

POLITICAL PARTIES, VIOLENT, AND CULTURE OF ELECTIONEERING PROTEST IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA: THE 1983 EXPERIENCE

WILLIAM ABIODUN DUYILE, OLUWASEUN PETER OYEWALE

Department of History and International Studies, Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Email: abiiodun.duyile@eksu.edu.ng

Received: 10 May 2021, Revised and Accepted: 13 June 2021

ABSTRACT

This paper is an examination of the political parties and culture of violent during the electioneering process in Southwest Nigeria. It focuses majorly on the circumstances that led to the 1983 political crisis in Nigeria most especially how it affected southwest. The paper also focuses of the activities of the two dominant political parties, that is, Unity Party of Nigeria and National Party of Nigeria and how their activities have created tautness in Southwest Nigeria. It explains the main reasons why violence engulfed the street of Oyo and Ondo, this is ranging from the slow and ineffective way the courts dealt with political matters and the patrician way security agencies went along with political violence. The reaction of Yoruba to show their displeasure and grievances to how shoddy the election of 1983 and the injustice also contributed to this evil of political violence in southwest. The paper concludes that the 1983 political crisis occurred as a result of inability of government and court of justice to do the right thing. The paper, however, derived its data from both primary and secondary sources.

Keywords: Political, Violence, Culture, Protest, Electioneering, Experience.

© 2021 The Authors. Published by Innovare Academic Sciences Pvt Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>) DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22159/ijss.2021v9i4.41873>. Journal homepage: <https://innovareacademics.in/journals/index.php/ijss>

INTRODUCTION

Democracy is defined as the continuous process of promoting equal access to fundamental rights. In lieu of this, Ake argued that the struggle for democratic culture that can bring about real development in Nigeria is the one sustained by economic and political development based on centralization of power, and reliance on indigenous communities to provide some refuge from the centralized state. Lamidi and Bello argued that the struggle for democratic government in Nigeria during military era is almost the same as the Nationalist struggles. This is because both sides of the coin were dedicated to the struggle for emancipation. In general, the concept of democracy is used to describe a political system designed to widen the participation of ordinary citizens. All over the world where democracy is being practiced, constitutional election must be the norm. It is the constitution that generates a style of politics. Politics is propelled by political parties. Political parties as defined by these writers are a body of men united for the promotion of ideals, with a focus to usurp power through the ballot box. Furthermore, Remi Anifowoshe see political parties as a means of organizing the people so they can select from themselves an elite group which will control the process of Public Decision Making on their behalf. Before the independent of Nigeria in October 1, 1960, series of efforts have been made to form formidable political parties with the aims of controlling the machineries of government. At the early stage, there were five registered parties in Nigeria which were as follows: Great Nigeria People Party (GNPP), National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP), Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), and Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Actually, there would be only three parties: UPN, NPN, and NPP. Even as the five parties emerged, the southwest surely had the five parties representatives operating in its domain, but the activities of two (NPN and UPN) seem to dominate the others. The fears expressed at the time of the lifting of the ban on politics that such practices as "horse trading, shifting alliances, sectional interests, and petty loyalty" would sabotage the new Republics were certainly, real.

The activities of the UPN and NPN created tautness in the Southwest of Nigeria. By the time of the gubernatorial elections on August 13, 1983, the brawls in the streets, on the airwaves, and in the compounds

where electoral bodies headquarters are located, had begun to usurp the actual voting itself as arenas of competition for, or resistance to, political power. Chief Bisi Akande, UPN candidate for deputy governor in Oyo, declared that if his party lost as a result of electoral rigging in the state, there were two lines of actions open to it: The court of law or the peoples' judgment [1].

It is interesting to note that both line of action were invoked by the UPN. In Ondo state, where the carnage reached levels of public mayhem similar to those in 1964-5, entire families of politicians were wiped out, and hundreds of houses were set on fire including the state headquarters of the Electoral body. Even the Electoral body staffs were helpless to declare the correct result or face the obliteration of themselves and their families [2]. For instance, in Abeokuta, capital of Ogun State, the transmitter of the Federal Television Station was attacked and set on fire.

It could be recalled that in Oyo and Ondo where the electoral contest had suddenly become intense after a landslide victory of the UPN, the bloodletting and arson were greatest. As indicated, political violence has become a line of action to further pursue claims to power of political parties. In the case of the southwest, it was the struggle for power between the NPN and UPN that have prominently led to the violence. Political parties, elections, and political violence are woven together in the collective consciousness of Southwest Nigerian people [3]. One major cause of the polling chaos of 1983 was the effort by the NPN to move from being a ruling party whose strength exceeded that of other parties, to one which enjoyed a monopoly of power within the political system. The desire of the NPN is to usurp power from the UPN in the Southwest, or to be more precise Yorubaland [3]. The political machinery on ground was one that was very well oiled and the reclusive approach adopted by the political bigwigs that ruled Yoruba politics at the time created a crusty, cranky, unfriendly attitude toward the NPN.

In Oyo, the battle involved as much bloodletting as exchanging of vituperative words. Here, the NPN achieved strategic victory number three, with the declaration of Omololu Olunloyo of the NPN as governor in place of Bola Ige of the UPN. In Oyo, an even wider gap of 84%

(UPN) to 14% (NPN) in 1979 had been replaced by a more critical NPN "victory" of 58–39% in 1983. Such a hitch in the very heartland of Yoruba politics cannot be made without the mobilization of a wide range of establishments, capitals, and "informal" means by the victorious party [4].

Bola Ige went to court confident that the revelation of the many irregularities in the election would swing the governorship back to him, or, at least, result in the cancellation of the poll and the call of a new vote. Hundreds of thousands of voters in the key towns of Ilesha and Ibadan had not been able to exercise their voting rights on April 13 because of a variety of impediments [3]. And then, there was the case of Modakeke, in which the injunction obtained against the use of the fraudulent electoral register had been disregarded by FEDECO officials. The fact that the political lords of Yorubaland are adamant insular who prefer in any dealings with the outside regions (South East, North West, North East, North Central, and South South) to run the show rather than reason and maybe subordinately play politics with this outside region [3].

The inherent factor in Yoruba politics are the fact that politics in Yorubaland is insular in nature and the political chieftains do not intend changing this reclusive approach to politics [3]. Yorubas detest treachery and celebrate whenever a traitor is captured. The treatment given to characters like Chief Akintola, and co. comes readily to mind.

The tension, fear, and anger in Yorubaland had overflowed its cup thereby bursting into violence immediately election results were announced in 1983, every other facets of life collapsed in the South West created vacuum that was later filled by killings, maiming, stealing, raping, anger, frustrations., etc. [5]. The inability of the electoral body to curb the inefficiency of the judiciary to resolve political issues created this vacuum.

On balance, the courts gave the NPN what it sought. In addition to Shagari's reelection, the NPN in the South West region was able to hold on to the near doubling of its governorship victories in Nigeria, capturing two UPN strongholds in the South West.

The dethronement of two UPN stalwarts from their governorship stools began violence that ate up the Second Republic [6]. The fact that the people had lost confidence in the courts allowed for violence to be pursued. By September 1983, politics had nearly completed its decay into a state of war in the South West region.

The events of 1983, hopeful, but hopeless situation began so much violence that was reminiscent of 1966 – Ibadan and Akure were in flames almost immediately the elections were announced. The people had lost hope in the judiciary and were determined to make a change. Streets in the South West were littered with bodies, blood, and burnt properties [7].

The insular politics played by Yorubas had like in 1966 proven to be impregnable to so-called intruders. In the 1983 elections, one fascinating features of that era were the alliances. The Peoples Parties Alliances (PPA) was made up of UPN, NPP (following the breakdown of its initial accord with NPN), GNPP, and PRP. All four parties ganged up to stop the NPN for the 1983 elections. The activities of political parties backfired on them. The South West region was heavily hit by political violence.

In different parts of our country especially the South West and South East political zone of Nigeria. All hell was let loose when perceived individuals were accused of trying to subvert the will of the people during the 1983 election. The events in Ondo, Oyo, Lagos, and Ogun, come readily to what the author meant.

The outburst of violence in the South West of Nigeria was more to do with perceived mind set of South Westerners of collaboration of some citizens (South West indigenes) with the Northern oligarchy to rule the

West. These perceived traitors of the South West were bent on not only denying Chief Awolowo the presidency of the country but also upsetting the apple card by snatching some of the states, then controlled by the defunct Unity Party of Nigeria.

In Oyo State, Dr. Omololu Olunloyo was declared winner over the then incumbent, Chief Bola Ige and Chief Akin Omoboriowo who had been deputy to the then incumbent Governor of Ondo state, Chief Michael Ajasin, were declared winner of the gubernatorial polls. Whereas the fires in Oyo soon burnt themselves out, and Olunloyo assumed office, Ondo state was a different kettle entirely. Omoboriowo left with his tails behind his legs, refused to return to claim or actualize his mandates. So much was lost as a result of this political violence. Hatred, evil, corruption, increased drastically creating a lingering pain among the people for a long time to come.

THE ELECTION OF 1983

Politically induced violence has been a recurring decimal in Southwest Nigeria, starting from as far back as the pre Independence era. As 1983 comes near, the fear of political violence loomed large among the people of the southwest. The elections of 1983 been the main culprit. At the root of the violence that has characterized, the chequered history of Yorubaland have been perceived injustice, marginalization, oppression of a minority ethnic group (such as the minority among the majority like the Modakeke/lfe palaver) by a majority group, electoral fraud, imposition of unpopular candidates on the electorate or the ill-treatment of popular, grassroots politicians by unpopular, and dictatorial cabals.

An election is "free and fair" or "massively rigged" depending on the fortunes at the election of the candidates or party making the allegation [8]. The collapse of the Second Republic cannot be simply attributed to any particular act of omission or commission on the part of the politicians who took control of the offices to which they had been elected or appointed after October 1, 1979; or the Nigerian soldiers who intervened on December 31, 1983, cannot also be held responsible, merely by that act, for the collapse of the Second Republic [6].

In Yorubaland, however, history had told us virtually all aspects of the electoral, process become, at some moment or another, subject to disagreement. When the degree of trust sinks to a low level, as in 1983, the controversies accumulate faster than they can be resolved [1]. The 1979 elections were concluded and were a success partially in the southwest [9]. The reason for the word partial to connote the election of 1979 was for, there were indeed proven and unproven allegations by various parties as regard the 1979 election. The accusations and counter accusations of rigging thrown by parties at each other makes the election of 79 inconclusive and party machineries were set in motion against each other to capture power in 1983.

In the best of circumstances, it is extremely difficult, even for political scientists, to define what constitutes a free and fair election. In a book titled "Elections without Choice," edited by Hermet Rose [10] and others, the authors make the assertion that free, fair, and competitive elections associated with the western democracies, as opposed to "election without choice practiced by authoritarian regimes or one party democracies found virtually in most regions of the world is supposed to contain, inter alia, the following essential elements"[8].

Competition between political parties or candidates contesting an election and freedom of voters to cast their votes. This freedom entails the voters' right:

- a. To have his franchise recognized through registration
- b. To vote without being segregated into categories dividing the electorate and revoking the idea of popular sovereignty
- c. To cast his ballot free from external hindrance and in secret
- d. To decide how to vote, even to spoil his ballot without external pressure; and

- e. To expect his ballot to be counted accurately even if it goes against the wishes of those in power [8].

In our context, the 83 elections did not meet the above conditions. The 1983 elections were not the only set of difficult hurdles that the Second Republic needed to get over, but a process which brought into sharp relief the fundamental problems of the new political system itself. Moreover, one of the major premises why violence erupted in 83 was the inability of the constitution and the society at that period to look into the fundamentals that had disrupted party formation and politicking since Nigeria's inception. The political culture in Yorubaland is captured by the following remark: Rigging elections has for a long time been as Yoruba as pounded yam or Amala [4].

Electoral fraud leads to disruption and this invariably combines with other factors leading to politically induced violence. Electoral frauds are not an evidence of a "commitment to democracy" but rather belong to a general social practice deeply embedded in the culture of party politics in the Southwest.

Against a background, of fear, unresolved disputes, sticking to an identity; the Yorubas wanted a peaceful resolution to the 83 election but with the attitude of the NPN and UPN nothing short of political violence would have emerged. The reports of malfeasance which showed from constituencies throughout the southwest as the elections commenced underage voters, the distribution of already thumb printed ballots, unauthorized possession of electoral materials, forged voting cards, impersonation, etc., could not be kept in any reasonable perspective, because each documented instance suggested how much of evil perpetration had been committed [11].

Within FEDECO, which swelled within a matter of months into an organization of a million employees of superintendent, an electoral machinery with, at its base, 160,000 booths, the reassuring voice of its Chairman, Ovie Whiskey, was sometimes out of harmony with the frank and revealing statements of its commissioners at the state level. One of these, Colonel Ayo Ariyo of Bende State, made it a point to warn the nation how unprepared FEDECO was?

The activities of the UPN and NPN created tension in the Southwest of Nigeria [12]. In 1983, there was only one relatively peaceful election and it is that of the Presidential election held on August 6. By the time of the gubernatorial elections on August 13, the struggles in the streets, on the airwaves, and in the compounds where FEDECO headquarters are located, had begun to supplant the actual voting itself as arenas of competition for, or resistance to, political power [12]. Overt appeals to the populace to resist the NPN's fraudulent electoral conduct were made in increasing frequency especially by UPN militants in the western states. The UPN major newspapers made the following cautionary aim threatening remark: "No party should allow the NPN to monopolize violence to rig the elections. Men of brawn are met only in the NPN. Chief Bisi Akande, UPN candidate for deputy governor in Oyo, declared that if his party lost as a result of electoral rigging in the state, there were two lines of actions open to it: the court of law or the people's judgment [13].

In fact, both line of action were invoked by the UPN. Throughout the Southwest states, thugs went about beating suspected NPN members. Some FEDECO headquarters were placed under virtual siege. In Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, UPN, and NPN officials kept vigil, watching each other and the FEDECO representatives, to forestall what each believed would be an attempt by the others to command a doctoring of the voting results [14].

In Ondo state, where the carnage reached levels of public mayhem similar to those in 1964-5, entire families of politicians were wiped out, and hundreds of houses were set on fire including the state headquarters of FEDECO. Even FEDECO staffs were threatened to announce the correct result or face the annihilation of themselves and

their families. In Abeokuta, capital of Ogun State, the transmitter of the Federal Television Station was attacked and set on fire [9].

In those states such as Oyo, and Ondo, where the electoral contest had suddenly become intense after a landslide victory of the UPN, the bloodletting and arson were greatest. As indicated, political violence has become a line of action to further pursue claims to power of political parties. In the case of the southwest, it was the struggle for power between the NPN and UPN that have prominently led to the violence. Elections and violence are woven together in the collective consciousness of Yoruba people [13].

At 1.30 am on the morning of August 11, 1983, a long 5 days after the first elections were held, Alhaji Shehu Shagari was declared, reelected President of Nigeria by a vote of 12,037,648 to 7,885,434 (for his nearest rival Obafemi Awolowo) [3].

Shagari's vote had doubled from his 1979 total that of Awolowo had increased by approximately 40%. Of equal importance is the fact that Shagari obtained a minimum of 25% in 16 states of the Federation compared with 12 states in 1979 (which had then provoked the reinterpretation of his required vote spread?).

The three states which remained outside Shagari's 25% plus column were all in the West: Ogun, Ondo, and Lagos. In Oyo, the scene of such bitter conflict in mid-August, Shagari and the NPN registered an increase from 12.75% in 1979 to 37% in 1983. Chief Awolowo refused to initiate legal action to challenge the NPN total votes. Politics played everywhere consumes energy because it is the gateway to wealth [7].

One major cause of the electoral disorder of 1983 was the effort by the NPN to move from being a ruling party whose strength exceeded that of other parties, to one which enjoyed a monopoly of power within the political system [14]. The desire of the NPN is to usurp power from the UPN in the South West, or to be more precise Yorubaland. The political machinery on ground was one that was very well oiled and the seclusive approach adopted by the political bigwigs that ruled Yoruba politics at the time created a crunchy, cracky, unfriendly attitude toward the NPN [14].

In Oyo, the battle involved as much bloodletting as exchanging of vituperative words. Here, the NPN achieved strategic victory number three, with the declaration of Omololu Olunloyo of the NPN as governor in place of Bola Ige of the UPN. In Oyo, an even wider gap of 84% (UPN) to 14% (NPN) in 1979 had been replaced by a more decisive NPN "victory" of 58-39% in 1983. Such a reversal in the very heartland of Yoruba politics cannot be made without the mobilization of a wide range of institutions, resources, and "informal" means by the victorious party [5].

Bola Ige went to court confident that the revelation of the many irregularities in the election would swing the governorship back to him, or, at least, result in the cancellation of the poll and the call of a new vote. Hundreds of thousands of voters in the key towns of Ilesha and Ibadan had not been able to exercise their voting rights on April 13 because of a variety of impediments. And then, there was the case of Modakeke, in which the injunction obtained against the use of the fraudulent electoral register had been disregarded by FEDECO officials [13].

Bola Ige, a veteran of many legal battles in Nigeria, came to court armed with an array of documents showing how FEDECO's figures differed from those noted by party agents in many constituencies' Ige's appeal did not, however, succeed. The fact that these conflicting results had been registered on forms printed by Ige's agents, because of a shortage of forms in the constituencies in question, led to their rejection by the courts. This ruling was sustained on appeal [5].

Surely, the irregularities glaringly displayed during the course of the 1983 election began that chilling bloodletting violence in 1983. The fact that the events and actions of the NPN and UPN can be fingered as the immediate cause of the collapse of the Second Republic [5].

Apart from the immediate causes of perceived injustice, marginalization, greed, electoral fraud, imposition of unpopular candidates on the electorate, etc., there indeed are inherent factors that makes politics in Yorubaland very violent. The fact that the political lords of Yorubaland are adamant insularist who prefer in any dealings with the outside regions (South East, North West, North East, North Central, and South South) to run the show rather than reason and maybe subordinately play politics with this outside region.

The inherent factor in Yoruba politics are the fact that politics in Yorubaland is insular in nature and the political demi-gods do not intend changing this seclurist approach to politics.

Whenever a Yoruba son goes out to reach out to politicians of other regions and takes a weaker position in the new arrangement with politician from other regions, then intends to lord its new found friends over the Yoruba people, an apparent rejection of such arrangement most often leads to violent clashes. Yorubas detest treachery and celebrate whenever a traitor is captured. Yorubas guard their identity jealously and its these kinds of arrangement made by some of their sons that always make politics in Yorubaland inherently volatile. We can easily cast our minds back at characters such as Chief Akintola, Chief Omoboriowo, Chief Omololu Olunloyo... and how their activities gave rise to violence [1].

The tension, fear, and anger in Yorubaland had overflowed its cup thereby bursting into violence immediately election results were announced in 1983, every other facets of life collapsed in the South West created a vacuum that was later filled by killings, maiming, stealing, raping, anger, frustrations, etc. The inability of the electoral body to curb the inefficiency of the judiciary to resolve political issues created this vacuum.

The Nigerian judiciary was even less able to fill its original role. The courts could not operate in any salutary way when drawn into this process of vote adjusting, of having to decide which of conflicting, and unquestionable, sets of results were most "improbable" which impromptu solution is most appropriate [12]. On balance, the courts gave the NPN what it sought. In addition to Shagari's reelection. The NPN in the South West region was able to hold on to the near doubling of its governorship victories in Nigeria, capturing two UPN strongholds in the South West [5]. The dethronement of two UPN stalwarts from their governorship stools began violence that ate up the Second Republic. The fact that the people had lost confidence in the courts allowed for violence to be pursued. By September 1983, politics had nearly completed its decay into a state of war in the South West region. Judges cannot adjudicate wars; they can, if they choose, acknowledge the victors and vanquished [15].

The events of 1983, hopeful, but hopeless situation began so much violence that was reminiscent of 1966 – Ibadan and Akure were in flames almost immediately the elections were announced. The people had lost hope in the judiciary and were determined to make a change. Streets in the South West were littered with bodies, blood, and burnt properties [4]. In some cases, witchcraft was introduced to fight each other. The NPN stalwarts were disappearing either by running away from the region or missing and not to be seen again.

The residence (South West region) increasingly panicked and desperately scattered away to where they could find safety. The violence had overwhelmed the federal government and on a daily basis countless numbers of people were losing their lives and properties. The continued incitement in the mass media by mostly the UPN stalwarts fuelled the streets with violence [5]. The two major actors in Ibadan and Akure escaped. However, some other NPN bigwigs were not so lucky. Thuggery and police brutality appeared to have become a regular feature of the era. The people as at this time wanted some form of respite as houses, properties, human life,... etc., were lost to political violence. The insular politics played by Yorubas had like in 1966 proven

to be impregnable to so called intruders. In the 1983 elections, one fascinating features of that era were the alliances. The PPA was made up of UPN, NPP (following the breakdown of its initial accord with NPN), GNPP, and PRP. All four parties ganged up to stop the NPN for the 1983 elections. The activities of political parties backfired on them. The South West region was heavily hit by political violence.

Thuggery and associated violence manifested in every aspect of our political journey in Nigeria. The South West of Nigeria is prone to such violence. Thugs have become private armies of political stalwarts creating pandemonium in Nigeria. Violence is regarded by many as a perceived response to oppression of the people or the greedy, wish of the incumbent wanting to remain in office forever [11]. In different parts of our country especially the South West and South East political zone of Nigeria. All hell was let loose when perceived individuals were accused of trying to subvert the will of the people during the 1983 election. The events in Ondo, Oyo, Lagos, and Ogun, come readily to what the author meant.

The outburst of violence in the South West of Nigeria was more to do with perceived mind set of South Westerners of collaboration of some citizens (South West indigenes) with the Northern oligarchy to rule the West. These perceived traitors of the South West were bent on not only denying Chief Awolowo the presidency of the country but also upsetting the apple card by snatching some of the states, then controlled by the defunct Unity Party of Nigeria [3].

The skies were brightened by the fires lit by mobs angered by what they saw as electoral frauds especially in the Old Ondo and Oyo states. In Oyo State, Dr. Omololu Olunloyo was declared winner over the then incumbent, Chief Bola Ige and Chief Akin Omoboriowo who had been deputy to the then incumbent Governor of Ondo state, Chief Michael Ajasin, were declared winner of the gubernatorial polls [14]. Whereas the fires in Oyo soon burnt themselves out, and Olunloyo assumed office, Ondo state was a different kettle entirely. Omoboriowo left with his tails behind his legs, refused to return to claim or actualize his mandates. So much was lost as a result of this political violence. Hatred, evil, and corruption [3] increased drastically creating a lingering pain among the people for a long time to come.

SOME PACIFIST MEASURES

Two main reasons can be adduced to be the reason why violence engulfed the streets of Oyo and Ondo – the slow and ineffective way the courts dealt with political matters and the partisan way security agencies went along with political violence. The government of Shehu Shagari and the Assembly had to think of something to curb the violence everywhere in the cities of the South West region [9], even though it was clear that the Federal government was overwhelmed by the activities of violence on ground. They knew something had to be done quickly so that power can remain in the hands of the NPN.

Drastically, government took action (at least from the FG level) against political violence, of course without the support of other parties, especially Yorubas who felt cheated at the perceived lordship of their Hausa counterparts. Yorubas love to adhere to their identity and this also includes political identity. The NPN although had in its fold prominent Yoruba sons was still seen by the masses of the South West region in the same way as the NPC (Northern people Congress) of the First Republic.

As far as the Yorubas were concerned, the NPN was an evolution of the NPC and as such could not be trusted. Even as the UPN continues to linger in one crisis or another, the UPN was still very popular with the people but not as what it was in 1979. The UPN had charismatic leaders who had a popular following. Followership in Yorubaland was based basically on trust and nothing else. Even at this, Yoruba politics were also heavily sentimental; issues, such as clan loyalty, remained a factor toward Yoruba politics.

It was factors mentioned above that made the job of security agents such as the police very difficult. It was clear that the police was on hostile ground. The type of approach the perpetrators of the violence use were guerilla (urban guerilla). Like urban guerilla movements, they strike and disappear into the crowd. A crowd collaborates with the perpetrators.

In the event of an envisaged violence that may rear its ugly head in 1983; there appeared in 1983 two studies of the 1979 election, each of which, by frankly revealing the variety of malpractices which had occurred, served as a grim forecast of what was in store for the country later that year.

The first study was written by a senior official responsible for the conduct of the 1979 elections, and the second was the work of two university academics (one of them a sometime journalist). Ahmadu Kurfi, drawing on FEDECO's own report on the elections, pointed out that in 1979 surplus ballot papers had been sold to the highest bidder, that polling agents had thumb-printed ballots for those who paid them, that ballot boxes stuffed with pre-marked ballots were substituted for the real ones on the way to counting centers, and that the deliberate invalidation of ballots by polling and counting officials had occurred [8].

Ogunsanwo and Adamu similarly demonstrated in copious detail how members of the huge temporary bureaucracy recruited by FEDECO to conduct the elections, as well as police and other security officials assigned to guard against electoral malpractices, and finally, the officers, candidates, and supporters of the contesting parties engaged in extensive acts of collusion to manipulate various aspects of the electoral process [9].

The contention can be made, on the basis of the evidence accumulated by Ogunsanwo and Adamu, that Nigerian elections are principally a competition for control of the electoral machinery and, secondarily, a competition for individual votes. Any party which fails to win control of this machinery in a particular area, or to neutralize the influence of its opponents over the personnel operating the machinery, risks losing elections regardless of the actual support it enjoys among the electorate [6]. Issues raised such as the above makes it difficult for elections to pass through without dissatisfaction from the public. Hence, violence does erupt starting from the body conducting the elections, to the electorates, and also the machinery (as the police) was allegedly loyal to the government in which case is the Federal Government [9].

For it is the jurisdiction of the Federal Government to be in charge of the police. When the South West went up in flames, the police loyalty was to the Federal Government since public opinion in Yorubaland was to the UPN, the NPN led Federal Government controlled the police making it difficult for the police to be trusted. This however does not mean that the NPN does not have a substantial share of supporters in the South West of Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The collapse of the Second Republic was in the year 1983, a period which brought forth military intervention. The South West was invariably under a siege before the 1983 elections. There was no military strength to enforce peace or is it because of the biases of the NPN government that peace could not be achieved. The more democratic systems of courts were completely misused and rigging was intensely increased during the 1983 elections [9].

Yoruba politics as have always been involving "two faces:" An interior face, concerned with the allocation of reward to those who are loyal to the Yoruba self-interest and exterior face, concerned with maximizing the profit of this internal gain in an overall view of the Nigerian polity [12]. There is also added to these a sub ethnic consciousness that may sometimes trigger clashes with the broader Yoruba interest.

It may be a psychological, historical, sociological interest pursued by the sub-ethnic group or clan. Violence is a strategy to acquire power at all cost.

In Nigeria, and the relentless struggle to procure individual and group benefits via the temporary appropriation of public offices eventually reducing the electoral processes to a Hobbesian state of war [16].

The Nigerian soldiers (Muhammadu Buhari led coup) who intervened on December 31, 1983, cannot be held responsible merely by that act, for the collapse of the Second Republic, nor can the thousands of politicians and government officials detained and were tried when the military took over.

The collapse of politics can be adduced to the monster of political violence. Politician it would assume had learnt nothing from the past and politics still wear the inevitability of the collapse of the Second Republic were indeed glaring in the events that existed before 1983. The year 1983 marked and one of the most endowed countries in the world, arguably the most important.

Hope and anxiety defined the four years of the Second Republic. But hope soon petered out. Anxiety soon yielded the enormous violence that eventually brought the military back.⁷¹ So at the time a band of soldiers pounced on the Shagari administration removing them from power. Nigerians rejoiced once again. Giving the impression that their savior had come.

The riots, uprising during our period of study showed that people who are disillusioned and alienated from their authority react in certain situations. The riots were a protest by the majority of the Yorubas to show their detest to how shoddy the election of 1983 were and the injustice also contributed to this evil of political violence. The open disregard for the people's wishes, as expressed through the ballot box, injustices perpetrated by the military, therefore created the immediate hostile climate for widespread riots and for attacks on the symbols of authority. As noted by post and Vickers:

The rebellion arose immediately from the conflict among political parties over control of the system of rewards. The Action Group crisis, which came into open in 1962, was mainly a struggle for power and control of the Western region between the various personalities and groups within and outside the Region. The same personalities clash also emanated its ugly head during 1983 election crisis that finally collapsed the Second Republic. If non-violent means of access to power (as through the ballot box) and redress of grievances are blocked, violence may become a substitute.

Although the Yorubas' do consider themselves as a peace loving and traditionally non-violent people. The resort to violence during the period of 1983 was a last resort to their frustrations.

In the Western Region, an unhealthy rivalry created a volatile situation and explains why the Western region was always repeating past mistakes. Rival political parties (as to be said between the NPN and UPN) exploited the tension between the parties in 1983 and used this opportunity to undermine the stability of the region during the 1983 crisis. The result of deep-rooted disunity among Yorubas' that can be traced as far back as the 19th century became a cockpit of Nigerian politics in which outside regions of Nigeria sort to manipulate to achieve their political goals.

The suspicion by the Yoruba leadership to any outside interference by those from other regions in Nigeria has always backfired because this suspicion always engenders a lot of conspiracy theories that aggravates violence in the region. For example, it is a known fact that the Yorubas' have seen the people from the Northern Region as a backward, conservative lot that are different from themselves whom they consider arrogantly as a progressive, modernized, educated people who were constantly pulled back by the North.

However, the crisis in the South West can be assigned to various factors which may not be primarily due to the processes of modernization alone. The factors to be identified by this writer are as follows; the

internal divisions and quarrels of the Yoruba; the consequent “style of politics” – the insularity and distinctness of politics in Yorubaland – which had a profound effect on the political behavior of the Yorubas. All these factors can be adduced as reasons why political violence is a regular reoccurrence in that region.

The factors outlined and the violent events which they produced had far reaching consequences for political stability in Nigeria as a whole. Most observations sort by the writer; all have a canning believe that the events in the South West during and before the 1966 coup, the 1983 collapse of the Second Republic have a direct or indirect undertones coming from previous clashes in the South West.

REFERENCES

1. Richard AJ. Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic. Edinburgh: Cambridge; 1987. p. 121.
2. The Guardian. Nigerian Political History. Lagos: Guardian Newspaper; 2002. p. 55.
3. Ajani J. Nigerian Political History, Print Media. Lagos: Vanguard; 2002. p. 9.
4. Duyile WA. Electioneering and Violent Political Protests in South-Western Nigeria: The 1983 Experience, The Publication is a Master's Degree Thesis. Okokomaiko, Lagos, Nigeria: Lagos State University, Masters Thesis; 2003.
5. Richard AJ. Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria. The Rise and Fall of the 2nd Republic. Cambridge: Cambridge Publications; 1987. p. 121.
6. Duyile WA. History of the Nigerian Military. Military History Docket. Sapele, Delta, Nigeria: Nigerian Navy Engineering College; 2006. p. 17.
7. Infrastructural Development in Nigeria, 1960-2015: An Interrogation of Nigerian Socio Economic Growth. Duyile, William Abiodun. Port Harcourt: S.N. Port Harcourt Journal of History and Diplomatic Studies: A Multi Disciplinary Journal of the Department of History and Diplomatic Studies; 2020. p. 4.
8. Amurfi K. The Nigerian General Elections 1959 and 1979 and the Aftermath. Accra: Macmillan Publishers; 1993. p. 20.
9. Anifowoshe R. Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience. New York: Nok Publishers International; 1978. p. 248.
10. Kurfi A. The Nigerian General Election, 1959 and 1979 and its Aftermath. Lagos: Macmillan Publishers; 1993.
11. Duyile WA. Military History Lecture Note. Sapele: Nigerian Navy College of Engineering; 2005. p. 34.
12. Ajani J. Politics in the South West. Lagos: Vanguard Newspapers; 1999. p. 21.
13. Ige B. Peoples, Politics and Politicians of Nigeria. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books; 1992. p. 407.
14. Duyile WA. Electioneering and Violent Political Protests in South Western Nigeria: The 1983 Experience. Masters of Arts, Thesis, Lagos State University. Amuwo-Odofin, Lagos State, Nigeria: Lagos State University, Publications; 2003.
15. The Vanguard Newspaper. Nigerian Politics. Lagos: Vanguard Publications; 1999.
16. Punch. Politics, Print Media. Lagos: Punch Newspapers; 1999.
17. Akinjogbin A, Ayandele EA. Yorubaland up to 1800. In: Ikime O, editor. Groundwork of Nigerian History. Lagos: Heinemann Educational Books; 1980. p. 124.
18. The Guardian. Politics in the South West. S. L., Newspaper, The Guardian; 2002.
19. Ajani J. Nigerian Politics, Newspaper. Lagos: Vanguard Newspaper;