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Godfatherism in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: The Pyramid of Violence and Political Insecurity in Ibadan, Oyo-State, Nigeria



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Abstract

Godfatherism based on a patron-client relationship has emerged as a phenomenon hindering participation, political security and peace as it torpedoes the consolidation of democracy since Nigeria's fourth republic commenced in 1999. Widespread political violence created insecurity whenever the *godsons* failed to fulfil pledges made to their *godfathers* especially on the allotment of appointments and sometimes sharing of state resources amongst others in many states of the country. It made politics violent and extractive rather than being peaceful and productive. In Oyo-State, Chief Lamidi Adedibu, an Ibadan based octogenarian was the godfather of politics in the State because of his ability to ensure victory for many seekers of elective offices in the State. From 2003 to 2007, violence and political insecurity pervaded the political space especially in Ibadan consequent upon the broken relationship between Chief Adedibu and Senator Rashidi Ladoja after the latter reneged on promises made to his godfather on becoming the governor of Oyo State in 2003. This paper examines Chief Adedibu as political godfather and the variables that sustained him within the context of the theory of economy of affection espoused by Goran Hyden. The study was carried out in three out of the five Local Government Areas in Ibadan metropolis using mainly qualitative methods of indepth interviews with purposively selected respondents considered germane to the objectives of the study including late Chief Lamidi Adedibu. This paper concludes that Adedibu's patronage system of politics was pyramidal with him on the top; while the poor, lumpens and thugs, members of the transport union and local politicians constituted the core of his dependants and vectors of violence.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the third wave of the democratisation process began across Africa, happenings from many African countries have been discouraging based on the prevalence of sit-tight and often recycled rulers, flawed electoral processes and the dominance of godfathers or big man politics (Moss 2007 and Debiel 2002). This is in sharp contrast to the conditions that enhance the consolidation of democracy as suggested by Smith which should include:

the strengthening of democratic institutions (especially the rule of law and protection of civil rights),... authoritarian political discourses need to be rejected and authoritarian political actors need to be neutralised... Perverse institutions should be abolished, such as tutelage by non-democratic elites. Consolidation means that democracy has become routinised and internalised in political behaviour (Smith 2003:259)

The absence of these requirements must have informed the assertion of Collier (2010) based on empirical findings in countries he describes as located in bottom billion due to low economic indices and insecurity; that democracy reduces violence in prosperous democracies while increasing same in the poor democracies. The political requirements for the consolidation of democracy entail that there must be the right attitudes that adhere to constitutionalism, moderation, co-operation, bargaining and accommodation. 'Moderation' and 'accommodation' in this context entail toleration, pragmatism, willingness to compromise and civility in political discourse (Smith 2003:259). All these will give rise to a political culture that can stabilise democracy. However, this has not been the case in many African countries due to squandering of resources, mismanagement, corruption, waste and greed and the lack of internal democracy in the emergent political parties in the post-transition phase.

So, without the factors needed to strengthen democracy firmly in place, the critical mass of the population gets excluded from constitutional politics. This situation gives rise to elitism and clientelism and forcing people into 'non-formal' modes of participation (Smith 2003:260). In contemporary Nigeria, this has given rise to *Godfatherism* and the proliferation of organised groups of lumpens who serve as vectors of violence for many political godfathers. Buoyed by a tradition that has accepted the instrumentality and rationality of political violence as a means of winning elections and settling political scores; there has been a geometric rise in the rate of political insecurity.

GODFATHERISM, LUMPENS, POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND INSECURITY: A CONCEPTUAL NARRATIVE

Godfatherism aptly qualifies as a synonym for patron-client relationship or neopatrimonialism (Sklar 2006). The concept of godfatherism dates back to the European pre-Christian era and subsequently became associated with Christianity. Initially it meant the commitment of a godparent to nurture and care for a child upon baptism and it originated in orthodox Christianity (Yahaya 2007).

The emergence of godfatherism cannot be totally divorced from the long years of military rule that created Big-Man rule in Nigeria. Moss (2007) describes Big-Men rule as a system dominated by individuals and personal relationships which ensures peace by the distribution of money, jobs and favours. This is reinforced by the cultural attitude in Africa that encourages deference, (sometimes fear) for the wealthy or powerful, with the hope that the Big- Man whether a local chief, warlord, party chieftain, political office-holder or a president will protect and provide for those under his wing and punish those who oppose him. The emergence and perpetuation of Big-Man rule in Africa has also been traced to the notion that rules of the game do not count in political contests in the African context. This view is informed by the usual flagrant disdain for rules by groups and individuals in the process of seeking political offices (Hyden, 2006).

Also, the *patrimonial* nature of many of the states in contemporary Africa which has no distinct separation line between what is private and official contributes to the continuity of Big-Man rule (Hyden 2006). It is the similarities between contemporary rulers in Africa and those of the medieval patrimonial leaders in Africa and Europe that has informed the concept of neopatrimonialism or personal rule; a system of relations linking rulers not with the citizens but with patrons, clients, supporters and rivals who represent the important segment of the society in their own narrow conception (Hyden, 2006, emphasis added).

Another related concept is *prebendalism* (Joseph 1987) which summarises the anomalies of the Second Republic in Nigeria. In a “prebendal” state, the holder gets to office based on the agreement that he or she will use such office to satisfy the demands of specific sub-sets of the general population. So, such a candidate remains popular or in office as long as he or she sticks to the agreement. Although, it is a relationship based on interdependency, it is actually a relationship between the weak and the strong.

In the parlance of political science, it appeared first in relation to the activities of kingpins of criminal underworld prior to the Second World War

in the city of Chicago in the United States (Yahaya 2007). Over-time, it became a popular lexicon of politics like mafianism which describes a formidable power bloc with enormous influence, e.g. the *Kaduna Mafia* (Bala and Tyden 1987). Mafians are strong socio-economic and political elites with shared political values and interests within an organised structure headed by a political godfather.

The activities of godfathers make politics attractive to criminals as noted by Collier (2010). This is because of the use of violence which denies the emergent regimes any form of legitimacy because they emerge as regimes without any social contract with the people (Kew 2010). This is because godfatherism perceives winning elections as the ultimate end of democracy. Collier (2010) identifies guns, wars and coups as technologies of political violence in the third world countries. In Nigeria, godfatherism remains one of the ills in the political process since 1999. This is because it has configured public office like an eatery which only the godfather alone gives the ticket to whoever he likes and once any beneficiary disobeys him, he gets him or her out of the eatery (Adebanwi 2010).

Instances include Saraki vs. Lawal in Kwara State, Ofor vs. Mbadimunju (1999–2003), Uba-Ngige (2003–2006), in Anambra State, Kachalla vs. Alimodu Sherif in Borno State (2002–2003) and in the second half of the fourth republic Ladoja vs. Adedibu in Oyo State. In all of these instances, the godfathers ensured that the *disobedient* godsons lost elections for second term in office and got some of them impeached. All these instances of patronage politics have made godfatherism phenomenal and parasitic in Nigeria's fourth republic with severe implications for participation, political security, the consolidation of democracy and peace. It has also made democratic politics expressive of the opinion of Schumpeter (1976:269) quoted in Abrahamsen that:

“democracy does not mean and cannot mean that the people actually rule in any obvious sense of the ‘people’ and ‘rule’. Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them... now one aspect of this may be expressed by saying that democracy is the rule of the politician or the godfathers who determine who gets what (Abrahamsen 2001:69, emphasis mine).

Violence is not new in Nigerian politics and it was cited as one of the reasons by the military for seizing power in the second-republic (Osaghae 2002). The youths have always been used as the agency or vectors of violence by unscrupulous politicians owing to the amoral nature of Nigeria's politics. Since the return to party politics in 1999, there has been a proliferation of such groups. The members of such groups qualify to be addressed as lumpens because they represent a pool of people whose labour

or skills have become obsolete largely because of capitalist transformation, restructuring or retrenchment, (Rashid 2004). Abdullahi (2005) expands the category of lumpens by including the unemployed and the unemployable, mostly male, prone to criminal behaviour, petty theft, drugs peddling, drunkenness and other anti-social tendencies. In the Nigerian context thuggery is the use of paid people (usually unemployed), to oppress, intimidate or kill political opponents and loot or damage their property (Anifowose 2006). These two categories yoked together by Chief Lamidi Adedibu constituted an indispensable tool in the execution of political violence and insecurity in Ibadan.

Political insecurity in this context transcends the scope espoused by (Gleditsch 2001) as the freedom from dictatorship and all forms of arbitrary government, to include the presence of political actors whose activities constitute a threat to political security, peace, participation, democracy and the public space.

ECONOMY OF AFFECTION AND AFFECTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Hyden (2006) in his treatise on African politics points out the salience of informal institutions and their noticeable edge because formal rules are bent to serve informal institutions. Based on the permeation of political and social life by these informal institutions and relations, it becomes fundamental to understand these institutions and relations in explaining a phenomenon like political godfatherism as practised by Chief Lamidi Adedibu. Hyden (2006) explains economy of affection as personal investments in reciprocal relations with other individuals as a way of achieving goals that are seen as impossible to attain without entering into such economy. People engage in the economy of affection because of sought-after goods – whether material or symbolic such as material, prestige and status which may be actually available but not accessible to all. According to Hyden (2006:72 principles of the economy of affection are: (a) whom you know is more important than what you know, (b) sharing personal wealth is more rewarding than investing in economic growth and (c) a helping hand today generates returns tomorrow.

THE EVOLUTION OF PATRONAGE POLITICS IN IBADAN: THE REPUBLIC OF WARRIORS

Civil disorder or organized violence is not a new phenomenon in Ibadan which was a settlement of warriors originally. Ajala (2006) reveals that contemporary Ibadan was established in the 1820s after the first two settlements were destroyed by warfare and pestilence. Ajala (2006) reveals

that Ifa is consulted annually in order to know what the incoming year will be like for the community and it is consulted on all crucial events both private and public. When Ifa was consulted in the formation of Ibadan, Ose Meji a very powerful Ifa corpus featured with rituals, predicted that Ibadan will breed violence and hostility (Ajala 2006). Overtime, city-disorder, (Ija-Igboro) became a recurrent feature in the socio-political life and earned it the ORIKI (epithet) '*a ki waiye k'ama l'arun kan lara ijagboro ni arun Ibadan*' (Awe 2007:6). Watson (2000) interrogated this trend and traced it to the intense and violent power struggle among Ibadan chiefs which made ascendancy a function of valour instead of blood-ties. Awe (2007) explains that one did not need to belong to a ruling house to succeed in Ibadan rather; you only needed to prove your worth on the battlefield.

The preceding events led to the evolution of a peculiar type of patronage politics based on the babaogun exchange relations that thrived on the exchange of valuable resources between patrons and clients (Omobowale & Olutayo 2007). The babaogun exchange relations were practised in tandem with the military/socio-political structure of Ibadan, in which individuals who had earned political greatness through successful exploits on the battlefield, became patrons (babaogun) and gave protection and military exposure to clients who reciprocated with their loyalty. This form of exchange (babaogun) gradually became the means of socio-political mobility in Ibadan. The story of Ibikunle a promising warrior of Ogbomoso origin, who came to settle in Ibadan during the Fulani war, as told by Isola, illustrates the babaogun patronage concept in a very instructive manner:

He was looking for adventure, freedom and safety from kindred spirits. The practice at the time was to assign new comers to established warriors-chiefs for military grooming. He was therefore sent to live with Toki Onibudo who was the lord of a large area in Ibadan around Ayeye. Ibikunle distinguished himself as a great soldier and soon became the captain of the soldiers retained by Onibudo. He was so skilful and fearless in battle that he earned himself the appellation of Kiniun Onibudo...when Toki died; he was succeeded by Ibikunle who became the head of the Onibudo household (Isola 2007:23-24).

So, gradually, Ibadan evolved as a republic of warriors who had migrated from different parts of Yorubaland (Isola 2007). This gave the city stability and strength partly because each one came with his unique experiences in the techniques and strategies of war and administration. Also, they all subscribed to the idea of a free, just and egalitarian society without a hereditary system of leadership. Even so, there were many tales of lurid intrigues, betrayal and suicide which made civil disorder to characterise the political life of the city. Watson (2000) observes that achieving success on

the battlefield and having a body of followers conferred *ola* or ‘social honour’. This became a determinant for claiming chieftaincy title. The individual gained prominence and influence by recruiting supporters: “his people ... their gaze conferred authority and their acknowledgement confirmed status” (Watson, 2000). This made warfare an important feature of Ibadan’s external relations. In August 1893, the chiefs of Ibadan were coerced into signing a treaty that put an end to regional warfare and subjected their polity to the British Empire thereby changing local politics.

THE MAKING OF A POLITICAL GODFATHER: YOUNG ADEDIBU IN FIRST REPUBLIC POLITICS OF IBADAN

Lamidi Adedibu was born on October 24, 1927 which coincided with the Muslim festival of Eid-EL-Kabir (Ileya) at around 9 a.m to Alhaji Aminu Adegoke Ajadi Adeduntan and Alhaja Asimawu Adepte Aduuni Abidemi of Oja Oba area in Ibadan South East (Key Informant). As a young man he started participating in politics as a political errand-boy to the likes of the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Mr Samuel. O. Lanlehin, and Chief Adisa Meredith Augustus Akinloye, one time national chairman of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in the early fifties (Musa 2006). He later became well known for both peaceful and violent protests, sometimes based on the instructions of his patrons and at times depending on his own discretion. On the 11th of May, 1951 he was actively involved in the peaceful demonstrations against the British colonial government around Ibadan that ended at Mapo. Also, on the 16th of May the same year, Adedibu participated again in a violent protest to the seat of government at Agodi over the same issue. In 1953, Adedibu was elected as the first chairman of the youth wing of the Action Group (AG). Sometimes later, a group of non-natives of Ibadan announced their activities claiming to be the youth wing of the AG on the rediffusion box at Oke-Are. This infuriated Adedibu, who in company of a friend named Alasaro, led a group of Ibadan youths of the AG to the venue of their meeting where they were sternly warned not to divide the party. Another memorable occasion was when, in company of his friend Alasaro, he led the youth wing of the AG to attack Chief Adelabu known as the stormy petrel of Nigerian politics (see Adelabu 1952) at a meeting of the NCNC in Mapo Hall in which many were injured.

In terms of patronage, Adedibu as a young man was courted by many politicians because of his ability to organize and mobilize for mass political activities. Notable amongst his patrons were Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola, once Premier of the Western region. In the early days of the crisis between the former and the latter, Chief Akintola wooed Adedibu from Awolowo by paying him One Hundred Pounds

weekly. This was however not enough to snatch him from the camp of Chief Awolowo (Musa 2006). Adedibu's loyalty to Chief Awolowo was rewarded with the contract to supply all the cement used in the construction of the Liberty Stadium in Ibadan (Ojo 2006). He was also awarded, with the help of Awolowo, the contract of supplying Cement for the Ministry of Works in the then Western region. He was also given responsibility by Awolowo to manage the Ijaye Forest Reserves (Ojo 2006). These gestures by Chief Awolowo and Akintola represent a form of patronage because of Adedibu's ability to mobilise the people at the grassroots, especially youths, for political actions.

CHIEF LAMIDI ADEDIBU IN IBADAN POLITICS OF SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH REPUBLIC

In the Second Republic (1979-1983), Chief Adedibu operated in the shadow of one of his political leaders who was then the National Chairman of Nigeria's ruling conservative party; the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) late Chief Adisa Akinloye. As a result, he could not dictate the pace of events in the politics of Oyo state, though he was a leading and well-respected figure of the party. He could not dominate the scene until Chief Akinloye fled the country to escape arrest by the military that truncated the second republic. While Chief Adisa Akinloye was in exile, Alhaji Busari Adelakun (a.k.a, Eruobodo), an equally influential and crude grassroots mobilize who could challenged or curtailed the excesses of Chief Adedibu also passed on (Mohamed 2006).

Therefore, the protracted transition programme of General Ibrahim Babangida that culminated in the truncated Third Republic, offered him the chance to fully assert himself as the godfather and patron of many seekers of political offices both elective and appointive in Oyo state. Chief Adedibu joined the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and succeeded in installing the candidate of his choice in the person of Chief Kolapo Isola as the governor of Oyo state. This unilateral action of his; attracted fierce criticisms and condemnation from Muslims in the State who had expected him to support Alhaji Lam Adesina being a Muslim and former member of the Federal House of Representatives from 1979 to 1983. In addition to installing the governor, he also installed Chairman of Ibadan Municipal Government (IMG) which then comprised all the five Local Government in today's Ibadan and all the nineteen councillors.

Although he faced resistance within outside his political party, his control of lumpens, thugs, his large followers and his connivance with security agencies enabled him to achieve his goal. This era marked the dawn of his dominance of Ibadan politics. The peculiar patterns of relations

between him and his clients threw him up as a middleman between seekers of elective posts and the poor who constitute the core of the voters. This made him a patron that could not be ignored with a sleight of hand by any aspiring politician in the state and by extension in the country. The experience he garnered as a political errand boy and the patronage he has enjoyed from both military and civilian regimes enhanced his finances which made him a master of grassroots political scheming. Unlike his predecessors, he introduced what is known as the philosophy of Amala-Gbegiri politics; a system of feeding the poor with the staple meal of Ibadan and granting them unhindered access to himself to meet their financial and other needs.

During visits to Chief Adedibu at his residence while trying to book a date for an interview, his control of the politics of Oyo state was palpable as different categories of politicians trooped in from across the state. After being booked to see Chief Adedibu at 9 a.m in the morning, the interview was not conducted until after 8 p.m when he finished observing Salat ul Isha, the last of the five canonical prayers of Muslims. In the course of waiting, we observed that almost all elected and appointed political office holders came to consult with Chief Adedibu including: the then Deputy Governor (Alhaji Taofik Arapaja) of Oyo State, Alhaji Latif Akinsola, *Tokyo* then chairman of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NUTRW) Chief Kolapo Isola former civilian governor of the State and General Raji Rasaki one-time military governor of Lagos and Ogun states, an indigene of Ibadan.

The arrival of these people turned what was supposed to be an in-depth interview into a focus group discussion as they interjected to corroborate most of the responses from Chief Adedibu. He described the babaogun (godfather) as an intermediary between the electorate and the politicians seeking office. Also, on his relationship with the Tokyo faction of the NUTRW, he reiterated his stance that in the event of a clash between an indigene and a non-indigene of Ibadan, the latter must be supported. According to him, godfatherism started from God because the Christians pass through Jesus Christ to see God and the Muslims supplicate using the name of Mohamed. In the village there is a head, in the family too, there is a head. All these people are leaders and you have to go through them to reach their people. As you can see our people are with us, they like us...this is the Deputy Governor he will not go inside to eat he will eat here with us.

CHIEF LAMIDI ADEDIBU: VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL INSECURITY IN IBADAN, 2003-2007

At the inception of the fourth Republic, Chief Adedibu's political rating and popularity was ebbing because of his involvement in the unpopular Abacha regime and the overwhelming preference of the people of the Southwest for the Alliance for Democracy. This party represented a rehash of the AG and the UPN with ideologies of Awolowo as their manifestoes.

So, his exit from the All Peoples Party (APP) that had just a handful of followers in the Southwest and without any strong national presence gave him a new lease of life politically. With the active support of the then President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, also a Yoruba man determined to control his region, Amala-Gbegiri politics that thrives on the provision of Amala the staple food and Gbegiri was revitalised and the list of clients comprising lumpens, the poor and the seekers of political offices started swelling. Subsequently, the PDP won overwhelmingly at the 2003 elections in Oyo state with the substantive contributions of Chief Adedibu.

His client and political godson, Senator Rashidi Ladoja, became the governor of the state. No sooner had he assumed office than the relationship between the two of them went sour because he allegedly refused to honour the agreements reached before he was supported to be the governor. This conflict threatened peace, security and participatory democracy in the state particularly in Ibadan despite several failed attempts at brokering peace between the two of them. It dragged the political foot soldiers of both actors into bloody confrontations that claimed several lives and resulted in the illegal impeachment of Senator Rashidi Ladoja on January 12 2006 by a legislature in a session constituted by lawmakers loyal to Chief Adedibu presided over by late Alhaji Lateef Salako a notorious member of the NUTRW.

However, during an interview with Chief Adedibu, he blamed the inability of his political opponents to accept defeat as the cause of the violence, implying that his supporters were compelled to defend themselves when attacked by opponents. This alludes to the fact of political violence though he tried to exonerate himself of any aggression. However, responses from six leading figures, members of the opposition parties in the study areas, refuted this impression as they were all unanimous in their different responses on the dangers of openly expressing any political view contrary to that of Chief Adedibu because of the founded fear of being attacked or killed.

LUMPENS AS AGENCY OF GODFATHERISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN IBADAN SOUTH-WEST

At the Ibadan South-West Local Government Area, four members of the leading ‘youth group’ in the area were interviewed on what they do to earn their living, the reason(s) for the formation of their group, their connections to its patrons and their political activities. Responses were analysed based on the negotiation of public or civic roles by youths (De Boeck & Honwana, 2005). Two of the four sell ice-blocks, one works as a “crosser”; one who drives smuggled cars into the country from neighbouring countries while the fourth one was an apprentice who dropped out of school at the Junior Secondary level. They all hold Ordinary National Diplomas with the exception of the fourth person and all of them hail from Ibadan.

When asked what led to the formation of their group? They cited unemployment, incessant power outages and the need to participate in politics. When probed further on why they want to be involved in politics, they all agreed that it is the only thing that offers huge and immediate rewards without strict educational qualifications. On their relationship with Chief Adedibu, their Chairman facilitated it when there is the need to mobilize supporters for elections but the group came into existence in the year 2000.

In the case of this group, they were approached by an aspirant for the post of Chairman of the Local Government who eventually won. He financed their group activities and offered personal financial assistance to the members. The most common of their activities were the street carnivals usually held during yuletide periods and offering of financial assistance to them to meet financial obligations during; freedom, burial, naming and wedding ceremonies. The foregoing narration shares similarities with the four motives for investing in economy of affection as stated by Hyden (2006: 74) are: (a) gain status, (b) seek favour, (c) share a benefit, (d) provide a common good.

While the aspirant for the post of Chairman sought to gain status, which could also mean a favour, members of the youth group shared some favours they got as benefits and sometimes put some pressure on the chairman to provide common goods for the community, though rarely.

In the context of political participation, it is clear that candidates and aspirants for political offices, beyond expressing their views and policy plans, must engage in dispensing monetary and other types of provable incentives and rewards to prospective supporters. In exchange for their support, respondents revealed that the Chairman, once in office, assisted many of them to travel abroad, especially to London, provided jobs at the Local Government and State levels and cars amongst other things. Amongst those who got jobs at the Local Government were those with no specific

duty post or even letters of appointments but who went monthly to the Local Government to collect particular amounts ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 naira. This is a stark manifestation of waste and corruption that typify affective behaviour.

During elections they monitored and defended the votes of their particular candidates by standing at the polling booths to steal or prevent ballot boxes from being stolen depending on their strength and popularity in the political wards. They did all these violently and when arrested the candidate came to secure their release from the Police. According to the respondents, this was not difficult because the Police often worked in active connivance; “being settled” by the Chairman. Therefore, it can be assumed that the “Challenge Base Forum” is one of the informal institutions that sustained godfatherism by engaging in active electoral malpractices. The then Vice-Chairman of the Local Government, Hon. Segun Okeowo, lent credence to the foregoing in an interview when asked about the relationship with youth groups. The 54 years old man revealed that the word youth in the local political parlance implies violence and that the Local Government has a cherished cordial relationship with these youths. This is sustained through financial support and other forms of assistance because they are always available for them during elections including the Challenge Base Forum.

Based on the responses of members, the formation of the group can be described as a needs-driven informal association. These needs include; economic empowerment and political participation. It was also found out that other groups in the Local Government Area could not profitably or actively participate in politics because their members could not carry out the activities performed by the Challenge Base Forum. By implication, the group became the agency of political insecurity making it practically impossible for any other group with a different opinion to flourish. This was the case in spite of the fact that this Local Government encompasses many neighbourhoods where many highly educated elites reside. Subsequently, most of these youths became tools in the hands of a higher patron at the State level.

LUMPENS AS AGENCY OF GODFATHERISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN IBADAN SOUTH-EAST

Historically, the Local Government can be described as the cradle of contemporary politics of Ibadan and the political centre of Ibadan (Mohammed 2006). Mapo, the headquarters of the Local Government, hosts the historic Mapo-Hall that occupies a place of pride in Nigerian political gatherings. Unlike lumpens and thugs in the other two Local Government

Areas none of those from Mapo attended school beyond the Junior Secondary School.

The eight respondents were mainly involved in the sale of Indian hemp (*Igbo* in local parlance) combined with riding commercial motorcycles. According to a key-informant, the name of the youth group is Ibadan Parapo, a name that was formed after an intra-gang conflict was resolved by the leadership of the National Union of Road Transport Workers of Nigeria (NURTW) in the Local Government. According to the key informant, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) usually stormed the den of many of these drug peddlers, a situation that brewed a crisis of trust and confidence amongst them because they believed the market in Mapo was targeted by the agency because of intelligence supplied by their rivals in Popoyemoja, which is another community in Ibadan South East with a high number of youth groups engaged in drug-peddling, specifically, Indian Hemp. The conflict was resolved by setting up only one selling point in Mapo instead of several in Ibadan South-East where each group should have their own market day to sell and arrange collectively to bribe the NDLEA. It was at the end of the reconciliation that they came up with the name Ibadan Parapo as a mark of unity.

As the 2007 elections drew closer, the rift and enmity between the Popoyemoja and Mapo factions of the youth group in Ibadan South East became more pronounced. Politicians exploited it in the process of recruiting youths into their camps for the elections. The Popoyemoja youths supported the All Nigeria Peoples Party's candidate (ANPP), Senator Abiola Ajimobi, against the candidate of Chief Lamidi Adedibu, Chief Adebayo Alao-Akala of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). As a result there was the introduction of politics amongst the youths in Ibadan South East. The leader of the Ibadan Parapo in Mapo, Taofik Daropale joined Chief Adedibu and became part of his errand boys. On the other hand, one Ademola a.k.a "Omo Alhaja" who was the leader of the Popoyemoja faction openly worked for the opposition and there were series of bloody clashes between the groups in the build up to the elections. Taofik Daropale died during one of such confrontations and was mourned by Chief Adedibu.

Unlike the youths in Ibadan South West, the two groups in Ibadan South East have always been on the street and fit into the description of street children by Adisa (1997) though not primarily induced by poverty or by the history of civil disorder and political violence in the Local Government. This trend gives resonance to the deviant sub-culture thesis that ascribes poverty to the personal failings of individuals resulting in self-perpetuating circles of social pathology (Adisa 1997). Besides being used as tools of political violence, these youths can be appropriately described as

lumpen because they face unemployment and unemployability; they are mostly male and prone to criminal behaviour, petty theft, drugs peddling, drunkenness and other anti-social tendencies (Abdullahi 2005 and Adisa 1997). This described the youths in both Popoyemoja and Mapo areas of Ibadan South East.

In connecting with the godfather, i.e Chief Adedibu, the Mapo youths reported daily at his residence to receive instructions and orders. These assignments included: accompanying him when going out to serve as guards, going to intimidate, molest and attack political opponents, and destruction or seizure of properties belonging to them. In exchange, they were immune from Police or NDLEA in their own drug businesses which made them to be above the law. So, unlike youths in Ibadan South West who were interested in future politics, the Mapo Youths in Ibadan South East were contended with being tools of political violence and intimidation in exchange for immunity from the law. Their peers in Popoyemoja aligned with the opposition because of immediate monetary gains and unwillingness to submit to the leadership of Taofeek Daropale. However, this shows that the two leading political parties in Ibadan patronized the Eru-Iku in order to use them as their respective political war machines.

LUMPENS AS AGENCY OF GODFATHERISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN IBADAN NORTH-WEST

The groups studied in this Local Government straddle Ibadan North and Ibadan North-West. Ibadan North-West like the two other Local Governments earlier discussed was created out of the old Ibadan Municipal Government (Simbine 2004). The youth group studied goes by the name Koto-Orun. Four members of the group were interviewed. Koto-Orun means “pit of hell”. They usually met at a location in and around the brothels near the Mokola roundabout which is not too far from Sabo, a community that houses mainly Hausa immigrants in Ibadan. Members of the Koto-Orun are well-known in the Mokola-Sabo community due to the help they give to people by facilitating the retrieval of their stolen properties in Sabo market. These properties include: mobile telephone sets, trinkets and electronics. Four members of the group were interviewed at different occasions. They all finished secondary school with poor results and due to lack of funds trained as boxers at Lekan Salami Stadium Adamasingba, which is not far from their base in Mokola. They were however evasive on the reasons why they stopped the pursuit of their boxing aspirations.

A key informant who was assisted to recover her stolen box of jewellery revealed that people usually come to them because they can fight and they possess charms which they often use to assist whoever seeks their

help. The youth group was not formed because of any specific objective. According to them, they were a group of friends who converged around a particular brothel in the area. As young men with training in the art of boxing, they were known and respected in the area. The group became more organized for political activities during the 2003 elections when they were contacted to work for one of their own, though a more elderly colleague; Alhaji Azeem Gbolarumi who served as the Personal Assistant to Chief Adedibu before becoming a Deputy Governor when the relationship between Chief Adedibu and Senator Ladoja went sour. According to them, they have been on the payroll of Chief Adedibu since then as each member of the group collected 5,000 Naira weekly in addition to daily feeding at the residence of Chief Adedibu. On the involvement of the group in politics, the four of them claimed to be members of the PDP not by attending ward meetings or by holding membership card but because they *work* for the Chief Adedibu. Work in this context means being available to be unleashed on political opponents. The relationship between the erstwhile Deputy Governor and the group can be explained by the affective behaviour theory. The former Deputy Governor behaved affectively with the youth group in order to bolster his status before the godfather; Chief Adedibu, while the youth group cooperated because of the benefits accruable from the relationship.

NURTW AND CHIEF ADEDIBU IN IBADAN POLITICS OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

In the build-up to the 2003 gubernatorial elections in the state, the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) became factionalised along two lines. One was led by Alhaji Lateef Akinsola (a.k.a Tokyo) and the other was led by Alhaji Wasiu Abubakar (a.k.a Tawa). The former enjoyed the patronage of Alhaji Lam Adesina from 1999 to 2000 when he was the state governor on the platform of Alliance for Democracy (A.D). The governor openly identified with the leader of the Union and described him as one of those who contributed to the emergence of the Fourth Republic because the two of them shared the same prison cell when they were detained because of their involvement in pro-democracy rallies in late 1998 by the then Military Administrator of Oyo State, COMPOL Amen Oyakhire during the dreaded regime of late General Sanni Abacha (see Adeniyi 2005). However, Tawa, who had been in a running battle over the Chairmanship of the Union with Tokyo, got logistic, legal and financial support from gubernatorial aspirants of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) particularly from Senator Ladoja. The internal struggle for the leadership and control of the Union became violent as the two became

pawns in the hands of gubernatorial aspirants. This arises from the fact that whoever is the Chairman of the Union has absolute powers and commands unqualified loyalty and obedience from members throughout the state. This makes the Union attractive and strategic to those who aspire to become governor of Oyo State as a huge reserve of men who can serve as political foot soldiers.

As a result there were a series of physical and legal battles between Tokyo and Tawa before the 2003 gubernatorial elections, especially in Ibadan. This led to the fractionalisation of the NUTRW and the emergence of a splinter group known as the (SEDAN) “Self Employed Drivers Association of Nigeria” with Tawa as the chairman. Despite this, the violent clashes that disrupted public and economic activity in and around Ibadan did not abate. Subsequently, it became glaring that NURTW was supported by the then incumbent governor-Alhaji Lam Adesina, while the SEDAN was actively supported by the PDP’s leading gubernatorial aspirant; Senator Rashidi Ladoja.

According to one of the organizing secretaries of the Union, at the inception of the Fourth Republic, the group teamed with the Alliance for Democracy in an exchange relationship that saw the preservation of the leadership of Tokyo in exchange for protection of members of the AD at political gatherings. This illustrates the theory of affective relationship and the lack of faith in the institutions of the state, worse still by those who run the state. An incident in 2000 remains vivid in the memory of a respondent, who is a close ally of Tokyo, while trying to underscore the extent of their loyalty to the government of Alhaji Lam Adesina against the aspiring PDP.

According to him: ‘Atiku (Vice-President) came to Ibadan in year 2000. We were part of the state government delegation that went to the airport at Ojoo in Ibadan to receive him. May God forgive us for our actions of that day. We gave the Tawa boys who came with Chief Adedibu merciless beating and even assaulted Baba, i.e Chief Adedibu himself, by tearing part of his Agbada (Cloth) because we needed to show the visitors that PDP is not on ground and to let governor Lam know that we were very loyal to him.’

Furthermore, the respondent revealed that the relationship between the NURTW and Chief Adedibu improved after the PDP won the gubernatorial election in 2003 with the emergence of Senator Rashidi Ladoja, a godson of Chief Lamidi Adedibu and indigene of Ibadan. But while the governor felt Tawa should be compensated with the chairmanship of the NURTW because he had hitherto been unjustly removed, Chief Adedibu rejected the idea because Tawa was not an indigene of Ibadan but a native of Iwo in neighbouring Osun state and so cannot be the Chairman of the Union in

Oyo state ahead of an indigene of Ibada. This was the one of the allegations of Chief Adedibu against Senator Rashidi Ladoja.

The contrasting preferences of the Chief Adedibu and Senator Ladoja reflect a crisis of confidence and mutual suspicion. This is because beyond their stated claims, the godfather and godson might just be positioning their trusted ally to be the chairman in order to have a formidable political gang which members of the Union constituted. This shows the perversion of civil society groups; manifest in the criminalised nature of some these groups that turn out to threaten the civil populace rather than contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for the advancement of democracy (Ikelegbe 2001). The observation of Fatton (1999) quoted in Ikelegbe, is descriptive and illustrative of the affective nature of the civil society life in many Africa countries because:

Civil society is a prime repository of invented ethnic hierarchies, conflicting class visions, patriarchal domination and irredentist identities fuelling deadly conflicts...hence civil society often manifests itself in perverse and extreme forms of 'private monopolies of violence' that are connected to self-seeking big men, devoid of any apparent ideological commitment, ethnically rooted and are the worst vehicles of unmitigated barbarities (Ikelegbe 2001: 6).

The quotation above explains the affective relationship between Chief Adedibu, Senator Rashidi Ladoja and the NURTW since 2003 which is illustrative of the relationship between political elites and some associations that constitute part of the civil society. Therefore, the godfather and his estranged godson, who was then an incumbent governor, became shadow parties and conflict entrepreneurs in tensions between the Tawa and Tokyo factions despite the danger it posed to public peace and security. The two needed a balance of terror in order to maintain and defend their individual interests which members of the NURTW readily provided.

ADEDIBU – LADOJA: CAUSAL ANALYSIS OF A BROKEN RELATIONSHIP

The relationship between Chief Adedibu and Senator Ladoja offers a classical example of how godfatherism can constitute a menace to good governance, participatory democracy and public peace. At inception, the relationship between the two was very cordial dating back to the truncated Third Republic when Ladoja became a Senator through the singular efforts of Chief Adedibu. According to a key informant and one time Chairman of a Local Government in Oyo state, due to the financial assistance offered to the gubernatorial candidate of the Social Democratic Party, (SDP), Chief

Kolapo Isola, at a very dire period, Chief Adedibu decided to reward him by making him a senator. So, when the two of them had to work together under the umbrella of the same party in 2003, they were not total strangers.

On whether there was any deal or agreement between the two prior to the elections, Senator Ladoja reveals referring to Chief Adedibu revealed that:

In 2002, he came to me and said, Rasheed what do you want? I said I wanted to be the governor and he said then let us work together. I said without him we have been winning elections. So what is it you can do that I cannot do and he said three things. One, he asked me; do you know how to abuse people? And I said no. then he asked can you take away your clothes in the public and fight? I said no. Thirdly, he asked; can you tell lies against someone and swear by the Quran and again call witnesses? Again I said impossible. Then he said those are the things we always use in politics (Adegbamigbe, 2007: 21).

In his own narrative, Chief Adedibu recounted that the relationship between the two turned sour due to the ungrateful nature of Senator Ladoja who refused to show commensurate appreciation for all his efforts and that is why peace was elusive in the state. In the words of Chief Adedibu: 'He (Ladoja) was collecting N65 million as security vote every month. You know that governors don't account for security vote. He was to give me N15 million of that every month. He reneged. Later it was reduced to N10 million. Yet he did not give me' (Adegbamigbe 2007: 23).

However, in another interview, Chief Adedibu denied demanding for part of the security vote insisting that he was quoted out of context, rather he argued that:

...they misquoted me on television...the issue of money could not have caused our disagreement because I have been spending money before he (Ladoja) was born... what I said on television that particular day was that after spending one and a half years and considering my contributions to his government, would it not be reasonable for him in a government I installed, not to give me a pint of water to drink? And when people ask him, he would now start grumbling saying "won ni ki n ma ji owo wa, ki n ma gbe kinikan wa" (He asked me to be stealing money and things to service him). Ma wa ni bi o ba ji owo wa, se mi o ni eto lati gba nkankan nibe, (I would then say even if you do not steal money, am I not entitled to something in your government?) (Omotunde 2007: 26).

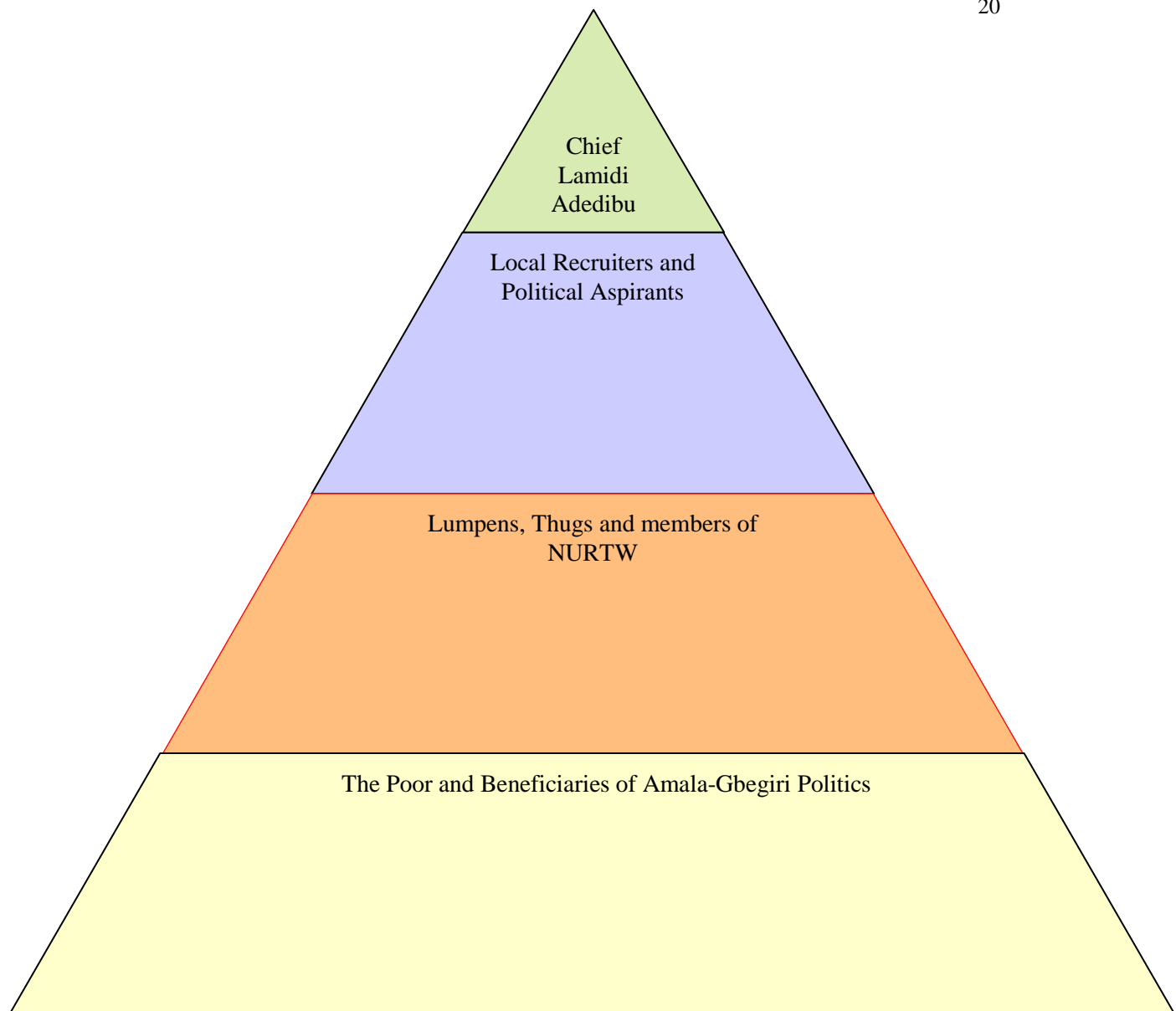
The above statements of the two actors, reveals the extent of the disappointment of the godfather by the refusal of the godson to honour agreements which they had before he assumed office as the governor of the state. Put in the context of economy of affection or affective behaviour; the

statement of the godfather shows him as expecting; gain, status, favour and sharing of state resources or benefits in reciprocation for his contribution to the electoral victory of the governor. Also, the refusal of Senator Ladoja to reciprocate Chief Adedibu speaks to a clashing perspective of what constitutes common good be the two of them. This is because the common good in the opinion of Chief Adedibu should be what benefits him, his cohorts and dependants in further sustenance of his political system of *Amala-Gbegiri*. The relationship between Chief Adedibu and Senator Ladoja had the features of the economy of affection because of the desire for the governorship seat by the former and the expectations of the latter from his investments into the relationship.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that aspirants to elective offices preferred to invest in direct reciprocal relations in order to win elections instead of relying on the manifestos of their political parties to attract votes. This made the likes of Chief Lamidi Adedibu central to winning elections because he had cultivated a large number of dependants by his open generosity and the provision of *Amala* and *Gbegiri* to those who thronged his house. Typical of Yoruba societies, this conferred on him influence and status which he instrumentalised and exploited for political gains. Godfatherism as practised by late Chief Lamidi Adedibu was sustained through a pyramidal structure that operated an economy of affection.

At the base of the pyramid are the poor followers and dependants whose loyalty is sustained by *Amala-Gbegiri* political system that makes him a benevolent politician whose instructions on electoral matters should not be flouted in appreciation and reciprocation for his generosity. Next in line are lumpens and thugs whom he shields from the law enforcement agents while they make themselves readily available for any onslaught against his political enemies. Also, visible in this pyramid is the NURTW; a professional association that became annexed for violence because of its internal struggle for the control of motor parks. Next in the pyramid are the local recruiters or local patrons who are sometimes politicians whose ratings by the godfather (Chief Adedibu) are dependent on the strength of followership they command amongst lumpens and thugs in their own political wards. The pyramid below illustrates the structure of Chief Adedibu's patronage politics.



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7. Interview with two members of opposition parties in Ibadan South-West (7-05-08).
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9. Interview with two members of opposition parties in Ibadan North (20-05-08).
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