



CONTENTIOUS POLITICS IN AFRICA

V.V.V.V.V

IDENTITY, CONFLICT,
AND SOCIAL CHANGE

V.V.V.V.V

EDITED BY

TOYIN FALOLA
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Toyin Falola

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*This volume is dedicated
for his contribution*

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Series Editor's Foreword

Chapter 19

Governmentalities of Policing Protests in Military and Democratic Dispensations in Nigeria: A Comparative Analysis of June 12, 1993, and January 2012

Gbemisola Abdul-Jelil Animasawun & Yinka Ahmed Aluko

Introduction

One of the main responsibilities of the state is the maintenance and sustenance of public order. However, this comes into contention during protests when the clash of two rights ensues. On the one hand is the right and responsibility of the government to ensure that public order is maintained, sometimes through the use of the coercive apparatus of the state, especially the police. On the other hand is the decision of the citizens to activate their rights for free association and expression of dissent through public protests whenever they feel aggrieved by the intentions and actions of the state. In such instances the streets become, in the words of Wale Adebani, "the sites of hegemony and counter-hegemony; inclusion and exclusion and of cooperation and conflict" (2012: 640). A feature of this scenario is also the clash between security agencies serving as street level bureaucrats representing the state and actors of civil society acting on behalf of the citizens. The emergent scenario in such contexts underscores the centrality of governmentalities in its pristine understanding and as presented by Michel Foucault in his lectures of 1978 and 1979 at the Collège de France. Ann Zimmermann and Adrian Favell (2011) trace the term *governmentalities* to twentieth century liberalism and bureaucratic control of populations. It has

since come to be understood as the political rationality or mentality of government and its technologies for the organization and exercise of power.

As a comparative study of a military and a democratic regime, this chapter examines the similarities in the governmentalities of the state under the two regimes through a critical analysis of the deployment of its political technologies, specifically for protest policing in the two contexts. This is done by examining the performance of the protests and the responses of the police, as political technologies of state power and street level bureaucrats, to gauge the extent of similarities, continuities, or departures from militaristic and colonial governmentalities in a supposedly democratic dispensation.

In his statement of June 8, 1993, on why the June 12, 1993, presidential election was annulled, former military president of Nigeria Ibrahim Babangida declared that “our actions are in full conformity with the original objectives of the transition to civil rule” (*Vanguard*, June 8, 2013) and generated an outcome that the nation, defined within his narrow and selfish prism, “did not bargain for” (Obadare 2012: 92–112). Retrospectively, it can be surmised that, indeed, the original intent of the transition program was to embark on a journey to nowhere while the masses waited for Godot (Becket 1953) just as the transition process was initiated with a preset expectation that privileged outcome over process.

Despite the differences in regime type and distance in time, the mentality that informed the deployment of the police as a form of state technology of power against the June 12, 1993, and January 2012 protests deserves closer analysis on account of the number of avoidable deaths that implicated the police rightly or wrongly. A comparative study will enable a measurement of the extent of change and continuity in the management of protests, especially peaceful ones, which is a core feature of a democratic society that the Nigerian state aspires to be.

We argue that the mentality from which the deployment of political technologies like the police springs can be gleaned from the countenance and declaration of the incumbent president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces of Nigeria, Dr. Ebele Goodluck Jonathan. When Jonathan was asked during an interactive session with journalists in front of a global audience about why he had failed to publicly declare his assets as stipulated by the constitution, he retorted, “I don’t give a damn” (Sahara Reporters, 2014: 1). This is a reflection of the ontology and notoriety of power relations in Nigeria where the subjectification of the people and the level of contempt in which they are held by those in power mirrors the words of Estragon in Samuel Becket’s *Waiting for Godot* that “people [Nigerians] are ignorant apes.” From the two quotations, it is deducible that the way protests are policed flows from a

governmentality and perception of the Nigerian people as of no value, while the intent of most government actions and policies are promises of Godot.

Patrick Chabal (2009) captures the life of the African after five decades of independence in *The Politics of Suffering and Smiling*. In a retrospective analysis, Chabal underscores the fact that Africans have continued to live as subjects worse than they did during the colonial era. According to him, “The fact that the colonial authorities were primarily interested in extracting maximum resources from the least financial and coercive expenditure meant that they usually exercised a relatively benign type of authoritarian rule. Nevertheless, when called upon, the state could be as callous and brutal as feudal lords had been in earlier times: violence was both endemic and systematic in the colonial world” (2009: 89). Colonial rulers thus instituted a dual form of subjecthood, which undermined their modernizing discourse and created a bastard form of political control. After independence, “the state was Africanized but it was still imperious, greedy and coercive” (Chabal 2009: 90). Given this reality, the relationship between the state and citizens in the post-colony cannot but be defined by resistance, contention, and the absence of a shared governmentality, which Charles Tilly (2009) presents as the fulcrum of Foucault thesis. We posit in this chapter that realities of state-society relations during protests in Nigeria as evinced before, during, and after the two instances focused on illustrate a negation of the normative assumption of governmentalities that the state and society should have a shared mentality, because neither of the two decisions came from a consensus of shared subjectivity between the state and citizens.

Governmentality of the African State and Policing of Protests

According to Lemke (2000), Foucault argued that the semantic linking of governing (*gouverner*) and modes of thought (*mentalité*) underscores the centrality of studying technologies of power through an analysis of the political rationality that informs their deployment and usage. Until the eighteenth century, the word *government* had a very broad usage, as it was used in fields such as philosophy, religion, medicine, and pedagogy. It signified problems of self-control, management for the family and children, the household, and control of the soul, all of which informed Foucault’s definition of the governing of the self and others (Lemke 2000).

In exercising its powers through its technologies, the state strives to “conduct the conduct” of citizens, which is another synonym for governmentalities. Political technologies are the means through which power and the rationalities

of the state are manifested, and in turn are used by the state as instruments of its power to affect and shape the conduct of individuals to conform with the underlying rationalities of the government. They are also used in the production of certain truths about a particular domain, such as the legal order of citizenship and rights (Zimmerman and Favell 2011). This aligns with Foucault's definition of governmentalities as the conduct of the conduct that encompasses all activities meant to regulate the conduct of citizens within a state in order to shape their interests, beliefs, aspirations, and desires through a combination of techniques and forms of knowledge.

Since the Treaty of Westphalia, which marked the inauguration of the modern state system, protests and revolutions have been defining features of state life. Their causes, management, and control measures go a long way in revealing the character of the state; its attitude to dissent; the character of the civil society; and the volatility or stability of the public space, especially the streets, which have implications for public order, peace, and security. They speak to its governmentalities and use of political technologies as seen in the conduct of the police serving as the technologies of the state's political power.

Therefore, it can be expected that the relationship between the citizens and governments will be fundamentally dialectical and prone to conflict, considering the knack for domination by the state which inadvertently or otherwise sparks protests. This polarity of assumptions regarding the *raison d'être* of the state and the absence of a shared mentality between the citizens and the elite partly explains the adversarial relationship between the captors and captives of state power. As a result, this defines the use of technologies of power by the state anytime its actions are resisted by its citizens. The governmentality of the state in the post-colony, in its bid to conduct the conduct of the people, rehearses from time to time one of the dimensions of power and domination, explained by Rita Abrahamsen (2004) as the ability to shape people's perceptions, cognitions, and preferences and to make them accept their domination as normal.

Ebenezer Obadare (2012) observes that African realities since independence informed the late Afro-musician and social critic Fela Anikulapo Kuti's declaration in his hit album *Army Arrangement* thus: "Suffer de Africa Pararapa," that is, there is immense suffering in Africa. Cyril Obi (2010: 443–457) laments that after five decades of oil production and incomes totaling over hundreds of billions of dollars, Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, houses individuals with some of the world's worst human development indices, pointing to the paradox between its immense oil wealth and the impoverishment of most of the citizens. Perhaps these realities informed Mbembe's (2001) suggestion that the main ethos of the governmentality of the postcolonial African state has been "the systematic application of pain." Obadare describes the postcolo-

nial Nigerian state sarcastically thus: "Nigeria is the African state of a thousand laughs par excellence" and, as a poster child of the postcolonial state, it is seen by the West as "contradictory if not oxymoronic" (Obadare 2012: 101).

The bullish and grotesque picture of the postcolonial African state and its grim fate on its subjects is presented by Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*:

The state, which by its strength and discretion ought to inspire confidence and disarm and lull everybody to sleep, on the contrary seeks to impose itself in a spectacular fashion. It makes a display, it jostles people and bullies them, thus intimating to the citizen that he is in continual danger. (2004)

Such a character inevitably breeds tension and instability, which goes a long way in shaping the perception and relationship between state and citizens. Besides providing the basis for both legitimate grievances and conflicts leading to instability on the continent, the character of the state has led to the alienation of citizens. Dauda Abubakar sums up the character of the postcolonial African state thus: "authoritarian, predatory and absolutist in terms of monopolization of power by its rulers," and quotes Claude Ake's description of the political class as one that "inherited power from the colonialists in Africa [and] regarded the state as the instrument of its will. Not only did it privatize the state, but it also exploited it for primitive accumulation and used it to oppress the populace" (2001: 31–36). This makes it a replica of the colonial states which, in the views of Berman (1998: 305–341), were "bureaucratic despotisms" headed by small cadres of European administrators and their equally small and poorly equipped police and military units mowing down African resistance with a few machine guns. As a colonial heir, the postcolonial state in Africa has been oppressive and constitutes an unbearable yoke for citizens, making it worse than its colonial progenitor. Obadare and Adebani (2009: 508) bemoan the fact that Africans are left with a state they did not imagine and one that has defied all attempts to fix it. This is a negation of the normative assumption that the state emerges in order to respond to needs that groups in society have, which typically include security, welfare, or the resolution of clashing demands on the allocation of limited resources. Ike Okonta (2008) puts it succinctly in his argument to the effect that the postcolonial state in Africa, like its colonial predecessor, is marked by political authoritarianism and scarcity.

As a subject of intellectual inquiry, the society-centered approach to the study of the state posits that it is an arena for the resolution of conflicts between private interests, while the state-centered approach conceptualizes the state as an independent force with its own policy agenda (Nordlinger 1987). Hyden (2006) characterizes two types of states. On the one hand there is a state in which offi-

cials get too preoccupied with sticking to the procedures, and on the other hand there is one in which officials uphold their own interests at the expense of the public they are meant to serve. The emergent character of the state determines the manner of deploying technologies of state power and whether it will be personalized or depersonalized. However, in many postcolonial African states there has been an obvious selfish utilization of state resources and institutions for private interests, leading to the privatization or capture of the postcolonial African state, including Nigeria. Sola Olorunyomi (2005) alludes to the institutionalized pattern of systematic alienation of the citizens historically by citing the constitution-making processes in Nigeria since 1922 as elitist and exclusionary "with the inescapable attitude of a benefaction from a benevolent despot." In understanding the character of the postcolonial Nigerian state, Olorunyomi (2005: 16) underscores the timelessness of Richard Joseph's thesis of *prebendalism*, which has an historic association with the manner of buying stools in ancient Greece by certain lords or monarchs with the sole intent of generating income for themselves as holders of such offices. Therefore, prebendalism speaks to patterns of political behavior hinged on the principle that such offices be contested for and then utilized for the personal benefit of the occupiers of such offices, including their cronies (Olorunyomi 2005).

Thus after fifty odd years of independent nationhood, the blurred nature of the *public* from the *private* stands at the foundation of other fissures and cracks that define the mentalities and behavior of the Nigerian state, a metaphor for postcolonial dysfunctionality. Adebani and Obadare (2010) posit that this malady qualifies it to be used as a template for examining and illustrating the chronic schizophrenia that has defined the African postcolonial state. The governmentality of the Nigerian state as a metaphor of the African malady is described by Adebani and Obadare as "the absence of a public ethic" (Adebani and Obadare 2013: 6), leading to citizens' perception of the state as "a system that cheats, spends lavishly, mismanages and wastes public funds in addition to favoring friends, groups and companies close to power" (Amuwo 2010: 423–442).

Current realities on the continent have informed the taxonomy of neopatrimonialism based on the mode and intensity of patrimonial practices. Bach makes a distinction between *regulated neopatrimonialism* and *predatory neopatrimonialism* (Bach 2011: 275–294). Regulated neopatrimonialism is achieved through the formalization of the distribution of resources and prebends by the ruler in order to make it inclusive. This is legitimated through cooptation and redistribution as an alternative to coercion, further promoting a culture of mutual accommodation. This enhances the capacity of the state to penetrate society and ensure compliance. Examples of such regimes in Africa can be found in Houphouët Boigny's Cote d'Ivoire (1960–1993) and that of

Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta (1964–1978). Predatory neopatrimonialism can be aptly illustrated with the regime of Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko (1965–1997). Lemarchand describes it as possessing an "unparalleled capacity to institutionalize kleptocracy at every level of the social pyramid and ... unrivalled talent for transforming personal rule into a cult and political clientelism into cronyism" (2003: 31).

Standing parallel to Mobutu's predatory neopatrimonialism is *sultanism*, coined by Max Weber to typify extreme instances in which the ruler's domination relies strongly on an arbitrary and unchecked exercise of power (Chehabi and Linz 1998). The term has been used in describing regimes that were authoritarian and bloody, like that of Idi-Amin in Uganda (1971–1979), Macías Nguema of Equatorial Guinea (1968–1979), and Jean-Bédél Bokassa of Central Africa Republic (1966–1979) (Bach 2011: 279). Although Sani Abacha's Nigeria (1993–1998) also reflected attributes of sultanism, it has often been described as predatory in order to avoid confusion with Nigeria's sultanates, which are traditional institutions (Lewis 1996: 79–103).

Given the subsistence of the exploitative, personalized, predatory, and intolerant nature of a state sustained by a mentality of sultanism and neopatrimonialism that abhors questioning by citizens, it behooves one to pose the question of whether colonialism defined by repression of dissent and demand has actually ended to warrant the description of the state as postcolonial or not. This is so because while nationalists' struggles challenged the excesses of the colonial state, dissent or demand have been criminalized through the agency of the police in a manner that presents postcolonial Africans in the post-colony more as subjects than citizens. Therefore, since independence, state-society relations have configured the African in the post-colony as a client, subject, and citizen.

In explaining the appropriateness of the term *postcolonial*, Crawford Young outlines certain features that were absent in the colonial state as defining and justifying its postcolonial nature:

The dramatic erosion of stateness itself in many cases — in the Weberian sense of the routine capacity to exercise ultimate authority within the territorial domain of sovereignty — opened space for a multitude of actors: informal traders, smugglers, warlords, arms traffickers, youth militia, local associations (civil society), women's organizations, religious groups, refugees. These elements operate with varying degrees of autonomy, interacting with state agents as well as international agencies, donor representatives, and the non-governmental sector. No single designation emerges to capture the cross-currents and contradictions of the era beyond the post-colonial state. (2004: 23–50)

However, our contextual usage of postcolonial is based on the cognizance that the term "is by no means suggestive of an aftermath of colonialism that denies the reality of neocolonialism, dependence and imperialism, no matter the subtleties of international finance capital in the post-World War II era" (Olorunyomi 2005: 82).

To understand the pathology of the Nigerian state and why the line between what should be private or public remains blurred, we align with the *structuralist* and *agential* explanations by Amuwo (2010). The *structuralist* perspective posits that the state in Africa is a making of Western colonialism in which its harsh, arbitrary, and predatory penchant can be located. The *agential* explanation posits that Africa's political elite and governments have been "adapting, indigenizing, tropicalizing, appropriating and reinventing" the postcolonial state and are to a large extent responsible for the state's pathologies and malfeasance (Amuwo 2010). Therefore, it is our view that the mentality of governing held by those in power influences the dysfunctionalities, demonization, and criminalization of any form of protest that dares to make the Nigerian state function in the interests of the citizens.

Policing Protests in Postcolonial Africa

During the colonial period, protests were used mainly as instruments of nationalistic struggles. The colonization of Africa adopted a carrot and stick approach that saw the African chiefs striking a deal with the invaders from Europe because they could not match their superior military might. This bred different forms of resistance and a tense relationship between the colonies and colonialists. Studies on resistance movements have revealed that colonial conquest was high-handed, just as it was challenged vigorously in forms of guerrilla and state armies and the organization of women and men for fierce violent resistance (Cooper 1994). Individually, Africans showed resistance and disapproval by running away from the tax collector or labor recruiters, ignoring orders, and criticizing the claims of missionaries, doctors, and educators, all of which formed isolated parts of collective action against colonialism. However, the British still needed to integrate Africans into their administrative systems through a system of indirect rule that underscored the distinction between the colonies and imperial powers, while the French adopted a system of assimilation that tried to create African Frenchmen and Frenchwomen.

The implication of the contrasting approaches by the British and French generated an impression that one was more discriminatory than the other. This was the case in the British colonies where official and social discrimination was highly pronounced. In many cases this stirred revolts and protests, espe-

cially over taxes, like the Nandi riots over the seizure of lands in 1923 in Kenya and the Aba women's riot in 1929 over taxes in Nigeria (Ellis 1976). These events led to the emergence of primary resistance movements in the early days of colonialism followed by modern mass nationalism (Cooper 1994). The early resistance saw mobilization along a broader network of affiliation beyond kinship units or ethnicities, which in turn became the broad and coherent platform for future resistance movements against colonialism.

Africans got stronger impetus to further challenge the colonialists because of the important roles they played in World War II, which made them conscious of their rights as well as the potential utilities of protests to achieve democracy, freedom, and self-determination (Moss 2007). Also, the independence of India from the British Empire in 1947 had a strong motivational impact on African nationalists. The resistance to colonialism across Africa took both armed and unarmed forms, leading to different types of movements that spearheaded protests across the continent.

In Nigeria, protests have always been held by citizens to demonstrate their dissatisfaction over unpleasant and hurtful practices of the state prior to and since Nigeria's independence. Popular among these were the Aba protests of 1929, the Agbekoya riot of 1968–1969, the reactions that followed the annulment of results of the presidential elections of June 12, 1993, and the January 2012 protests over the removal of fuel subsidy. Despite the pervasive nature of intra- and inter-group crises in Nigeria, such occasions of protests present hope and disappointment about the possibilities of collective civic actions across the divides of religions and ethnicity. This is based on the collective feeling of comradeship and vigor that initially greets such protests. However, the vigor fizzles out often too easily when reconstructed in religious and ethnic narratives. For example, the June 12 struggle became perceived over time as a Yoruba agenda, just as the South-South geopolitical zone of the country did not participate in the January 2012 protests over the removal of petrol subsidy because the incumbent president hailed from the area (Adebanwi and Obadare 2009). Such gaps are cleverly exploited by the state to demonize active participants or leaders of such protests as political jobbers, irredentists, and seekers of cheap popularity in order to obscure the real message conveyed by such protests and to rip it of credibility.

Protests and revolutions have always been used by citizens to react to state policies and decisions that are considered unpopular and inimical to their welfare. They usually occur out of frustration and are often the only resource of the powerless and oppressed. We conceptualize protests, whether violent or peaceful, as forms of resistance hinged on the definition articulated by Walraven and Abbink (2003: 1–40) as intentions and concrete actions taken to oppose

others and to refuse to accept their ideas, actions, or positions for a variety of reasons. One of the most important reasons behind this resistance is the perception of the position, claims, or actions taken by others as unjust, illegitimate, or intolerable attempts at domination, which may or may not be acts of physical violence. More than any other thing, protests bring the state and organized sections of the society in adversarial contacts in a clash of hegemony and counter-hegemony. The repertoire of protest actions includes the gamut of (un)civil disobedience encompassing a wide range of activities, from petitions, public demonstrations, and marches to theatre and other forms of performances such as sit-ins, occupations, and the destruction of property (Tarrow 1998).

Since the Treaty of Westphalia, which marked the birth of the contemporary system of states, revolutions and protests have featured in histories of nation-states, partly because the state as successor of the church became absolute. Raeff (1975) argues that the absolute state precipitated public political action, which received its philosophic inspiration from the rationalism of the eighteenth century. Raeff further argues that these eighteenth century beginnings can be linked to the emergence of a new social class and its triumph over the *ancien regime*, which provided the basis for the unfolding of the two major planks of modern civilization — capitalism and statism. The rise of states and attempts to consolidate the power of the state have, advertently or inadvertently, been causes of popular protests and revolutions in different epochs and locales.

Protests have led to revolutions and changes of regimes across the world. This makes them a source of worry for many regimes irrespective of the type of government. Leaders under different regime types usually deploy the military and police as technologies of state power and its representatives against protesters. In many such instances it is usually a scenario of the armed fighting against the unarmed. This raises issues of human rights abuses and questions the democratic credentials of many states. As a form of state response to reactions from citizens and opposing political parties, states ensure that they police protests. In this situation, citizens describe actions of the police during protests as *repression*, while the state justifies its own decision, no matter how brutal, on the premise of *maintaining law and order*. Going by evidence from the premodern, modern, and postmodern eras, scholars and policy makers have been grappling with how to humanize the handling of protests by state security agencies, especially the police. Michael Lipsky (1980) suggests that protest policing is very crucial to the understanding of how states view social movements. It is also reflective of how states view dissent and public demands. In this context, Lipsky argues that the police may be seen as street level bureaucrats whose actions reflect the perception of the government held by the

people. Therefore, the management or mismanagement of these protests goes a long way in projecting a state as actually repressive or tolerant of the expression of dissent and demands from the citizens. In this situation, the police appear as a public relations officer whose activities go a long way in shaping how the protesters, who are first and foremost citizens of the state, would perceive the state (Della Porta 1999). This reinforces the views of Bryan Smith (2003) that the state and society are intertwined in a mutually affecting relationship that shapes each other's actions.

While the police continue to deny being repressive and abusive of human rights, the victims of police brutality and assaults during protests have maintained their position, often with evidence that police brutalize them for activating a fundamental aspect of their human rights. In this context, the press and civil society organizations emerge as “police” of the police by monitoring the way protests and protesters are treated and by serving as joint members of the fourth realm of the state in advocacy and whistle-blowing any time infractions are committed against protesting citizens. This has also received a further boost from the advent of information and communication technology, which has made social media a sort of check on the excesses of the state and its agencies. This has in particular provided citizens with alternative platforms to express themselves whenever the state constrains their access to the streets and state owned media. For example, in Zimbabwe, Kudakwashe Manganga (2012) observes that with the enactment of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) in 2002, the internet has provided the alternate platform for citizens to construct a counter-public space, just like the internet substantially aided the African fourth wave of democratization in the Maghreb.

Hegemony, Counter-Hegemony, and Atunda

Ayo Olukotun (2004) refers to the Italian Marxist theoretician Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, which derives partly from Marx's statement in *The German Ideology*, that the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas; the class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that generally speaking the ideas of those who lack means of mental production are subject to it. This presupposes that over time the ideas of the ruling class ascend to the position of sanctified common sense of the entire society. Divergent ideological expressions may exist in plural settings, but they are regarded as distractions. Olukotun (2004: 1–140) explains that whenever concealed and open persuaders of legitimation fall short of aiding the state to have

its way, the use of force becomes inevitable. It is in such contexts that the police, and sometimes the military, go to the streets to depict the street level bureaucrats and enforcers described by Della Porta. Olukotun quotes Gramsci further in explicating the operation of hegemony:

The normal exercise of hegemony is characterized by the combination of force and consent which balance each other reciprocally without force predominating excessively over consent. Indeed the attempt is always made to ensure that force would appear to be based on the consent of the majority expressed by the so-called organs of public opinion — newspapers and associations — which therefore in certain situations are artificially multiplied. (2004: 12)

Also, the ruling class makes use of the mass media and education system to legitimate their struggles through promotion of concepts such as *national interest* and protection of *our nascent democracy* in order to generate and sustain a positive consensus towards the implementation of their often ill-conceived or misunderstood policies. However, this does not go unchallenged by intellectuals of the subordinate class as well.

In this case, Nigeria's police illustrate the instrument of state hegemony and governmentalities, while counter-hegemony is depicted by the person and musical ideology of the late Fela Anikulapo Kuti. Adebaniwi describes the late musician as "Nigeria's iconoclastic musician of international renown and social critic par excellence" (2010: 129). The choice of Fela as a symbol of counter-hegemony is based on the description given by Olorunyomi that, "He stretches to the limit the centrifugal potential of language through his re-coinage of standard acronyms and words in order to subvert actual and perceived hegemonic constructs" (2005: 71). His music is considered to be a timeless embodiment of resistance against hegemonic governmentalities that define many postcolonial African states through their (ab)use of political technologies like the police, especially during protests that include coercive and ideological forces. As a form of counter-hegemony, Fela's music challenges hegemonic discourse and its reproduction locally and internationally.

Furthermore, the personality and music of Fela illustrate the propelling motif of *Atunda* as explained by Funso Aiyejina (2009). *Atunda* is a Yoruba word that means to recreate. So we proceed from a standpoint that protests and revolutions are geared towards the recreation or remodeling of societies in ways that create a public space that is not monopolized. We posit that Fela Anikulapo Kuti and Antonio Gramsci are expressive of the essence of *Atunda* as espoused by Funso Aiyejina. Pius Adesanmi of the Sahara Reporters presents a summation of the narratives *Atunda* represents:

The story of *Atunda* in Yoruba mythology: the servant of the Orisa Nla (Supreme God) who rebelled against slavery and servitude, rolled a boulder over his slave master, and broke him to pieces. The shattered god became multiple gods and deities in a cosmological process of renewal. By opening his eyes and looking within, *Atunda* answered Bob Marley's question: are you satisfied with the life you are living? *Atunda* was not satisfied with the life he was living, he was not satisfied with his situation, hence his foundational rebellion. This explains why Wole Soyinka and Funso Aiyejina have argued that in *Atunda* the Yoruba gave the world the first revolutionary, the first iconoclast, the first progressive agitator, the first subject in history who resisted and rejected oppression, the first agent of change and rebirth. Aiyejina even considers *Atunda* the predecessor of Che Guevara, Martin Luther King, Marcus Garvey, Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cabral, and Eduardo Mondlane. (2011)

Performance of June 12, 1993, Protests and the Governmentalities of Their Policing

The emergence and popularity of June 12, 1993, in the annals of Nigeria's political history can be described as the culmination of an endless road of transition to democracy led by the self-declared evil genius, General Ibrahim Babangida, from 1985 to 1993. The transition process of the Babangida administration has been well documented in terms of its actors, villains, and victims. However, for our purpose we shall present its narrative as a precipitant of public protests and rejection of the military governmentalities that informed its annulment. Patrick Wilmot argues that contrary to the inane arguments rooted in ethno-religious centrism, "the main reason for the annulment was the recognition that Nigerian voters had entered the modern world and were pursuing their interests rather than drift like sheep in paths laid down by ethnic, regional and religious leaders ... the ruling clique was genuinely surprised that Nigerians had not acted according to the plans it had for them" (2007: 49). This argument speaks to the emergence of counter-hegemony from the mass of the Nigerian electorate that rejected the governmentality of the ruling oligarchy as represented by the ruling military class of that time. In precipitating public protests, the drums of the impending wave of protests were well beaten by the press, and the masses reacted in a manner that activated the streets, especially in Lagos metropolis, as sites of resistance and repression. Wale Adebaniwi (2008: 123) describes the period as one in which "civil insurgency and desperate mobilization for democracy was clothed in the robe of journalism."

By performance of protests, we refer to the actual manner of expression of resistance by the citizenry, while governmentalities of protest policing implies the thinking and the actual methods adopted in conducting the conduct of protesters by policemen during such protests. On the day of the first protest youths, students, and market women, especially in the southern part of the country, took to the streets. Highways were lined with burning fires, and thousands of demonstrators, demanding that the government recognize the results of the election, filled the streets of Lagos with barricades of burning cars, buses, and tires that blocked three bridges in the city center. On July 16, 1993, when tanks were rolled out to root out the protesters, tear gas and guns were part of the repressive mechanisms used by the police and the men of the armed forces. What followed were heaps of dead bodies all over major roads in Lagos.

The prologue of the next wave of protests started on June 11, 1994, when Chief Abiola declared himself president and commander-in-chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces at Epetedo in Lagos and enjoined the heroic people of Nigeria to come out in support of his government. He resurfaced from hiding again on June 22, 1994, to address a small rally in Lagos restating that the government he put in place on June 11, 1994, remained the only legitimately constituted authority of the country (Adebanwi 2008: 123). On June 23, 1994, he was re-arrested and detained, an action that triggered the paralysis of economic activities aided by the active involvement of the members and leadership of the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), led by Frank Kokori on July 4, and that of Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association (PENGASSAN) on July 12. The protests that followed were brutally repressed by a combination of military and police action which left an innumerable death toll.

The policing of the June 12 protests was more repressive than preventive. The policing of the protests can also be described as flowing from a governmentality that viewed protests as irrational manifestations of mass feelings and a violent anarchist reaction that the state must put down by all means.

Performance of January 2012 Protests and the Governmentalities of Their Policing

One of the causes of tension and violent protests in the history of postcolonial Nigeria is the debate on the appropriate price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS), also known as fuel or petrol. Unlike the conflicts and violence in the Niger Delta related to issues of environmental degradation and insecurity arising from the exploration of oil, protests that are triggered any time the gov-

ernment upwardly reviews the pump price of fuel often manifest more violently outside the Niger Delta. Obadare and Adebanwi present a concise explanation of the cause of the January 2012 protests:

In the very first week of January 2012 with the New Year's air still redolent of the odor of the previous year, major towns and cities across Nigeria exploded in spontaneous civic rage. The immediate provocation was President Goodluck Jonathan's announcement of the federal government's resolve to remove the "remaining" subsidy on petroleum products distributed in the country ... the pump price of petrol was to rise from N65 to N141 ... (2009: 1)

The public outrage that greeted the removal confirmed the truism that protests remain the only option left to the oppressed. Implicated in the series of protests against increases in the pump price of fuel was the adoption of neoliberal economic policies referred to as Structural Adjustment Programs.

As a derivative of neoliberalism, SAPs peaked as a global policy raft and political ideology from 1979–1981 in response to global economic crises, stressing the need for the reduction or withdrawal of the government in order to enhance the economies of developing nations and driven by leading international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. SAPs entailed lending to developing countries on conditions set by these institutions. The key conditions were reduction or cancellation of expenditures on social services such as education and healthcare, liberalization of trade, liquidation of state-owned assets, and deregulation of the market. However, instead of rescuing the postcolonial state, SAPs made victims out of the most vulnerable classes: women, children, unemployed and unemployable youths, the elderly, and the disabled. Leys (2005: 206–215) equates neoliberalism to neocolonialism because it articulates and enforces ideologies benefiting only the dominant forces woven around SAPs. Perhaps this informed the description of the 1985 coup that ushered in the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida, described by London's *Financial Times* as IMF induced (Adekanye 2007: 28). Consequently, the introduction of SAPs has been accompanied by increased frequency of strikes, demonstrations, violent protests, crises, and conflicts in countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Sudan, Zaire, and Zambia.

The timing of the January 2012 protests coincided with the global economic recession and also followed a global pattern of reactions against cuts in welfare spending by the state. Just as there were reactions against the Thatcher cuts of the 1980s in Britain, there have always been violent protests each time the government upwardly reviewed the pump price of petrol in Nigeria. However, the performance of the January 2012 protest, particularly in Lagos, is reputable

for its contrarianism and cosmopolitanism. It was spearheaded by the recently formed Save Nigeria Group (SNG), which was supported by labor unions and other civil society organizations. Unlike the performance of the June 12 protests, which was largely mobile, the January 2012 protest was stationary because public places were occupied daily for more than a week by groups of citizens comprising mostly of the lower and middle classes. In Lagos they converged on the Gani Fawehinmi Square at Ojota, under the Post Office Bridge in Ilorin, and in front of the government secretariat at Agodi, Ibadan. Resistance was expressed in a theatrical form with leading musicians, actresses and actors, religious clerics, and members of the opposition coming together to utilize the protest as the only option of the oppressed.

The protesters at Ojota in Lagos metropolis demonstrated a high level of organization, as there were few instances of deliberate provocation on their part. Therefore, the presence of police and other security agencies prevented the protest from getting hijacked by criminals who usually loot shops and businesses during such occasions. However, there were instances of killings of bystanders and innocent Nigerians by the police at venues of protests like in Ilorin and across neighborhoods in other cities, including Lagos, where youth playing football on the streets were killed by policemen driving through some neighborhoods.

Conclusion

From the preceding discussion we can see that certain shared traits are discernible in the governmentalities of the Nigerian state, irrespective of regime type, in the manner of policing of protests. One of these is the use of force, especially by the police, to crush assemblies of protesters. This was done severely and brazenly during the June 12 protests, perhaps due to the existence of a military state then. However, the police relied more on the show of force during the January 2012 protests, although there were cases of killings by the police.

Irrespective of regime type, whether military or democratic, the state as a hegemon uses everything within its disposal to ensure it regulates the conduct of citizens, especially in times of protests. The struggle to lay claim to what is public through public protests has persistently brought the state and the public in adversarial contacts. Also, the preference for neoliberal policies that are antithetical to the good life of Nigerians, as seen in the reactions to increases in the pump price of petrol, equally triggers public protests. The state responds through *ideological state apparatuses* to affirm its pretensions as a Weberian state, first through the police and, second, discursively by casting the substance of such protests in ethno-religious narratives as was done during the June 12, 1993, and January 2012 protests.

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