

In a related interest, it is pertinent to observe that the continuous failure of the Nigerian government has led to an increased practice of monetary crimes especially amongst the youths. Hence, we see that prostitution (including gigolo), cyber fraud, human parts marketing, human trafficking, armed robbery, banditry and kidnapping for ransom and the likes have not only proven to be the most common crimes nowadays, but have gradually become acceptable routes to making wealth in Nigeria.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Henry Bell-Gam's "The Hidden Treasure"

Synopsis: The discovery of crude oil (hidden treasure) in the community of Kohia/Omasi is lightly good news but ironically conjures communal crisis instead of propagating development, harmony and peace amongst the people. Eze Kohia, the paramount ruler does not fancy the antics of the discoverers of the hidden treasure (Schepetrolina Company Ltd.) hence, rejects bribe from the company to the greatest disappointment of his deputy, Eze Omasi, who in later scheme goes behind and accepts the bribe money. To safely enclose his depraving deed, Deputy Eze Omasi arranges the kidnap of Eze Kohia. Shortly after, his intrigues are uncovered by the gods through the community diviner who ensures his arrest and the release of the kidnapped Eze Kohia. Deputy Eze Omasi and his accomplices are napped and made to face the law.

Subject Matter: Relaxed on the backdrop of politics, Bell-Gam's Hidden Treasure runs on the channel of greed as well as bribery and corruption in the face of plenteous wealth. The discovery of crude oil in the land by the Schepetrolina Company Ltd. breeds several intrigues and antics for two basic ends. One fueled by greed, thus, the attempt is to amass wealth even at the expense of many while the other, sitting under the backdrop of justice fights to protect the common good instead of being egotistical. The unseen crude oil hence, becomes the subject of conflict. However, through the many tests and trials, justice prevails as those who insist on getting their hands dirty for a selfish course are brought to face the law.

Thematic Preoccupation: In relation to the play's subject matter, greed, impatience and disunity guarantee no good end as underdevelopment and communal crisis most likely become the net's catch. The story of the Hidden Treasure is almost a cliché as far as the Niger Delta region of Nigeria and crude oil exploration is concern. Quite a number of social qualms are usually linked to this concern, there is either the problem of gain sharing and the problem of oil spillage in the case of so much oil exploration activities. Hence, the offshoot of the above sees nothing but crimes such as thuggery, kidnapping, theft, impersonation, murder, deceit and cheat.

In most cases, these level of intense follow-up amounts to the problem of insecurity and this for sure have a longing economy disadvantage upon oil host communities as investors will see no other rational but to shy away due to so much unfavorable conditions founded upon political jingoism and greed. The memorandum of this piece

therefore, highlights the virtues of peace, patience, honesty, selflessness, and harmony as necessary ingredients that should take center stage in the face of tempting scenarios if there must be development. In a nutshell, as exemplified in the intriguing spectacle of the Hidden Treasure, good governance becomes an indispensable ingredient for national development hence, bribery and corruption, nepotism and tribalism, violence and the likes must necessarily be shunned.

Social Relevance: Essentially, the overriding lesson one could dutifully and judiciously deduce from this very piece is to say simply that greed, selfishness, disunity and dishonesty are unlikely vices that are capable of weighing down any developmental attempt of any given society. As clinically demonstrated in the Hidden Treasure, it is glaring that the aforementioned vices are not good for any sort of gathering, organization or institution. Deputy EzeOmasi's character presents a typical Nigerian attitude of materialism and greed. The typicality of this loud attitude aggregates to a number of copious negative dealings which are repulsive against the development of any society.

In earnest though, the play Hidden Treasure is socially relevant as it preaches to all and sundry the importance of communal behavior. Communal behavior fosters the altitude of selflessness, honesty, love and unity which is good for the advancement of all. The end of Deputy Eze Omasi's character nonetheless, shows a great lesson to all; the consequences of greed and other associated depravities of extreme nature.

Henry Bell-Gam's "Ube Republic"

Synopsis: The sudden death of King Eremadu fast tracks the conspicuousness of the treacherousness in Prince Eremadu's persona. The latter who is a prince and heir to the throne of Banana community tricks his people into championing his political aspiration. Soon, Prince Eremadu triumphs following an election process and becomes a distinguished Senator. Still ambitious, with his intelligence in treachery and forgery and through his mastery in political chicanery, he secures the admiration of his fellow senators who vote him senate president. Double joy for Prince Eremadu whereas double blow for the people of Banana community as the death and burial of King Eremadu becomes a conspiracy affair. In a related interest, it soon becomes conspicuous that the corpse of King Eremadu has been stately attended to. With the following, Prince Eremadu's mischief does not only become very eye-catching but becomes brightly a desecration upon his community. Reactively, the latter is dealt with following traditional precepts.

Subject Matter: Engrossed in the topic of politics, Ube Republic is a hot commentary on the mischief of power players. As typical as the Nigeria's political colognes, this piece creatively explores on the topic in question through a representation of an archetypal grass-root political situation. Bell-Gam's blunt expression through the microcosm of the imaginary Banana community presents a sound prototype of Nigeria's political situation. Of course, as emblematic as most Nigerian politicians are, the focus character, Prince Eremadu is satirically put on limelight to showcase the efficacy of possessing the following characteristics; lie, deceit, bribery, and corruption. Damned are the holders of such machineries as they practically holds no conscience; dreadful are the machineries themselves as they only suffice as raw materials for selfish gains and consequently backwardness; and doomed are the people ruled by damned politicians wielding dreadful machineries as violence, endless anguish, poverty, death and underdevelopment becomes their lot.

Thematic Preoccupation: Logically informed by the derivatives of the play's subject matter, the thematic concern in Ube Republic can be put simple, "the bane of selfishness, hypocrisy and corruption by political power players". Dramatically harnessed through the plot's heart perturbing journey clinging with a satisfactory resolution, the sad end of Prince Eremadu following the unrest incubated by the latter in his home town, Banana community, clarifies the thematic sensibility of the play. Such level of thematic awareness espoused in the play can equally be responsive in acting as an expunging axe standing against those rotten tooth living freely within the dentition of Nigeria's political landscape. Categorically, Ube Republic is a sound advocate for a transparent and ceteriorogenesis of politics and consequently good governance. Whereas, the acceptance of such commendation can well secure the succession of collective good and development, the playing of clandestine and duplicitous politics as with Prince Eremadu, will only breed de-developmental results.

Societal Relevance: Apart from the already said, Ube Republic is socially relevant in that it explores a matter of high topical interest. Politics is the pivot upon which every society either thrives or fail; the difference exist in the manner each society rotates its own. Upholding this point, this play is also of societal relevance being that it exposes a problem and takes a step further to redress it. Hence, the recommendations espoused in the play becomes food for social structuring and restructuring. On a concluding note, Ube Republic is beneficial to all and sundry; whether the classy or the classless, the ruled or the ruling class and the contemporary or the ultramodern class.

Political Elite Theory

Whereas several theorists have been allied to the Elite Theory, Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) is the first and most recognized theorist affiliated with the theory. Be that as it may, it is significant that this discourse be advanced with background knowledge of the concept known widely as Political Elite. Stating logically, the concept in question suffice to categorize some classified personalities in politics. No wonder, Woleala Ekundayo (1), apprises that; be it ruling or governing, political elite refers to a group of highly distinguished persons who are characterized by exceptional performance in politics, who effectively utilize or monopolize power and who possess a sense of group cohesion as well as a corresponding esprit de corps. By this instance, it becomes practical to state that political elites always excel in the ability to secure power and rule. Relatively, the latter defines elite theory as:

A set of ideas, principles and assumptions on the concept, structure and exercise of power. It is a theory that inquires about and elucidates on power relationships in the modern society. The theory postulates that a small group of people which can be found in the economic, policy planning and military institutions of the state is vested with overriding power. (Ekundayo, 2017, p.1)

Concurrently, this small group of people exercising preponderant power is aptly considered political elites. It is thus, interesting to note that this group known as political elite holds exceptional abilities in politics and as such, enjoys great monopoly of power in this regards. From a critical line of thought, political elites flourish in all societies fairly because of the fact that they possess outstanding abilities that help them to secure power, perpetuate it and rule. It is objectively logical to apprise that being powerful makes it a lot easier to maintain and sustain political power. However, to instill clarity, Ekundayo (2017) explains in clear terms the makings and assets of the elite theory.

1. The elite theory stipulates that overriding and ultimate power can be found among the people who hold key positions in the economic, political and military institutions in any society.
2. The theory assumes that all men love power. Hence, through the elite theory we are able to understand that those in power do not want to surrender power easily but to hold on to it tenaciously and through any means.
3. The theory states that all men are not all endowed alike. Hence, the emphasis on the psychological and intellectual superiority obtained by the elite. It further

reinforces the psychological, intellectual and other differences that set apart the political elite from the non-elite.

4. The theory emphasizes inequality rather than equality in the society. It stresses the belief that the elites are the highest accomplishees in their fields and that the political elite are imbued with personal resources such as social skills, intelligence and special interest in politics.
5. The theory divides the society into two different groups because politics is, essentially, a relationship between rulers and the ruled and it is defined in terms of power. It is the ruling class that produces the power elite, the power wielding minority group, in any society.
6. The theory emphasizes the rule by the minority over the majority in any society. The society is usually ruled by the political elite, a minority group of achievers in politics who are highly organized, cohesive and will do everything to secure, conserve, preserve and perpetuate its power over a majority that is largely unorganized.

Political Elite Theory and Politics in Nigeria

Perhaps founded on a bleak heart, Yagboyaju and Akinola give a blunt yet sound appraisal of the gloomy political realities in Africa thus;

...since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, and despite the growing embrace of democratic governance processes, the African continent has had to grapple with multiple of challenges of insecurity, poverty, injustice, and underdevelopment, in general. These range from civil wars (Liberia and Sierra Leone), postelection violence (Cote d'Ivoire, 2010, and Nigeria, 2011), coups d'etat (Mali and Guinea Bissau, 2012), large scale uprisings, and the associated migratory flows (Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya since 2011), xenophobic attacks (South Africa and Zambia), to the growing threats of transnational crimes, violent extremism, and terrorism across the continent. (Yagboyaju & Akinola, 2019, p.4)

Reacting to this observation, it suffices to say that the people at the helm of affairs pivoting the government of each of these countries captured all sprout out from the political elite class. Being wary of the latter's consideration, Ekundayo infers that the power elite are present in any society, no matter how small or large, old or new, the

society is. Nevertheless, critically sizing the situation in the Nigerian context, the latter relatively asserts that:

The power elite has been identified with those occupying key positions in the economic, political and military institutions in any country as in the United States of America. In the case of Nigeria, the economic, political and military powers are subsumed in the Hausa-Fulani aristocracy and their collaborators from other ethnic groups. However, the power elite have remained dominantly as the Hausa-Fulani aristocratic class, which exercises overriding power in Nigeria through political, economic and military institutions. However, they have collaborators from other ethnic groups. (Ekundayo, 2017, p.4)

Upholding this position, it becomes needless to make the inference that political elites are infinitely convoluted in the struggle to maintain power. Bearing in mind that the Nigerian state and her politics is the subject in this discourse then, it should seem weird to find the foregoing argument farfetched. In this vein, it should unquestionably be unequivocal for one to think that politicians in Nigeria are extremely desperate. And whereas some foreign characters might find the flare to think that the desperation of many Nigerian politicians to wield power is because they hold an ambition to pilot collective development for the enjoyment of all and sundry, the situation is shamefully not the case as history has apparently noticed. As a matter of fact, considering the current state of things in the country, such wishful thought can only be extensively viewed as fiction.

Well, as pitiable as this narrative look, the truth remains that the so-called political elites fight to maintain power so as to keep on manipulating contents in national coffers, with the immunity of political impunity; to the sizable benefits of their bottomless pockets and copious bank accounts. In as much as this is so, these power holders are regrettably extreme in their dubiousness therefore, fairly anything including; lying, deceit, killing, betrayal and blackmailing can serve as alternative to a typical Nigerian politician in an expedition to maintain power as well as to gluttonously syphon materialistic gains from the pocket of national treasury. The entirety of this description can be collapsed to suit the coinage; “political corruption”. Be that as it may, to be critical of this matter makes it apt to reiterate Ezonbi Boumo’s assertion that:

Political corruption manifest in elections such as the manipulation to obtain or remain in power. Political positions are scarce and the prizes of

office are high, hence, the competition of such resources-positions-involves every possible extra -legal means through corruption in order to overcome obstacles of opposition. Political corruption is sometimes seen as similar to “corruption of greed” as it affects the manner in which decisions are made, as it manipulates political institutions, rules and procedure, and distorts the institutions of government. (Boumo, 2014, p.37)

As lucid as it is, Boumo’s assertion here presents an inch-perfect resolution to the thesis statement of this research. As a matter of fact, the trappings of this critical sentiment resolutely points at “corruption” to being the flagbearer of backwardness and de-development in Nigeria.

Typically, the imprint of Nigerian politics has since been characterized by a vivid and noticeable character known generally as corruption. Obviously pained by this reality, one of Nigeria’s most renowned presidents, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, on the 29th September of the year 2000, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) criticized the situation. Specifically, former president Obasanjo did not only propagate corruption as a very negative phenomenon, the latter equally defined his thought on the matter, thus:

With corruption there can be no sustainable development, nor political stability. By breeding and feeding on inefficiency, corruption invariably strangles the system of social organization. In fact, corruption is literally the antithesis of development and progress. (Boumo, 39).

Upon the brightness in the light made apparent by the foregoing provision, what else can one possibly say or do other than innovating and earmarking strategies that will seek to redress the situation. With the poor state of things in Nigeria today, it is not only understandable for one to think that the nation does need a healer, but it is equally logical to think that the healer comes fast in order to avoid the worse. Counting those outstanding dilemmas facing the country, Nigeria is of late plagued with issues of excessive kidnapping, banditry, armed-robbery, insurgency, terrorism, prostitution, cyber-fraud, religious bigotry and ethnic crisis, tribalism, political thuggery and terrorism, massive oil theft (bunker) etc. All of these issues need redressing, and whereas that healer Nigeria should be seeking to help outdate her misery can surface from any end, it suffices to say that the politicians are in a sound position to rectify Nigeria of her numerous ordeals.

WAY FORWARD

Being typical of Africa and of the black race in particular; upon the scandalous impacts of colonialization, the shocking influx of industrialization, the appalling bearings of cold and civil wars and the socio-political and economic destructions caused by political power scimmages amongst politicians, ethnic groups and religious sects, many people find it prettily comfortable to identify poverty, insecurity and under development with the African continent. Evidently, this widespread attitudinal behaviour floated by many cannot be viewed as a prodigy of some sorts fairly because, the bleak identity allotted to Africa has been a mainstream idea especially after the era of colonialism. Even so, the African continent and the Nigerian state in particular should not be too proud to stand behind the backdrop of flimsy excuses to give credit to her quandaries. After all, some of her counterparts like Rwanda dare to be progressive despite the misgivings of her background as with other African countries. With her outstanding breakthroughs in very recent years, people begin to wonder if it is the same Rwanda that was engrossed in a fierce civil unrest just yesterday. As a matter of fact, Congressional Research Service (CRS) report shares a briefing of Rwanda's story:

Rwanda has seen rapid development and security gains since the 1994 genocide, in which an estimated 800,000 people mostly members of the ethnic Tutsi minority were killed over a three-month period. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), then a rebel movement, ended the genocide by seizing power and has been the dominant force in Rwandan politics ever since. The RPF-led government has won donor plaudits for its efforts to improve health, boost agricultural output, encourage foreign investment, and promote women's empowerment. (CRS, 2021, p.1)

Founded on this premise, the former has it that Rwanda has achieved a rare degree of political stability, public safety, economic growth, and poverty alleviation in a sub-region plagued by armed conflicts and humanitarian crises. These gains are particularly remarkable in the wake of the 1994 genocide, in which extremist members of the ethnic Hutu majority orchestrated a three-month killing spree targeting the minority Tutsi community, along with politically moderate Hutus and members of the Indigenous Twa community. In the wake of this development, President Paul Kagame, leader of the RPF, now the country's dominant political party has since been widely portrayed as the architect of Rwanda's development "miracle" and of its autocratic political model.

Characteristically, Rwanda's President Kagame is the healer of Rwanda. The former rose into the ranks of power through extreme struggle (including all manner of criticisms and

resistance especially based on ethnicity), not for any selfish reason, but for the purpose of seeing a Rwanda devoid of poverty, insecurity, and underdevelopment. Moving forward, Nigeria in every respect needs a political messiah; one who is a selfless visionary and not a selfish missionary, one who is keen on protecting lives and property for its essence and not on manipulating the former for any egocentric motive, one who is built with the design of progressiveness and not of backwardness, one who is keen on moving upon global trends and not on only copying and/or patronizing products of the global community and finally, Nigeria needs a healer who is willing to sacrifice not because he wants to materialize materialism, but because he wants to actualize a vision whereby Nigeria will one day be recognized as a nation whose system suits as an epitome of global standard.

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