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Party Politics and Democracy in Northern Nigeria 1951-1983

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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2019
TITLE PAGE

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By

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the

International University of Africa

September, 2019
AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis entitled: “Party Politics and Democracy in Northern Nigeria 1951-1983”, has been carried out by me in the Department of History. No part of this thesis has been submitted for a degree or diploma at this or any other institution of higher education.

Muhammad Alhaji Bello

Name of Student                      Signature                      Date
This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Muhammad Alhaji Bello, entitled “Party Politics and Democracy in Northern Nigeria 1951-1983”, complies with the regulation of International University of Africa and meets the established standards with respect to originality.

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External Examiner

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Internal Examiner
DEDICATION

This PhD thesis is dedicated to my father Alhaji Bello, my mother Hajiya Asma’u and my entire family for their continued support and encouragement in my life.
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<tr>
<td>ABU</td>
<td>Ahmadu Bello University</td>
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<td>ACP</td>
<td>Assistant Commissioner of Police</td>
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<td>AG</td>
<td>Action Group</td>
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<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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65. UK: United Kingdom
66. UMBC: United Middle Belt Congress
67. UNIMAID: University of Maiduguri
68. UPGA: United Progressive Grand Alliance
69. UPN: Unity Party of Nigeria
70. USA: United States of America
71. USSR: United Soviet Socialist Russia
72. WASU: West African Students Union
GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE THESIS

1. Adalchi: Fairness
2. Araba: Lets separate
3. Atemityough: smashing the head
4. Chancha: Broom
5. Gbagba: Tiv chief
6. Haraji: Tax
7. Ichango: The younger of the two sons of Tiv. His descendants are called Mba Ichango
8. Ipusu: The elder of the two sons of a Tiv. His descendants are called Mba Ipusu
9. Jam’iyya: Political Party
10. Mahaukata: Crazy People
11. Mutane: People
12. Nasara: Victory
13. Oduduwa: Ancestor of Yoruba people
14. Ologun: War Chiefs
15. Sawaba: Freedom
16. Talakawa: Commoners
17. Wetie: Wet it
ABSTRACT

This research brings a new perspective on the crises that have been consuming the Nigeria’s democracy as it highlights the fundamental role played by party politics instead of the hitherto widely emphasised factors such as ethnicity, regionalism and religion. The study aims to trace the evolution of party politics and democracy in Nigeria, with special emphasis on the Northern region. The analysis examines how political parties operated; what their impacts are; what problems and challenges they are faced with currently, what lessons could be drawn from our past political experiences as a country with a view to proffering solutions to the challenges we face. As the thesis converses the impacts of party politics and democracy in Nigeria and their successes and failures, that will serve in giving policy makers/politicians a good position to know how and why the first and second republics in Nigeria failed. Thus, the research highlights the need to draw better policies and manifestos that will ameliorate the challenges facing our democracy. The method of historical research applied was in various ways. The researcher embarked on collection of primary source materials which included published and unpublished works and manuscripts by actors of some historical events in Northern Nigeria, Nigeria and beyond; archival materials were also included. Areas visited for data gathering included libraries of some universities, the National Archive Kaduna, Arewa House Kaduna, Independent National Electoral Commission, and so on. Furthermore, oral interviews were conducted as the historical reconstruction cut across colonial and post-colonial periods. Secondary Sources Materials used included documented journals, manuscripts, newspapers, text books and research theses. The scope of the area of study mainly covers developments in Party Politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria from 1951-1983. The climate, physical characteristics and inhabitants of Nigeria are also brought to limelight. Some findings of the thesis revealed that Herbart Macaulay and his friends formed the first political party (Nigerian National Democratic Party) in Nigeria and the first elective principle was brought about by the Clifford Constitution in the first quarter of the 20th Century. Nnamdi Azikwe, Sa’ad Zungur, Obefemi Awolowo, Mallam Aminu Kano, Ahmadu Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and so on were the democratic champions that spearheaded the struggle for independence in Nigeria which materialised in 1960. The major cause of the Western Regional crisis, the fall of the First and Second Republics and the Nigerian Civil War was ugly party politics, rather than religious, regional or ethnic difference.
ملخص البحث

هذا البحث عبارة عن نظرة جديدة للمشاكل التي تعتدي على النظام الديموقراطي في نيجيريا حيث وضع أن السبب الأساسي للاضطرابات السياسية هو السياسة الحزبية، خلافا لما اشتهير من نسبة الأسباب إلى التعصب القبلي أو الإقليمي أو الديني. استهدف البحث إلى تقييم السياسة الحزبية الديموقراطية في نيجيريا على وجه العموم والمنطقة الشمالية على وجه الخصوص. فتم النظر في عمليات الأحزاب السياسية وأثرها، ومهما كانت التشويه والتحديات التي تواجهها حاليا، وما هي الدروس التي يمكن أن نستفيد من ماضي سياسة البلد حتى نجد حلًا للحاضر. وعلى هذا قدم البحث معلومات مهمة تساعد الباحثين الراغبين في معرفة تاريخ السياسة الحزبية الديموقراطية في نيجيريا ومدى تأثيرها مع بيان جانب النجاح وجانب الفشل لليبيين للسياسيين عوامل الضعف والانحصار في الجمهورية الأولى والثانية. لذا صار من الضروري ضرورة إصدار الأهداف والدواميج السياسية التي تسهم في مواجهة التحديات التي تواجه الديمقراطية. وقد استعمل الباحث مناهج البحث المتعددة وجمع المعلومات من المصادر الأولى من كتب ورسائل منشورة وغير منشورة والمخطوطات والسجلات. فطالع بالجامعات والمكتبات العامة والأرشيف الوطني وغيرها، إضافة إلى المقابلات الشخصية التي قام بها. وأما المصادر الثانية التي استخدمها الباحث فتشتمل على المجلات والرسائل والكتب والبحث العلمي. وانحصر حدود البحث في الدراسة التاريخية لنشأة السياسة الحزبية في شمال نيجيريا من العام 1591م إلى العام 1591م. وتوصل البحث إلى أن حزب حزب الديدوقراطي الوطني نيجيري (NNDP) كان الأول الذي كان أقدم وأكثر أحزابها أول من أنجز حزبا سياسيا في نيجيريا باسم: الحزب الديدوقراطي الوطني نيجيري. وكان الدعوة الأولى من قانون كليفورد (Clifford Constitution) في الربع الأول من القرن العشرين. بعد كل من إمدي أزكري، وسعد زنوجر، وأوبامبيو أوبوتو، ومامل أمين كابو، وأحمد بلو وأبوبكر تابإفا بابوا، من قادة حزب طلب استقلال نيجيريا إلى أن حالفهم النصر عام 1960م. وأثبت البحث أن السبب الرئيسي للأوضاع السياسية في المنطقة الغربية في البلاد وسقوط الجمهورية الأولى والثانية والحرب الأهلية إما هو السياسة الحزبية لا التعصب الديني أو الإقليمي أو القبلي. خلافاً على ذلك فإن التحول من النظام البرلماني إلى النظام الرئاسي لم يستطع أن يحل المشاكل التي تواجه الديمقراطية في نيجيريا بسبب السياسة الحزبية القبيحة. وحقق البحث كذلك أن كثيراً من الأحزاب السياسية المتخصبة عجزت عن التوفيق بما ودت أثناء الحملات الانتخابية، كما أن أكثر الأحزاب السياسية كونت على أساس دينية أو إقليمية أو قبلي أو عرقية.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION
BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

The study of Nigerian party politics and democracy is not a new subject to historians and social scientists. Attempts have been made by different scholars who offer divergent theoretical analysis. The purpose of this study is to explore party politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria in the period 1951-1983. The research brings a new perspective on the crises that have been consuming the Nigeria’s democracy through emphasising the major role played by party politics instead of the hitherto widely accentuated factors such as ethnicity, regionalism and religion. The first elections in the history of Northern Nigeria took place in 1951. However, it should be noted that elections were conducted in 1923, 1928, 1933 and 1943\(^1\) in the southern parts of Nigeria.

The term “Nigeria” is derived from the word “Niger” – the name of the river that constitutes the most remarkable geographical feature of the country. Nigeria is a country of 923,768 square kilometres;\(^2\) bound in the west by Benin, in the north by the Niger and Chad Republics, in the east by the Republic of Cameroon, and in the south by the Gulf of Guinea. The country gained independence from the British government on 1\(^{st}\) October, 1960, and became a republic in 1963.


Northern Nigeria is bordered by Enugu in the south; by Niger Republic in the north; Chad Republic and Cameroon in the east; and by Benin Republic in the west. Northern Nigeria began as a Protectorate during the Colonial period and later reconstructed to Region, and finally divided into States after Nigeria got its independence.

By 1960s, a full-fledged democratic government got firmly rooted in Northern Nigeria. For the first time, a Parliamentary System of Government came into being, having all Members of the National Assembly carrying the mandate of their constituencies. In other words, an unprecedented democratically elected government at all levels of power came into being with the emergence of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the first Prime Minister of Nigeria and Nnamdi Azikwe as the President. The first Regional election after independence took place in 1961.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter deals with the background to the research, significance of the research, objectives of the research, research questions, methodology of the research and so on and so forth. The second chapter is mainly a literature review of some related materials. It is believed that a researcher cannot achieve significant study without first understanding the literature on the

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ground. The third chapter gives a background to the precolonial Nigerian area. The chapter also looks at the introduction of Islam, peopling of Nigeria as well as creation of regions and states. The fourth chapter gives background to democracy and formation of political parties in Nigeria up to 1951- the commencement period of this research. The fourth chapter also deals with the nationalists movements in Nigeria. The fifth chapter examines the formative years of democracy in Northern Nigeria from 1951-1960. The fifth chapter also looks at the first political parties as well as elections in the Northern region. The sixth chapter studies post-independence politics, formation of more political parties and the violence that culminated in the fall of the first republic in Nigeria. The seventh chapter primarily deals with the transition to democracy, creation of states and local government areas, formation of political parties of the second republic and elections of 1979 and 1983. The seventh chapter ends by examining the political repression and social/economic discontents that culminated in the fall of the second republic in Nigeria.

The country was split into three geopolitical regions by the colonial administration - Western Region, Eastern Region and Northern Region\(^5\) and its political parties took on the identities and ideologies of each region. The Northern People's Party (NPC) led by Ahmadu Bello.

epitomised the interests of the predominantly Hausa/Fulani Northern Region. The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) led by Nnamdi Azikwe (later renamed "National Council of Nigerian Citizens") signified the predominantly Igbo Eastern Region. The Action Group (AG) led by Obafemi Awolowo dominated the Yoruba Western Region. The NPC took control of the Federal Parliament and formed a coalition government with the NCNC. The National Independence Party (NIP) formed by Eyo Ita, became the second political party in the old Eastern Region. Ahmadu Bello, leader of the NPC, was poised to become the Prime Minister, but instead he chose to become the Premier of the Northern Region, and supported his Deputy Tafawa Balewa's candidacy for Prime Minister. In the end, Tafawa Balewa of NPC emerged as Prime Minister and Head of Government, and Nnamdi Azikwe of NCNC was named President. The Action Group was regarded as the major opposition in the first republic. Though the NEPU, UMBC, BYM and few other political parties existed, but they were more restricted to the Northern Regional Parliament as opposition parties.

At Nigeria's independence, the Northern Region gained more seats in the parliament than both Eastern and Western regions combined and this ensured Northern dominance in Nigerian politics for a number of

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6. Odenigwe, op. cit., pp. 198-199
years in the first republic. Bitterness amongst southern politicians triggered political chaos in the country. Obafemi Awolowo, Premier of Western Region, was accused of attempting to overthrow the central government. This followed a period of conflict between the AG regional government and the central government. Awolowo was later convicted of charges bordering on financial mismanagement, conspiracy and an attempt to plot a coup. With incarceration of Awolowo, Samuel Akintola took over as the Premier of Western Region. Because Akintola was an ally of Ahmadu Bello, the undisputed strong man of Nigeria, Akintola was criticised as being a puppet of the North. As premier of the West, Akintola presided over the most chaotic era in Western Region—one which earned it the nickname "the Wild-West". As late as Thursday, January 13, 1966, Balewa announced that the federal government was not going to intervene in the West. However, the very next day, Akintola, premier of the West met with his ally Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, the Premier of the North and the party boss of NPC to which Balewa belonged. At the same time, a top-level security conference in Lagos was taking place attended by most of the country's senior army officers. All of this activity created rumours that the Balewa government would be forced to crack down on lawlessness in the West using military

might. As D. M. Kutz notes, one of the background state of affairs necessary for the success of a political unification is the complementarity of national elite. In this case, one can argue that there was clash of interest and the elites were antagonising one another.

The Nigerian Army is part of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Its origin lies in the elements of the Royal West African Frontier Force during the colonisation of Africa, which later became Nigerian Army when independence was granted in 1960. In 1956 the Nigeria Regiment of the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWaffen) was renamed the Nigerian Military Forces, and in April 1958 the colonial government of Nigeria took over from the British War Office control of the Nigerian Military Forces. This institution played a significant role during the agitation for independence in Nigeria. It also led to truncation of both the First and Second Republics in Nigeria, which this research intends to look at.

The first prominent politicians in Nigeria were Herbart Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikwe, Mallam Sa’ad Zungur and so on, who were all

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members of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC). By middle of the 20th Century, more notably, the Obafemi Awolowo, Mallam Aminu Kano, Ahmadu Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Anthony Enaharo, Samuel Akintola and so many others also came to the limelight of Nigeria’s political stage. And by independence period, while most of the above mentioned politicians remained politically relevant, the likes of Ibrahim Waziri, Maitama Sule, Jaja Wachukwu, Nuhu Bamali, H. O. Davies, Adeleke Adedoyin, Zanna Bukar Dipcharima, Festus Okotie-Eboh, Muhammad Ribadu, M. A. Majekodunmi, Adeniran Ogunsanya and few others also dominated the political space of Nigeria.\textsuperscript{14}

The political turmoil during the mid-1960s as a result of differences in party politics culminated into Nigeria's first military coup d'état. On 15th January, 1966, Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and his fellow “rebel” soldiers (most of who were of southern extraction) led by Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna of the Nigerian Army, executed a bloody takeover of all institutions of government. Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa was assassinated along with the premier of Northern Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello, Samuel Akintola, premier of the West, and Festus Okotie-Eboh the Finance Minister.\textsuperscript{15} It is not clear whether President Azikwe's life was

\textsuperscript{14} J. O. Ojiako, \textit{Nigeria: Yesterday, Today &...?} Africana Educational Publishers, Onitsha, Nigeria, 1981, pp. 77-84
spared because he was out of the country at the time, or whether he had been informed about the impending coup so he sneaked out that his life could be spared. This is viewed as a conspiracy, given the fact that the key players of the coup were Igbo and planning and executing a coup cannot be done abruptly. In essence, the president must have known something about the coup before his departure. Critical historical inference is used to arrive at this view. Major-General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsí took control as the first Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria on January 16th, 1966.

The Republic would be in a state of turmoil due to the secession of Biafra and the ensuing civil war from 1966-1970. After Biafra was overrun and the nation re-unified, military rule continued for another nine years, implementing Nigerianisation of foreign businesses. In the long run, elections were held in 1979 leading the way to the Nigerian Second Republic and a return to democracy.\textsuperscript{16}

After the assassination of Nigerian military Head of State, General Murtala Mohammed in 1976, his successor General Olusegun Obasanjo initiated the transition process to lay off military rule in 1979. A new constitution was drafted, which saw the Westminster system of government (previously used in the First Republic) jettisoned for an

American-style Presidential system— the major distinction between the first and second republics in systems of government. The 1979 constitution mandated that political parties and cabinet positions reflect the "federal character" of the nation. Political parties were required to be registered in at least two-thirds of the states, and each state was required to produce at least one cabinet member. A constituent assembly was elected in 1977 to draft a new constitution, which was published on September 21st, 1978, when the ban on political activity was lifted. In 1979, five political parties competed in a series of elections in which Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was elected president. Obasanjo peacefully transferred power to Shagari, becoming the first head of state in Nigerian history to willingly step down and allow democracy to reign. All the five parties won representation in the National Assembly.

In the broadly monitored 1979 election, Alhaji Shehu Shagari was elected on the NPN platform. On October 1st, 1979, Shagari was sworn in as the first President and Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with challenges or resistance from the opposition parties, particularly the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) presidential candidate,

Obafemi Awolowo who filed a petition against the president elect Shehu Shagari, Alhaji Ahmadu Kurfi who was the Chief Electoral Officer of the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) and F.L.O. Menkiti, Returning Officer for 1979 presidential election in Nigeria. The 1979 election culminated in the beginning of the Second Republic and the actualisation of the departure from the hitherto Westminster Parliamentary system of government to Presidential system of government in Nigerian history. And by this period, notable politicians in the North included Shehu Shagari, Mallam Aminu Kano, J.S. Tarka, Balarabe Musa, Abubakar Rimi, Solomon Lar, Ahmed Ibrahim, Aper Aku, Abubakar Barde, Jalo Waziri, Ibrahim Dimis, Umaru Dikko, Muhammad Goni, Shehu Kangiwa, Sola Saraki, and so on. With the beginning of the Second Republic in Nigeria, the National Assembly, which is bicameral in nature comprising of the Senate and the House of Representatives, elected their presiding officers. After all the political manoeuvrings, Joseph Wayas and Edwin Ume Ezeoke emerged as the Senate President and Speaker respectively.

In August 1983 Shagari and the NPN were returned to power in a landslide victory, with a majority of seats in the National Assembly and

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19 Ojiako, op. cit., pp. 308-316  
20 Ibid. pp. 283-299  
22 https://www.speaker_of_Second_Republic  Accessed on 15-12-2018
control of 12 state governments in Nigeria. But the elections were marred by violence and allegations of widespread vote rigging and electoral malfeasance led to legal battles over the results. The three months period of the second election in the second republic was a period marked by political, economic and security challenges in the history of Nigeria.23

Revolts broke out in Plateau State, after the announcement of the return of NPP the (Solomon Lar), as winner of the 1983 gubernatorial election in the State. Followers of the NPN and Mr John Kadiya (NPN gubernatorial candidate) attacked and injured people in Jos metropolis, Bukuru, and villages of Du, Zawan and Gyei. One of the party executives of the NPP, Mallam Adamu Garba was attacked along with his wife and daughter. The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of Bukuru area had to quickly mobilise a unit of anti-rioting policemen to quash the uprising.24 It should be noted that the NPN took NPP to court over the victory of Solomon Lar, and won its case which was ruled after the military coup of 1983.25 In Kaduna State, the NPN used the legislative powers of having majority of NPN legislators and impeached Governor Balarabe Musa of PRP.26

25. A. Danlami Jos, interviewed on 18-12-2018, in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria
On December 31st, 1983, the Military overthrew the Second Republic. Major General Muhammadu Buhari, became the Military leader of the new government. He cited charges of corruption and administrative incompetence as reasons for the military intervention. He emerged as the leader of the Supreme Military Council (SMC), the country's new ruling body. President Shagari was placed under house arrest, and several of his cabinet members were either jailed or exiled.  

Despite the above developments in political activities in Northern Nigeria and the country as a whole, there had been a lot of challenges and problems regarding democratic development which included rigging of election, political thuggery, lack of political consciousness, intimidation, money-bag politicking, godfatherism, political repression, ethnicity, sycophancy and a host of other problems. All the problems are said to revolve around party politics. In view of the problems, this research strives for a painstaking investigation on their root causes. B. J. Dudley, R. Anifowose, T. Falola and other scholars have demonstrated that party politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria and the country at large are faced with: lack of free, fair and credible elections, series of election

29 Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria…, op. cit., pp. 74-179
30 Anifowose, op. cit., p. 241
31 Falola et’al, op. cit., pp. 104-114
petitions, lack of internal democracy, money-bags politicking, marginalisation of the minority, ethnic/religious bias to mention but a few.

Considering the above and many other problems of democracy and party politics, this research intends to examine them with a view to understanding the genesis of the problems that engulfed politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria and to learn from the past mistakes. Organisations and well-meaning individuals have been known to play vital roles, but the fact remains that with all these efforts, there is still much left to be done and desired in order to attain ideal democracy and party politics devoid of massive rigging, forced brutality and other forms of problems revolving around the democratic atmosphere in Northern Nigeria and the country at large.

PERIODISATION OF THE RESEARCH

The justification of 1951 as the take up for the research is because the first elections in Northern Nigeria took place in it. In essence, the study, apart from giving a background of Nigerian party politics and democracy, unearths political activities/developments from the beginning of the first elections in Northern Nigeria to the end of the Second Republic. The termination of the research in 1983 is on the grounds that the military
overthrew the Second Republic in the year; thus, truncating party politics and democracy in the entire country.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Historically, party politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria, like in Southern Nigeria; has been facing a multiplicity of challenges. It is in view of this and many other reasons that the researcher sets the following objectives:

1. To provide a background and evolution of Nigerian party politics, democracy and the challenges therein right from their inception in 1923 to 1951;

2. To give a historical account of party politics and democratic development in Northern Nigeria in the period 1951-1983;

3. To historicise the character and trend of party politics and democracy in the period 1951-1983; and

4. To examine the distinction between the First and Second Republics as well as the role of the Talakawa (Masses) in party politics.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This research is both relevant and timely considering the challenges, problems in party politics and democracy. Such challenges and problems
typify their usefulness for further research. The available works needed to be reviewed and reinterpreted with a view to exploring more facts and provide a new perspective in the historical analysis of the subject. Besides, since democracy is the widely accepted system of government in the globe, there is the need to have a good understanding of its evolution and practice in order to proffer solutions to some of the problems that impede its consolidation and smooth operation. As American P. N. Stearns correctly describes history as “store house of information”,

availability of authentic historical information is vital to the development of any human society. As such, the researcher holds the view that this work is relevant and significant for the party politics and democratic development of Northern Nigeria and the country at large.

**RESEARCH METHODS AND MEANS OF DATA COLLECTION**

This research applied a variety of methods of historical and other investigations. The researcher adopts the following methods of data collection commonly used in historical research.

*Primary Source Materials:*

These include unpublished works and manuscripts by actors/ participants of some historical events on Northern Nigeria and beyond. The recorded

minutes of meetings of political parties and archival records or materials and newspapers are also included. Areas visited for data gathering included Libraries, the National Archive Kaduna, Arewa House Kaduna, National Assembly and other relevant places. Moreover, oral interviews were conducted as the historical reconstruction is relatively contemporary and some of the political participants are alive to give first-hand information. In essence, the key players in some of the political transformations in Northern Nigeria were consulted for first accounts of events. The researcher lays emphasis on primary sources where applicable. That notwithstanding, the primary sources were corroborated with other material sources with the fundamental view of being objective in this research, as well as agreeing with what E. H. Carr points as “…the selection and ordering of facts…”.

**Secondary Source Materials:**

These simply mean the historical developments that are documented in journals, newspapers, books and theses. In this investigation, there was extensive use of secondary source materials which comprised published and unpublished texts that are appropriate and relevant to the subject under study. These works were accessed from political Party Secretariats, libraries of Gombe State University, Ahmadu

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Bello University, Zaria; Bayero University Kano and University of Maiduguri. The Northern History Research Scheme, Abdullahi Smith Centre for Historical Research, the National Archive Kaduna and Arewa House, Kaduna, were other repositories where relevant materials got obtained. Vendors of Newspapers/Magazines were visited and information obtained from relevant old and current newspapers or magazines.

**Historical Comparative Method**

This method of research involves comparing time frames and space. As this research compares the Nigerian First and Second Republics in terms of systems and forms of government as well as compares Nigerian democracy/ military coups with those in other African Countries. This historical research method is apt.

**Analytical Method:**

**Historical analytical method** is an integral element of the study of history. Specifically, it requires interpretation and understanding of different historical events, documents and processes. History is best understood as not a series of facts, but rather as a series of competing interpretive accounts. The goal of analytical method is to develop a narrative about a specific topic based on the evidence at hand. Often, this
necessitates answering questions of ‘how’, ‘why’, ‘when’, ‘where’ something happened the way it did. As such, much historical analysis is inexorably tied to developing causal mechanisms due to their clarifying power. Multi-causal accounts that address a wide range of potential arguments are common based on the complexity of history.\textsuperscript{34}

Historical analysis entails not only reviewing and interpreting sources, but also encompasses a wide range of analytical skills. Diverse viewpoints must be addressed and appreciated, and it is critical to understand the perspective of a source’s author in order to assess the source’s validity and reliability. Both primary and secondary sources, produced during the time under study, scholarly sources should be utilised in order to develop a fuller understanding of the topic.

\textit{Picture Coverage:}

There could be some important areas that picture coverage would possibly be used in this study. However, there are other important research methods such as \textit{Descriptive Method, Case Study} and a host of other research methods which this research does not apply because of time and resources.

\textsuperscript{34} https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/historical.method, Accessed on 02-07-2016
STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Party politics in Nigeria, Northern area inclusive, is marred by a variety of complications that need to be studied so that Nigeria and other societies with similar problems would harness efforts in proffering solutions to the lingering problems. This is imperative considering the fact that democracy is currently the most applied system of government globally. In essence, studying problematic issues in democracy and party politics will pave ways for solutions to the existing and future predicament. The quest for democracy as a system of governance is sweeping across the entire world, from the nation states, in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to Africa and Asia. The growing acceptance of democracy can be understood to mean that democratic systems and principles have greater advantages when compared with other political systems in terms of minimising bad governance. Accordingly, democratic movement all over the world is among other things, doggedness on the expression of the will of the people. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, has no choice than to align itself with the rest of the world on the democratic crave. Conversely, Nigeria has not been so lucky to be democratised ideally. It has had long grief-stricken history of dancing around democracy but has never gotten it right. Studies have shown that this is basically due to some challenges
amongst which are lack of large scale free, fair and credible election; lack of freedom of speech and publication; refusal to accept defeat in elections by political gladiators; corruption and attitude of political office holders to corner the wealth of the nation; inobservance of the rule of law; and long military rule and so forth.

The style of party politics and democracy that is operative in Northern Nigeria needs to be examined for proper understanding of the historical processes. This has arisen mainly due to the fact that party politics and democracy in developing countries like Nigeria is marred by a lot of irregularities, such that some scholars termed Nigeria’s elections as “war”. The how and why these irregularities came about are somewhat shrouded and mysterious. Observers at national and international levels had also been giving reports which showed that Nigerian democracy has a long way to go. This study therefore; intends to historicise and explicate them with a view to helping policy making bodies in proffering solutions and consolidation of democracy.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the causes of failure of democracy in Nigeria?

2. What factors influence the levels of participation of the masses (Talakawa) in party politics and governance?
3. To what extent do ruling parties respond to the needs of their constituents?

4. Do political parties differ in their programmes? What factors are responsible for the differences/ or similarities?

5. Does party politics have clear vision and clear strategy that will help the parties to achieve their political goals?

**RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

This research will work to prove the following hypothesis:

1- The failure of democracy in Nigeria was as a result of ineptitude of the political parties and unhealthy party politics.

2- The call to implement promised projects and struggle for mass participation brought the *Talakawa* into party politics.

3- The level of response by the ruling parties to the needs of their constituents was very poor because their personal interest differed from peoples’ needs. The ruling parties also neglected the importance of transparency with no clear strategy and unpreparedness for the Western type of democracy.

4- Political parties differ in their programmes- while some political parties are *leftist* in ideology; others are more of *right wing*.

5- Political parties were marred with lack of clear vision as well as lack of good experience.
LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research is aimed at unravelling issues related to party politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria in the period 1951-1983. Therefore, historical developments on party politics and democracy in the Southern part of Nigeria would only be touched or discussed peripherally. Moreover, all political and democratic developments beyond 1983 would not be covered by this research.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW OF RELATED MATERIALS
This chapter reviews some related literature on the subject of study with a view to demonstrating that the topic is researchable and to clarify how the study fills gaps in existing knowledge on the research topic. It is believed a researcher cannot perform a significant study without first understanding the literature in the field. It is, therefore, intended to position the research thesis within the body of other literature so as to provide a new perspective for the reader. The research argues that highly polarised party politics had been the major problem bedevilling the Nigerian democracy. This view can only be argued in comparison to other related literature. A number of theses and books would be reviewed below and that will determine how each literature contributes to the research. The review will also give clear picture on the strengths and weaknesses of other established ideas, while letting to find out the disagreements on the subject matter. It can therefore, easily be understood about what has been done and what needs to be done. In other words, the literature review will give the opportunity to identify and resolve some controversies on the history of party politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria and the country at large, and determine gaps or unanswered questions where possible.
1. Writing on the topic “Nigeria: Background to Nationalism”, J. S. Coleman gives authoritative explanations of the origin and evolution of the nationalists’ movement in Nigeria. He also accounts for the formation of the NCNC, NEPU, AG, NPC, BYM and other political parties and the roles they played for Nigeria’s independence. Coleman further demonstrates how the nationalists’ movement was later regionalised as a result of the divisive aspect of the British policy in Nigeria, where the Machiavellian policy of divide and rule was pursued. The introduction of the Richards constitution which balkanised the country into three regions according to Coleman, culminated in stimulating regionalism in both nationalists’ movements and party politics.

Since Coleman’s work was published in 1958, it does not cover party politics and democratic developments which finally culminated in Nigeria’s independence. Also the work does not cover how the first republic was truncated as a result of the military coup in 1966. Issues related to creation of states and crises of the Western region are also not fully covered in the study. This study intends to look at the transformations leading to Nigeria’s independence as well as the difference between the first and second republics in terms of systems of

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government. Moreover, Coleman admits a dearth of data during his research period.

2. R. N. Sklar’s “*Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation*”, \(^{36}\) presents an enlightening perspective on developments in the formation of political parties in Nigeria prior to the independence period. Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP), as Sklar maintains, came into being as a result of social discontent in the metropolitan districts of Ilorin, the movement for restructuring of the Native Authority; and government which were perceived to be under the Fulani supremacy, was instigated by educated elements whose social status was parallel to that of the founders of the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC). Firstly, their condemnation of the Native Administration made it uncomfortable to the traditional rulers and chiefs of Ilorin, both Fulani and Yoruba. The educated elements in Ilorin joined hands together with the *Talakawa* (commoners), just as the case of how Mallam Aminu Kano in connection with the commoners fought against the Fulani aristocracy and the Native Authority in Kano under the umbrella of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) in the 1950s and 1960s.

The struggle between the Talakawa and those in power was in accordance with the Marxist ideology. Marxism denotes that there are two classes of people: The bourgeoisie controls the capital and means of production, and the proletariat provides the labour. Marx and Engels maintain that there has been a struggle between these two classes; and this struggle is known as *Class Struggle*. Therefore, it can be concluded that the situation of Ilorin which gave birth to the formation of Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP) is similar to that of Kano which led to the formation of the Northern Elements Progressive Union. Once people are suppressed or oppressed, they would be compelled to find a way out in order to liberate themselves. The cases of the French Revolution, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, the Iranian Revolution and a host of others shared some similarities in different perspectives. On the other hand, the founding of the Labour Party (LP) to protect the interest of the working class in the United Kingdom parliamentary system of government could be seen to share some similarities with that of Ilorin Talaka Parapo as well as NEPU and other political parties formed to champion the course of the commoners around the globe.

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3. A. Chapman, “Political Development in Eastern Nigeria: The Roles of Ethnic Unions”,\(^{38}\) - demonstrates that the 1962/63 period of census was a trying moment for the survival of Nigeria as an inseparable entity. The attacks on Hausa/Fulani people in the Igbo land kindled uprisings in Kano which resulted in attacking the Igbos in retaliation. The crisis deteriorated to other towns and cities in Northern Nigeria; it was, however, suppressed by the ruling NPC. It should be noted that the crisis consumed thousands of lives in the country. This study holds the view that the frustration of the Eastern Nigeria came to open, after the region realised that its political future to control the centre was bleak; thus, the onslaught on the Hausa/Fulani nationalities in the Eastern Nigeria. The crisis eventually culminated in the break-up of the NPC/NCNC alliance at the centre, as F. N. Fayam argues that the Igbo people lost confidence in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa government, alleging that NPC was all out to dominate the country.\(^{39}\) This is a clear indication of party politics.

4. B. J. Dudley, Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria,\(^{40}\) gives a lucid and broad discourse on Northern Nigerian party politics. His work is widely regarded as one of the classical works on party politics and democracy in Northern Nigeria. Dudley illustrates how Mallam Aminu


\(^{40}\) Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria..., op. cit., pp. 116-118
Kano joined and later took over the leadership of Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU). And, to truncate the leftist ideology as being championed by the NEPU, Ahmadu Bello, Ibrahim Imam, Isa Kaita and a host of others formed the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC). Clearly therefore, the formation of NPC which became the most dominant political party in Northern Nigeria was a reaction by the aristocracy. A. Feinstein, M. H. Kukah and R. N. Sklar hold the same view.

Dudley accounts for the formation of political parties in Northern Nigeria; the nature of party alliance in party politics; party organisation; party nomination; party and the legislature; formation of the Northern Regional Assembly and so on. Tables in his work analysed the Northern Regional election results of 1952-1961, as well as Federal election of 1964. However, Dudley’s work terminates in 1964; thus, it does not cover party politics and democratic developments leading to the fall of the first republic in Nigeria. This research terminates in 1983, far beyond the period covered by Dudley’s. It therefore, intends to cover areas not covered by Dudley’s work.

5. B. Ijomah, “Nationalism and Socio-Political Integration (The Nigerian Situation)”, 41 appropriately clarifies that the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups that moved out of Northern region, usually ended their

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destination in the Western region. Therefore, the more the society becomes heterogeneous, the more the likelihood of ethnic unrest. It is viewed that this among other things made the Hausa/Fulani to easily become the victims of operation wetie during the 1960s crisis that consequently crested in the Nigerian civil war. Operation wetie would be discussed in chapter six. Ijomah further emphasises that the political parties in Africa have been the main causes of instability, particularly at the election period. This point has been buttressed by plethora of evidence given the fact Nigeria’s elections have never been perfect and the suppression and desperation by the ruling and opposition parties during election period have been demonstrated from the First through the Second Republics in Nigerian elections.

6. S. A. M. Nelson, “Constitutionalism and Nigerian Nationhood: A Factor in the Process of Nation Building”,42 argues that the North, which has the highest figure of population, got more voted officials in the House of Representatives in Lagos. There was to be a separation of residual powers, some to be conferred to the new Federal authority. Another important item provided for, as Nelson argues, election to the Federal Legislature was divided from election to the Regional Assemblies. No Member could maintain a seat in both Regional and

Federal Legislatures at the same time. Nonetheless, a Member of one legislature could stand for election to the other, after which he/she could resign from the initial position. Nelson’s position is buttressed by B. J. Dudleys’ An Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics, \(^{43}\) where he maintains that allocation of Members for House of Representatives was based on population. Dudley further argues that Senatorial Districts were divided equally with each State having five seats including Lagos, the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. The senatorial election which was conducted on the 7\(^{th}\) July, 1979 was a victory to the NPN, the reincarnated NPC of the first republic. It was actually an indication that Shehu Shagari, the NPN presidential candidate was heading to the presidency as the first civilian democratically elected president of Nigeria in the Second Republic.\(^ {44}\)

7. C. O. Ejimofor, “The Colonial Roots of Nigerian Crisis- A Study of British Policies and Administration in Nigeria”, \(^ {45}\) argues that colonial administration sowed the seed of disunity and exploitation in Nigerian polity. The thesis also discusses problems revolving around the judiciary, public order, public morality, public safety and public defence; where parties normally encroach in court cases against charges of rigging,

\(^{43}\) Dudley, An Introduction to Government & Politics..., op. cit., p. 199
\(^{44}\) Ibid, pp. 185-215
intimidation, oppression of political opponents, falsifying census figures, discrimination in employment and a host of other problems.

Ejimofor further dwells on the difficulty of transfer of power. He defines federalism “as a union of groups, united by one or more common objectives, but retaining their distinctive group character for other purposes”. In this system, argues Ejimofor, if the transfer of power is done without any difficulty, the system can be said to be legitimised. It is a known fact that an ultimate test of responsive and democratic system is its ability to transfer the power of government from one set of leaders to another. This may occur either between parties or within a single party. But if the level of personal trust is low, if the political process is viewed as a life and death conflict, and if little political courtesy alleviates the untreated conflict, it will be difficult for the incumbent elite to relinquish their roles in the political process and step aside for a new group of political actors. This is somewhat far from reality in the Nigerian situation where some elected officers always sit tight and resist transfer of power in logical order. Based on this analysis, Ejimofor’s thesis is significantly important in reconstructing political processes of Northern Nigeria and the nation at large. However, Ejimofor’s work does not cover the Nigerian Second Republic in anyway and this research plans to
cover this period by focussing on the political developments that characterised the period. These and many others would be covered.

8. L. H. Hydle, “The Press and Politics in Nigeria” 46 gives a significant background on how the Nigerian nationalists stood firmly to ensure the Africanisation of the civil service, changes in local administration, a development plan for the country, mass education and the choice of leaders through elective principle. The colonial government had to submit to the demands of the nationalists. And this gave the nationalists an impetus to maintain their base of popularity in growing electorate with some communal interest and idea. Hydle further stresses how the press played a major role in publicising the position of the nationalists in the country. In the Western region, the newspapers were printed in English and these included: West African Pilot, The Daily Times of Nigeria, Lagos Daily News, Daily Telegraph and the Daily Service, The Comet and so on. While in the Northern Region Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo “Truth is worth than a Penny”, was the major medium of educating the generality of the public. Mallam Abubakar Imam was the first editor- who worked from 1939-1951. Hydle further maintains that the Northern Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo’s system of broadcasting information was more instructive and moderate than the Southern nationalists’ press.

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Hydle’s thesis is relevant and significant to this research as it explains the role of the media in democratic dispensation.

However, despite the relevance of the above thesis, it only lays emphasis on how the press stimulated party politics and democracy in Nigeria, without discussing the series of elections that took place in 1951, 1954, 1959, 1961, 1964, 1979 and 1983. Without elections, there would be no representative democracy. Therefore, the study intends to cover elections in Northern Nigeria from 1951 to 1983 as well as how both the First and Second Republics declined and fall in Nigeria as a result of highly polarised party politics.

9. G. A. Odenigwe, “The Constitutional Development of Nigeria: The Origins of Federalism 1862-1954”\textsuperscript{47} gives an in-depth analysis on constitutional developments in Nigeria. Odenigwe begins with the historical background of the Nigerian State- how it transformed from the conquest of the area by the British to the Amalgamation of 1914 and all constitutional developments from 1922 up to 1954. The thesis describes how the first constitution (Clifford Constitution) came into being and how it paved the way for the beginning of party politics and democracy in Nigeria. The Clifford Constitution allowed Nigerians to contest for

\textsuperscript{47} Odenigwe, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 88-107
elective positions, hence the evolution of party politics and democracy in Nigeria.

Odenigwe also illustrates how the development of national consciousness began, who the pioneers were and how it continued to transform the country through the Richards’ Constitution of 1946, Macpherson’s Constitution of 1951 and finally, Lyttleton’s Constitution of 1954. These constitutions contributed to the development of party politics and democracy in so many ways and one cannot discuss any meaningful development without referring to the Nigerian constitutions. Odenigwe gives an elaborate discussion on how the NCNC as a political party fought for the attainment of Nigeria’s independence through galvanising the efforts of nationalists like Nnamdi Azikwe, Mallam Sa’ad Zungur and so on. That notwithstanding, Odenigwe’s thesis terminates in 1954 without covering so many political developments in Nigeria bordering on party politics, democracy, independence/ advent of the first republic as well as developments in the second republic. In view of these and so many other related issues, this research would cover areas not covered by Odenigwe’s work.

10. J. O. Ojiako, *Nigeria: Yesterday, Today and…?*, provides relevant information on the formation of political parties in the second

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republic and list of names of all senators elected in 1979, as well as number of members of House of Representatives, statistics of Houses of Assembly and governors with their political platforms. He maintains that the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) was formed on 22\textsuperscript{nd} September, 1978; Nigeria’s People Party (NPP) was also formed on 22\textsuperscript{nd} September, 1978; National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was formed on 24\textsuperscript{th} September, 1978; Great Nigeria People Party (GNPP) was founded on 17\textsuperscript{th} November, 1978. In the second republic, five political parties were registered by the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) to wrestle for power in the 1979 elections. However, Ojiako mentions all the political parties and how they were formed, except the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) which was the reincarnated Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) of the first republic in principle and practice. This research would fill this and many other gaps in it.

The election results of 1979 and 1983 presented in Ojiako’s work also gives insight on the strengths and weaknesses of the second republic political parties in Nigeria. Shehu Aliyu Shagari emerged as the first elected president of Nigeria and was sworn-in on 1\textsuperscript{st} October, 1979. His party NPN won five states out of the ten states that constituted Northern Nigeria during the gubernatorial election. Like the first republic, the NPN and NPP also formed alliance at the National Assembly and that paved
the way for the emergence of NPN/NPP members as presiding officers of both the Senate and the House of Representatives, as Ojiako clearly points out. However, Ojiako’s work terminates in 1981, without covering political development beyond the year. Elections were held in 1983 and Nigeria Advance Party (NAP) participated. There were series of social and economic discontents which culminated in the fall of the second republic. On 31st December, 1983 the second republic was toppled by the Military. These and many other developments are not covered by Ojiako’s work and this study intends to fill the gaps.

11. Y. B. Usman (ed.), *Political Repression in Nigeria Volume I*,\(^49\) argues that, in Borno State, the Majority Leader in the person of Shugaba AbdulRahman of the GNPP in the State House of Assembly was unlawfully expatriated by the NPN with the plan of eliminating him in Chad. The NPN Federal Government claimed that Shugaba’s father was born outside Nigeria. There was a plethora of evidence that NPN government oppressed both the *Talakawa* and the opposition during its reign, as argued by Abubakar Rimi\(^50\) where he maintains that the political repression in the Second Republic was not too distinct with that of the First Republic. The NPN, being the party at the centre oppressed and

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suppressed the PRP, GNPP, and NPP States in Northern Nigeria. In Kano State, the PRP and its members faced despotism by the NPN, being the ruling party at the centre. For instance, on Friday, July 10\textsuperscript{th}, 1981 Dr Bala Muhammad, who was the Political Adviser of Kano State Governor, was assassinated in what Abubakar Rimi (governor of Kano State) labelled as an \textit{organised, premeditated violence designed at stumbling the wheel of progress}. The security attitude towards this assassination was nonchalant. Moreover, in Bakalori, Talata Mafara Local Government Area of Sokoto State, Idowu Odeyemi demonstrates a political tyranny where anti-riot policemen sealed off the village on 26\textsuperscript{th} April, 1980 and murdered a lot of villagers with their small children. This cold-blooded action arose as a result of the farmers’ resistance on claiming their land by the government without appropriate compensation.\textsuperscript{51}

12. M. Y. Mangvwat, “\textit{A History of Class Formation in the Plateau Province 1902-1960: The Genesis of a Ruling Class}”,\textsuperscript{52} gives an analysis on party politics in Plateau Province of Northern Nigeria. Mangvwat dated 1950 as the formation year of the Northern Peoples’ Congress, while 1951 as the year for the founding of the NEPU; which this research considers as an oversight for the following reasons. The advent of

Northern Peoples’ Congress as a political party was, according to B. J. Dudley, A. Abba, G. A. Kwanashie, and J. S. Coleman meant to truncate the radical movement of the NEPU as a political party. M. H. Kukah and R. L. Sklar uphold the same position that the formation of the NPC in 1951, was as a result of the election triumphs recorded by NEPU, which sent a weakness waves to the aristocracy and its interest. Furthermore, B. J. Dudley presents tables for the 1951 election results of Kano as follows: NEPU (12 seats), NCNC (5 seats), Native Authority (6 seats), and Independent (3 seats). NPC was not captured for the simple reason that it was not founded as a political party by this period. It is therefore; more considerable to rely on 1951 and 1950 for the formation years of NPC and NEPU respectively, considering the fact that NEPU participated in 1951 elections while NPC did not. This study intends to correct Mangvwat’s error as periodisation is very essential in historical studies. Besides, Mangvwat’s thesis terminates in 1960, while this study terminates in 1983.


55. Coleman, op. cit., pp. 363-366
57. Sklar, op. cit., p. 321
58. Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria…, op. cit., p.80
Relations”, 59 gives an in-depth and elaborate discussion on the evolution of political parties in Nigeria and the mobilisation of the electorates. Adamawa suffered from the syndrome of ethnic political rivalry over the years. Like in Adamawa, almost all parts of Northern Nigeria also experienced ethnic and religious politics especially from the 1950s. Furthermore, Pongri talks about inter party politics in Adamawa in the closing years of the colonial rule. This research aims to elucidate on inter party politics; hence, the relevance and significance of Pongri’s thesis to this study.

Notwithstanding the relevance of Pongri’s thesis, it only covered Adamawa and some parts of Northern Nigeria. Moreover, Pongri’s research indicates that the NCNC, which was formed in the 1940s, was the first political party in Nigeria, without considering the fact that the NNDP was the first political party that contested election in 1923. 60 This study therefore, argues that it is an error to put forward that the NCNC was the first political party formed in Nigeria. Another error in Pongri’s thesis was the issue of dating the formation of the NEPU, where he incorrectly cited that the party was formed in August, 1948. The actual date of the formation of NEPU was August, 1950, as R. L. Sklar, 61 A. D.

59. Pongri, op. cit., pp. 635-650
60. Falola et ‘al, History of Nigeria III, ... op cit. p.62
61. Sklar, op. cit., p. 321
Yahaya, A. M. Danbatta (a founding member), G. A. Kwanashie, R. Anifowose, A. Feinstein, and A. Abba correctly point out. The research considers that periodisation is very critical in historical analysis. In the light of these therefore, this research intends to fill the gaps, raise observations, and make corrections on the errors and a host of other significant issues.

14. G. A. Kwanashie, “The Development of One-North Phenomenon in Northern Nigeria 1900-1965”, examines the emergence of Northern People’s Congress (NPC) as the major political organ of the northern elite, where he notes that members of this group had been engaging in forming associations through which they could collectively express their view on developments in society and project their interest. By this, a critical look tells one that the associations that were initially formed had metamorphosed to political parties, just like how Nigerian

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64. Kwanashie, *op. cit.*, p.152
65. Anifowose, *op. cit.*, p. 246
68. Kwanashie, *op. cit.*, p. 152

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Youth Movement (NYM) in the South Western part of Nigeria transformed to a political party known as Action Group.

In later years of political activities, precisely towards the end of colonial rule, prominent politicians like Sa’adu Zungur emerged from the Bauchi Province, and this area (Bauchi) was the first to produce the Prime Minister of Nigeria in person of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa via the activities of party politics. In essence, Bauchi State was carved out of the political hub of the Northern region, an area where this research intends to unveil.

Kwanashie further discusses the nature of dominant political class, where he mentions the political power wielded by Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto. R. Anifowose buttresses Kwanashie’s position on the powers of Ahmadu Bello, where he demonstrates how the Premier of the Western Region, Samuel Akintola sought for Ahmadu Bello’s support in restoring political stability in his region in the mid-1960s. The NEPU as a movement arose from growing radicalisation of Northern society which had become apparent by 1950, and it reflected in its demands the same disaffection with Northern society that several members of the educated class had been expressing since the 1940s.

Conversely, Kwanashie’s work terminates in 1960, and this research investigates party politics and democracy up to the Second
Republic. Kwanashie does not examine how party politics had been causing series of crises in the country too.

15. H. Wakili, “The Phenomenon of Revolts and Riots in Kano, 1893-1995: An Historical Perspective”, gives an informative discourse on political conflicts and crisis as a result of party politics and democracy. Kano State being the most populous state in the North means a lot to democracy, as politics is a game of number. The State was deeply engulfed in intra party politics during the second republic, as a result of the split in PRP. This split came to the open after Abubakar Rimi lost the PRP gubernatorial ticket to Sabo Bakin Zuwo during the 1983 party primaries. This crisis was further exacerbated after the death of Mallam Aminu Kano, the founding father of the party. The ascension to power of Sabo Bakin Zuwo further deepened the split as he revised Rimi’s policies despite having the same manifesto in the PRP. For example, when Rimi was the governor of Kano State he created three additional emirates, but all these were dissolved by Bakin Zuwo’s government in 1983. Moreover, government workers who were viewed as sympathetic to Rimi were either dismissed or compulsorily retired from service.

Hence, during the third republic, NRC, a party which was viewed to a right wing won the gubernatorial election in Kano State as a result of

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the protracted crises in the former PRP factions. This study would not dwell on it because the third republic came into being in 1990s, and it is out of the scope of this research. However, the research only cited it as an illustration to justify how the past affects the present. In the words of P. N. Stearns, “the past causes the present and so the future”.

While agreeing with Wakili in his account of historical development in relation to party politics and democracy in Kano State, his thesis is limited to one out of the ten states in Northern Nigeria. This study therefore, intends to deal with issues beyond Kano State, which is viewed as a gap to be filled.

16. R. Anifowose & F. Enemuo (eds.), “Elements of Politics”, deeply talks on democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law. It argues that democracy is by far the most popular form of government in the world today; there is hardly a leader who does not want to be seen as a democrat or a regime that does not seek to be looked upon as democratic. The work further explains that democracy implies one man one vote, irrespective of differences in religion, wealth, intelligence and so on. It also denotes the equal right and opportunity off all citizens to hold political office. In Northern Nigeria, there is no denying the fact that

wealth, tribe, sycophancy, godfatherism and religion have been playing a significant role in holding political office.

Ideally, the recognition of basic rights of the citizenry is one of the hallmarks of democracy. Concern for human rights has now become a universal issue. Conversely, there is a great disparity in the level of sincerity with which these rights are genuinely protected by different States in Nigeria. It is a known fact that Northern Nigeria, like the Southern part, suffers from arbitrariness on the part of the government in a variety of ways. Yes, civil and political rights of the citizenry have been strangulated by governments right from the 1951 elections as B. J. Dudley clearly points out in his work.72

R. Anifowose & F. Enemuo’s work further provides a detailed explanation on political parties in Nigeria from beginning up to 1983 and even beyond. This is significant to the research as it centres on party politics. Based on the foregoing discussion, it is comprehensible that this work is relevant and important for the reconstruction of democracy and party politics in Northern Nigeria. Nonetheless, the work does not describe the topography and the peopling of the Nigerian area. In view of these and many other significant uncovered themes, this research aims to cover these gaps.

72 Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria…, op. cit., pp. 264-267
17. A. Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) in the Politics of Nigeria 1950-1960”,\textsuperscript{73} dwells intensively on the significance of NEPU, which begins first, by giving background to the emergence of the Nationalists Movement in Nigeria. In this section, the conquest of the Nigerian area by the British forces and resistance by the educated elite of Nigeria are adequately deliberated. Abba also dwells on the movement of radical nationalists’ movement in Nigeria, which implanted the seed of political parties like Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM), NCNC, NEPU and NPC. These political parties served as foundation stones for today’s political parties in Nigeria.

Abba further touches painstakingly on latter political parties such as UMBC, ITP, and BYM and so on. By this point, Abba’s thesis analyses the struggles between these parties and the NEPU. Of immense importance, is Abba’s intensive examination of the role of NEPU in democratic elections in Northern Nigeria. The issue of democratic election is at the heart of every democracy. The NEPU resisted undue political domination in Northern Nigeria and fought against suppression and oppression of the masses.

\textsuperscript{73} Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...” op. cit., pp. 293-316
Based on the foregoing, it is evident that Abba’s thesis is relevantly significant to this research, as it provides foundation and general picture of Nigerian party politics in colonial and post-colonial eras. However, Abba centres his thesis on the importance or rather the significance of NEPU only, without deeply discussing the relevance or roles played by other political parties which this study intends to examine.

18. A. A. Ujo, *Understanding Elections*,\(^7^4\) looks at the definition of election, where it is described “as a procedure that allows members of an organisation or community to choose representatives who will hold positions of authority within it”. Ujo further stresses that the most important elections select the leaders of local, state and national governments- the area intended to be studied here.

The author further analyses the critical features of election in a democratic system of government that it should be free and fair. In this regard, four conditions are stated thus: an honest non-partisan administration to manage election; independent judiciary to interpret electoral laws; a developed system of political parties well organised to put their policies, traditions and teams of candidates before the electors as alternatives between which to choose; and a general acceptance through the political community of rather vague rules of games which limit the

struggle for power because of some unspoken sentiment that if the rules are not observed more or less faithfully the game itself will disappear amid the wreckage of the whole system.

Ujo goes on to elucidate on transparency of election, electoral management bodies, registration of voters, political parties, and election constituencies and so on. All these are critical features in democratic setting. Therefore, in view of the foregoing discussion, Ujo’s work is significantly relevant to this research, as it unveils political and democratic historical developments in Northern Nigeria and beyond. That notwithstanding, the work does not touch on critical issues like ethnic politics, regional politics and other developments in pre-independence Nigeria. This study intends to look at all these critical topics.

19. G. N. Hembe, *J. S. Tarka: The Dilemma of Ethnic Minority Politics in Nigeria*, gives the account of how J. S. Tarka, one of the political heavy weights of Northern Nigeria struggled to emerge as the most influential politician in the lower north - between 1950s and 1980s. Hembe also demonstrates how the UMBC as a political party came into being; and how the minority ethnic groups of Northern Nigeria struggled to make their point in both regional and national politics in the country.

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75. Hembe, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-227
In accentuating how the minority ethnic group stood strong, Hembe demonstrates that there were heated debates in the Constituent Assembly (CA) during its assignment in the Northern Nigeria, where the *upper North* is predominantly Muslim, the *lower North*, particularly the Tivland is predominantly Christian, remained divided—thereby having sharp contrast in religious opinions. This arisen as a result of arguments on the Sharia issue which came up on 6th April, 1978, where the pro-Sharia group who were mostly CA members from the Hausa/Fulani people staged a dramatic walk-out, when the anti-Sharia group who were non-Muslims opposed them. The heated discussion originated when the pro-Sharia group supported the establishment of Federal Sharia Court of Appeal. In the end, the Sharia issue did not scale through in the 1979 Constitution; an issue that the pro-Sharia group were dissatisfied with.

The above analysis demonstrates how religious difference in Northern Nigeria and the country continued to affect our democratic development. However, despite these significant contributions of Hembe’s work, it does not cover the formation of all the major political parties in Northern Nigeria and their objectives and manifestos. This research intends to cover all the major political parties in the first republic and all the registered political parties in the second republic and how they related in the course of their politicking in the North and where need be,
in the whole country. This research also intends to give a concise background of a number of prominent politicians in Northern Nigeria and the positions they occupied.

20. A. M. Jega, *Democracy, Good Governance and Development in Nigeria*,\(^{76}\) brings to limelight the meaning and historical context of the term “democracy” where he states that it originated from the ancient Greece around 500 BC. Jega also elucidates on a range of definitions of democracy, which the centrality of all the explanations revolve around the “power of the people to decide”. Therefore, this continues to receive priority in the course of analysing democratic development in Northern Nigeria. In other words, the present research will find out whether ideal democracy is obtainable in Northern Nigeria and Nigeria as a whole or not, as it would find out the role of the citizens in determining who gets what, when and how.

Jega goes on and analyses modern democracy where he states that the emergence of Oliver Cromwell in the 17th Century led to the rebellion against absolutist monarchical rule in England. This, according to Jega sowed the seed of a political movement that had sought the rights of the citizens against the State - the right to freedom of conscience and freedom

of debate; the right to equality before the law and freedom of trade; the right to vote and a host of other rights. Based on the foregoing therefore, this piece of work is relevant to the research, as the term democracy has been elucidated extensively.

However, there are some peculiar historical events unveiled in the political transformation of Northern Nigeria which the work does not cover. These include; but limited to: when and how the Region was created; who gets what, when and how in the party and electioneering activities; system of leadership of all those that were democratically elected and so many other developments. In view of this therefore, this research intends to fill these gaps.

21. A. A. Ujo, *Democracy and Politics*, 77 begins by giving various definitions and meanings of the term *democracy*; the theories of democracy; practice of democracy and so forth. Like many previous scholars, Ujo also follows suit in his historical contextualisation of democracy, as he maintains that its origin and practice emanated from the ancient Greece. To the Greeks, “*demos*” means “people”; while “*Kratien*” means “government or rule”. Perhaps, this root meaning of democracy inspired the former US President, Abraham Lincoln, to define

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democracy as “government of the people, by the people and for the people”.78

That notwithstanding, Ujo’ work does not unveil issues in the pre-independence and Nigeria’s First Republic elections intensively. In view of these and other relevant themes regarding democracy in Northern Nigeria, this research would examine them.

22. A. A. Ujo, Political Parties and Electoral Competition in Kaduna State 1979-1983, 79 provides a variety of definition of “political party” which is, somewhat, the first phrase of this research topic. It is to be noted that there is no universally accepted definition of political party. Thus, various definitions have been put forward by different scholars one of which is the definition given by Richard Rose, who defined political party “as an organisation concerned with the expression of popular preferences and contesting for control of the policy-making offices of government”. Some essential features offered in this definition include: group, organised group, and the aim of the group is to control political power.

The notion of group here denotes the party as a corporate body with unambiguous identity; members can be identified from non-members.

While by being organised, it signifies that they are stratified, having specific roles to play based on their responsibility. The aspiration to control political power by political parties makes them distinct from pressure groups whose fundamental aim is to influence government’s decision. The work goes on to explicate the role of the electoral commission, some common styles in the formation of political parties, and problems militating against political institutions in Nigeria.

Based on the aforesaid discussion, it is evident that the piece of work is relevant to this research as it touches on so many themes that the research intends to critically examine. However, the work covers only Kaduna State, the former Headquarters of Northern Protectorate, but not the whole Northern Nigeria. Therefore, this research intends to fill these gaps.

23. M. H. Kukah, Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria, 80 is a logical account on a theme that is volatile. Kukah gives an explanation on how the northern small group (oligarchy) acquired and has held power using religion as a mechanism. He points out how Hausa/Fulani dominated the northern Nigeria through the instruments of media and party politics. He also argues that the NPN was a reincarnated NPC in policy and practice, using traditional rulers and religious places to

80 Kukah, op. cit., pp. 145-171
ensure the success of the party during the 1979 elections. Kukah emphasises more on the role of religion in politics.

Kukah also discusses the formation of political parties in northern Nigeria, where he argues that the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) was a leftist political party and perhaps comprised the highest number of intellectuals such as the likes of Wole Soyinka, Yusufu Bala Usman, A. D. Yahaya, Chinua Achebe, A. U. Jalingo, Arthur Nwankwo, Junaidu Mohammed, Abubakar Rimi, Balarabe Musa and so on. Identifying PRP as a leftist political party was also highlighted by H. Wakili, as earlier discussed.\(^8\)

\(^8\) Wakili, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 102-106
CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NIGERIA
The chapter looks at the introduction of Islam in pre-colonial Northern Nigeria and how it later dominated the region and gave birth to the Islamisation of Kanem-Bornu Empire and also led to the rise of the Sokoto Caliphate. The administrative structure of the Caliphate laid the foundation stones of the Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria after the conquest of the former by the Europeans. The chapter also looks at the peopling of Nigeria as well as creation of Regions and States. The administrative structure of the Nigerian State is equally an important sector that this thesis aims to look at. The ethnicity which has three major groups- Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba; the protectorates that metamorphosed to regions and later transformed to States including the balkanisation of the States due to agitations would be illustrated.

**Pre-Colonial Northern Nigeria**

History has it that even before the coming of the Europeans, the area called Nigeria today was occupied by different political systems living in different kingdoms, emirates, chiefdoms and so on. In other words, the history of Nigeria goes beyond the first contact with the Europeans and the British connection. The great ancient empires of West Africa such as Songhai, Ghana, Mali stretched their influence to various parts of the country. Of outstanding significance was the upsurge of the Sokoto
Caliphate in Northern Nigeria. Meanwhile, before discussing the Sokoto Caliphate let us look at the introduction of Islam, which led to the formation of the Caliphate.

The Introduction of Islam and the Rise of Sokoto Caliphate

The writings of a number of scholars, particularly J. N. Paden, M. H. Kukah, A. Feinstein and B. J. Dudley are crystal clear on the role of the aristocracy in Northern party politics and democracy. Most, if not all the prominent politicians of the pre-independence first and second republic had one link or the other with aristocracy in Northern Nigeria. The research will give a concise biography of some of the prominent northern democratic champions which most of them had link with the emirates of Northern Nigeria. In essence, the Sokoto Caliphate and its emirates have direct or indirect impact on party politics, democracy and administration in northern Nigeria.

Islam was introduced into Northern Nigeria through the Kanem-Bornu Empire during the reign of Umme Jilme, who ruled between 1085-1097 C. E. However, some scholars have argued that even before the famous Islamic Scholar in person of Mahammad B. Mani brought Islam to Kanem-Bornu, Islam had reached the Savannah region by the 8th Century. This region was known as Bilad al Sudan. The most famous empires were Kanem-Bornu, Ghana, Songhai and Mali as noted above.

82 G. Odenigwe, op cit., p. 2
Prominent Arab historians/philosophers like Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Batuta, Al-Bakri and Al-Masudi had written about the glories of these lands. New ideas came via the visiting traders in the field of administration.\textsuperscript{83}

Towards the 13\textsuperscript{th} Century, Kanem-Bornu became a centre of Islamic knowledge attracting famous teachers from Mali. By the middle of the 13\textsuperscript{th} Century, evidence had shown that Kanem scholars and poets could write classical Arabic of high stock. Illustration can be made from the writings of the Chief Scribe of Kanem court dating 1391-1392 C.E. During the reign of Mai Idris Alooma in the period 1570-1602 C.E., the Islamisation of Kanem Empire ensured. The chronicler of the Empire in person of Ibn Fartuwa brought this to the limelight.\textsuperscript{84} With the spread of Islamic literature and culture, Islam came to Hausaland in the early 14\textsuperscript{th} Century, during the reign of Ali Yaji, who ruled Kano in the period 1349-1385 C.E.

When the prominent scholar and theologian in person of Al-Maghili visited Kano, Muhammad Rumfa, the then ruler of Kano asked him to write a book on Islamic government in the 15\textsuperscript{th} Century. The book is titled “The Obligation of the Princess”. Al-Maghili later went to Katsina, which had become a centre of learning in the 15\textsuperscript{th} Century, attracting scholars from Sankore University of Timbuktu bringing books on divinity and etymology. It was in this period that the Torankawa clan

\textsuperscript{83} P. B. Clarke, \textit{West Africa and Islam}, Edward Arnold Ltd, 1982, pp. 45-60
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid, pp. 61-63
migrated from Fouta Toro to settle in Konni, and in the early 18th Century they moved to Degel- the birth place of Shehu Usman Danfodio, the founder of Sokoto Caliphate.

Shehu Usman Danfodio was the founder of Sokoto Caliphate which by 1809 had achieved both religious and political supremacy over the Hausaland. As such important officials such as Waziri, the prime minister; the Maaji, the treasurer; the Sarkin Dogarai, Chief of Police and so on were appointed in each Emirate. Odenigwe argues that the foundations and organization of the Sokoto Caliphate was of special interest.\(^85\) One can argue that the Europeans institutionalised the Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria during colonialism as a result of the successes of the administrative structure of Sokoto Caliphate.

**The Peopling of Nigeria**

Ethnicity is one of the keys to understanding Nigeria’s people and pluralistic society. It distinguishes groupings of who for historical reasons have come to be seen as distinctive by themselves and others on the basis of locational origin and a series of the other culture markers. Experience in the post-independence period fostered a widespread belief that modern ethnicity affects members’ life chance.

In Nigerian colloquial usage, these collectivities were commonly called “tribes.” In the emergent Nigerian National culture, this topic was

\(^{85}\) Odenigwe, *op cit.*, p. 8
discussed widely as “tribalism,” a morally reprehensible term whose connotation were similar to American terms, such as “discrimination,” “racism,” or “prejudice.” Nigerian National policies have usually fostered tolerance and appreciation for culture differences, while trying at the same time to suppress unfair treatment based on ethnic prejudice. This long-term campaign involved widespread support in educated circles to replace the term “tribe” or “tribal” with the more universally applicable concept of ethnicity.86

Nevertheless, older beliefs died slowly, and ethnic identities were still a vital part of national life. The ethnic variety was dazzling and confusing. Estimates of the number of distinct ethnic grouping varied from 250 to as many as 400. The most widely used marker was that of language. In most cases, people having a separate term for the language and to its speakers regard themselves, or were viewed by others, as ethnically different. Language grouping were numbered in the 1970s nearly 400, depending upon disagreements over whether or not closely related languages were mutually intelligible. Language groupings sometimes shifted their distinctiveness rather than displaying clear boundaries. Manga and Kanuri speakers in northern Nigeria spoke easily to one another. But in the major Kanuri city of Maiduguri, 160-kilometers south of Manga-speaking areas, Manga was considered a

separate language. Kanuri and Manga who lived near each other saw themselves as members of the same ethnic group; others farther away did not. Markers other than language were also used to define ethnicity. Speakers of Bura (a Chadic language closely related to Marghi) saw themselves traditionally as two ethnic, Bura and Pabir, a view not necessarily shared by others. Bura mostly adhered to Christianity or to a local indigenous religion, and a few were Muslims. They lived originally in small, autonomous villages of 100 to 500 persons that expanded and split as the population grew. The Pabir had the same local economy as the Bura, but they are Muslim, they lived in larger (originally walled) villages of 400 to 3,000 with more northerly architectural styles, they resisted splitting up into subgroups, and they recognised a central ruler (Emir) in a capital town (Biu).

The official language of the country is English, which is taught in primary school and used for instruction in secondary school and universities. All officials with education to secondary school level or beyond spoke English and used it across language barriers formed by Nigeria’s ethnic diversity. Many in the university-trained elite used English as one of the languages in their homes and or sent their children to preschools that provided a head start in English language instruction. In additional to English, pidgin has been used as a lingua franca in the south (and in adjoining Cameroon) for more than a century among the
non-school population. In the north, southerners spoke pidgin to one another, but Hausa was the lingua franca of the region and was spreading rapidly as communications and travel provided a need for increased intelligibility. Counting English, the use of which was expanding as rapidly as Hausa many Nigerians were at least trilingual. This language facility usually included a local vernacular, a wider African lingua franca, and English. Given the long history of trade and markets that stimulated contacts across local ethnic units, multilingualism was a very old and established adaptation. Such multilingualism enabled communication among different ethnic group in the country.

Nigeria is famous for its huge population on the African continent. This population is made up of about 374 pure ethnic stocks. Three of them- Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba are the major groups and constitute over 40 per cent of the population. Other ethnic linguistic groups are: Tiv, Ibibio, Kanuri, Nupe, Gwari, Igala, Jukun, Idoma, Edo, Urhobo and Ijaw and so on. High school age population - over 47% are 15 years old below.\(^\text{87}\)

**Creation of Regions in Nigeria During Colonialism**

Nigerian federalism took firm roots in 1946 when three regions were established in a federal format for the first time in Nigerian political history. Before then, colonial Nigeria was made of twenty four provinces

which were run from the centre in Lagos in three clusters of geographical administrative regions. These regions of western Nigeria, Eastern Nigeria, and Northern Nigeria were transformed by the British into quasi-autonomous federal states in 1954, following a series of conferences, beginning with Ibadan conference of 1950. Despite agitation for more regions, principally by minority ethnic nationalities, British colonial rule ended with the three regions in 1960. In 1963, ethnic minorities were separated from the Western Region and turned into the Midwestern region by an act of Parliament. There ensued a national crisis, originating from Western Nigeria. It was this crisis and others that led to a military coup d’état of 1966. The escalation of the crisis clearly presaged a civil war between the military establishment of the Federal Government, under General Yakubu Gowon, and a rebellious Igbo insurgency led by Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. In preparation for that eventuality, the Federal Government created a total number of twelve States out of the original four regions (East, West, Midwest, and North). At the time of General Gowon’s overthrow by the team of Murtala Muhammad and General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1975, Nigeria had twelve states that survived the end of the civil war in 1970. But the new team embarked on further states creation. They and their successors,

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88. Odenigwe, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-319

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by military fiat, created seven more states between 1976 and 1983, for a
total nineteen Federal states.\textsuperscript{89}

It should be noted however, on the 1\textsuperscript{st} January, 1914, the
Protectorate of Northern Nigeria and the Colony (Lagos) and the
Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were amalgamated to form the
federation of Nigeria. In 1939 the Governor General of Nigeria, Sir Hugh
Clifford divided the Northern and Southern Nigeria protectorates into
provinces. But the Southern Protectorate was divided into two provinces
namely Eastern and Western Provinces, the Northern was left intact.
However, provincialism came to an end in 1946 and was replaced with
the regional structure. The regional structure was effectively introduced at
the inception of the Richards Constitution in 1946. It was named after
Richard who was the Governor General of the Federation of Nigeria at
the time it was drawn up. This was to achieve the following set
objectives:

(a) To promote the unity of Nigeria;

(b) To provide within that desire for the diverse element which make
up the country;

(c) To secure greater participation by Africans in the discussion of
their own affairs.\textsuperscript{90}

\textsuperscript{89} Faruk, \textit{The Struggle of the National Association for the Creation of More States}, Northern Nigerian Publication Company, Zaria, Kaduna, Nigeria, 1992, pp. 5-58
The hallmark of the Richards’ Constitution is the introduction of regionalism. The country under the Richards Constitution was divided into three regions namely: Northern Region, Eastern Region and Western Region. The regional structure which the country was divided into since 1946 ended on the 27th May 1967 when the then Federal Military Government under General Yakubu Gowon abolished the four regions and replaced them with States. However, it is instructive that after the military takeover of 15th January, 1966 of political governance, the then Nigerian Military Government under General Aguiyi Ironsi promulgated the constitution (Suspension and Modification) Decree No. 1 of 1966 abolishing the regional structure of the country. The Decree also abolished the country Federal structure and replaced it with unitary system. The Federation was therefore, renamed Republic of Nigeria. The four regions were renamed Group of Provinces namely: Northern Group of Provinces; Eastern Group of Provinces; Western Group of Provinces and Mid-Western Group of Provinces. It is well settled that not all parts of the present South/South Geo-Political Zone was part of the defunct Eastern Region. The present Edo and Delta States were never part of the defunct Eastern Region. Edo and Delta States were formerly

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Mid-Western Region carved out of the defunct Western Region in 1963.\textsuperscript{91}

**Creation of States in Post-Colonial Nigeria**

Some scholars are of the opinion that the State creation exercise that took place on the 27\textsuperscript{th} May, 1967 (especially the creation of the defunct Southern Eastern and Rivers States out of the defunct Eastern Group of Provinces) was a shrewd political maneuvering’s and masterstroke to pull the rug out of the feet of the then Military Governor of the defunct Eastern Group of Provinces, Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu who had declared the succession of the Eastern Provinces out of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

However, the people of the defunct South Eastern and Rivers States had clamoured from the 1950s the creation of Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State out of the defunct Eastern Region; while Benue-Plateau and other minorities’ areas of the defunct Northern Region had agitated for the creation of the Middle-Belt region. With the creation of twelve States in 1967, the defunct Mid-Western Region was renamed Mid-Western State. The defunct Mid-Western Region was created by an Act of Parliament passed in 1963. In 1976, the name of the defunct Mid-Western State was changed to Bendel State. The States in the defunct Eastern

\textsuperscript{91} Faruk, *The Victors & Vanquished of the Nigerian Civil War 1967-1970..., op cit.*, pp- 11-39
Region in the South/South geo-political zone of the country are the present-day Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Rivers States.

When twelve States were created on 27th May, 1967 by the then Federal Military Government, three States were carved out of the defunct Eastern Region. These States were East Central States (now Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo); South Eastern State (now Cross River and Akwa Ibom States). The defunct Western Region became Western State, while Lagos State was carved out of the defunct Federal Territory of Lagos. The defunct Western State changed to Ogun, Oyo, and Ondo States. The defunct Northern Region in 1967 was divided into North Central State (Kaduna State); Central West State (later changed to Kwara State); Benue/Plateau State (now Benue and Plateau States); North Western State (Niger and Sokoto States); Kano State remained the same up to 1983; North Eastern State changed to (Bauchi, Gongola and Borno States). After the twelve States were created in 1967, Lagos remained the Federal Capital of Nigeria while the Capital of Lagos State was Ikeja.

On the 3rd February, 1976, the twelve States structure of the country was dismantled and replaced with nineteen States. The defunct North-Eastern State was divided into Borno State (present Borno and Yobe States) and Gongola State (now Adamawa and Taraba States) and Bauchi State (now Bauchi and Gombe States). The defunct East Central State

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was divided into Anambra State (Anambra, Enugu and Ebonyi States) and Imo State (now Abia and Imo States). The defunct Western State was divided into Ondo State (now Ekiti and Ondo States), Ogun and Oyo States (now Oyo and Osun States). The defunct Benue/Plateau State was divided into Benue (now Benue and Kogi), and Plateau State (now Nassarawa and Plateau States). The defunct Central Western State (Kwara) was renamed Kwara State. It is instructive that the present Kogi State is partly formed from old Benue and old Kwara State. The defunct South Eastern State was renamed Cross River State (now Cross River and Akwa Ibom States). The defunct North Western State was divided into Sokoto (now Sokoto, Zamfara and Kebbi States) and Niger State.

Below is the summary of how Nigeria moved from the first three regions to the nineteen states where the study terminates:

* 1960-1963: Northern Region, Western Region and Eastern Region.

* 1963-1967: Northern Region, Western Region, Mid-Western Region-(carved out of Western Region), and Eastern Region.

General Yakubu Gowon in the period 1967-1975 divided the Northern Region into Northeastern State, North Western State, Kano, Kaduna, Kwara, Benue/Plateau and Lagos (carved out of Western Region) States. Mid-Western region was renamed Bendel State. Eastern Region was divided into East Central, Cross River and Rivers States.
North Western State was divided into Sokoto and Niger States, while North Eastern State was divided into Borno, Gongola and Bauchi States. Benue-Plateau State was separated into Benue and Plateau States. Western State was divided into Oyo, Ogun and Ondo States. East Central State was divided into Anambra and Imo States.93

**Administrative Structure of Nigerian State**

The history of Nigeria during the postcolonial era has been one of a search for the constitutional and political arrangement that, while allowing for the self-expression of its socially and culturally diverse peoples, would not hinder the construction of a nation out of this mosaic. In this search, the country has experienced cycles of military and civilian rule, civil war, and peaceful reconstruction. If any nation typified political scientist R. N. Sklar’s characterisation of the African continent as a “workshop of democracy”, it would certainly be Nigeria. The country has experimented with different federal, state, and local government systems, learning more about its needs, resources, and constraints with each experiment.

Despite the predominance of military regimes during the three postcolonial decades, Nigerian society has retained many of the fundamental building blocks of a democratic policy: vigorous

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entrepreneurial classes, a broad intelligentsia and numerous centers of higher education, a dynamic legal community and judiciary, diverse and often outspoken media, and, increasingly, courageous human right organisations. Despite the differences in character and composition of the successive governments, it is still possible to identify the major threads of Nigeria’s institutional evolution. Nigeria is essentially an artificial creation, which, like most other African states, is a product of colonialism. This fact is central to understanding the country’s government and politics, which have been conditioned and bedeviled by the problems of accommodating several diversities: ethnic, linguistic (there are between 250 and 400 distinct languages), geopolitical, religious (there is a deepening cleavage between Christians and Muslims), and class.94

Nigeria became politically independent on October 1st, 1960, after about seven decades of colonial rule by the British. Prior to colonial rule, most of the groups that today make up the country were often distinguished by differences in history, culture, political development, and religion. The major differences among these pre-colonial groups pertained to their sociopolitical organisation: anthropological and historical studies usually distinguish between societies that were

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94. Iloeje, *op. cit.*, p.7
centralised (“states”) and those that were non-centralised (“stateless”).

To the former category belonged the Sokoto Caliphate and the Emirates of the north that, together with the Kanem-Borno Empire, were advanced Islamic theocracies. Also included in this category were the Benin, Oyo, and other western kingdoms, as well as the Igala Kingdom in the Middle Belt or lower north. In these centralised systems, there were clear divisions between the rulers and the ruled, usually based on wealth and ascribed status. Institutions of a distinct political nature, as well as taxation systems were already established. Of all the centralised systems, the Sokoto Caliphate with its vassal emirates had the most advanced form of state organisation. Not surprisingly, it provided the model for the British Colonial policy of indirect rule, i.e the government of indigenous peoples through their own institutions and rulers.

By contrast and non-centralised systems such as those of the Igbo and other eastern and Middle-Belt groups, there was a diffusion of political, economic, and religious institutions and practices. Also to be found was a large measure of egalitarianism, democracy, and decentralised authority. Under the colonial policy of indirect rule, “traditional” rulers (known as warrant chiefs) were imposed on these stateless societies. In the immediate pre-colonial period, a pronounced

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95 Falola et’al, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94
96 Ibid. pp. 9-14
religious gulf separated the northern from the southern peoples. Islam had been introduced to the Hausa States and other northern parts in the 14th century, but it did not dominate until the Jihad of 1804, which extended fringes, such as Oyo and Auchi.

The southern people lived in towns and villages in the South. The people were mainly of traditional religions who underwent increasing contact with, and exposure to Europeans and Christianity. In some areas of the South, such as Benin and Warri, the penetration of Christianity dates to the fifteenth century. When the North experienced contact with Europeans much later, the spread of Christianity and other Western influences was slowed by the strong attachment to Islam.

This fact explains in part the uneven rates of economic and educational development between the northern and southern peoples that have persisted to this day, with important consequences for government and policies. It should not be assumed that the various population groups in pre-colonial Nigeria were completely separated from one another. Historians have established evidence of various forms of interaction among the peoples, the major ones being trade and superordinate-subordinate relationships. Powerful centralised systems, such as the Sokoto Caliphate and the Benin Empire dominated several neighbouring

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groups. Where no established group held sway over the others, as was the case among the Yoruba-speaking people in the nineteenth century, a pattern of conflicts and resolution was prevailed. On balance, there were pronounced differences among the people who later came to comprise Nigeria, especially when we consider the major regional groups. British rule did much to accentuate these differences and, in some cases, created new divisive sentiments. Even the nature of British conquest and the process by which its rule was established stimulated separate identities.

During the period extending from Amalgamation in 1914 to independence from colonial rule in 1960, Nigeria had four major constitutions, each named after the colonial governor who formulated it: the Clifford Constitution (1922), Richards Constitution (1946), Macpherson Constitution (1951), and Lyttleton Constitution (1954). Although the first two constitutions were virtually imposed on the country, the latter two involved some constitutions with representatives of the people through constitutional conferences. At the Ibadan General Conference of 1950, Nigerian leaders agreed that only a federal system that allowed each of the three regions (North, West and East as created by the Richards Constitution) to progress at its own pace would be acceptable. Until that point, the constitutions had a unitary orientation. In

99. Odenigwe, op. cit., pp. 54-373
creating three regions and delegating some powers to them, the Richards Constitution was a forerunner of the later federal constitutions.

Although the regional leaders at the Ibadan conference had unequivocally declared their preference for federalism, the subsequent Macpherson’s Constitution was essentially unitary. It went farther than the Richards’ Constitution in devolving power to the regions but left the regions subordinate and closely tied to the central government. Because many Nigerian political leaders favoured a federal system in which the regions enjoyed wide autonomy, the Macpherson’s Constitution engendered continuing opposition. Finally, in 1953, this constitution became unworkable. Rather than self-government for the whole nation, the northerners wanted self-government as soon as practicable and only for any region that was ready for it. They believed that each region should progress politically at its own pace.¹⁰⁰ When a constitution that gave the regions significant autonomy eventually emerged, this Lyttleton Constitution was the one that remained in force, with slight amendments, until independence in 1960. It enabled the regions to become self-governing at their own pace: the two southern regions in 1956 and the northern region in 1959.

Several important developments that have continued to affect Nigeria’s government and politics in the postcolonial period marked the

period of colonial rule. First, British Colonial rule nurtured north-south separation, which has remained the classic cleavage in the country. In particular, after Frederick Lugard’s pact with northern emirs to protect Islamic civilisation, the north was shut off from much of the Westernising influence to which the south was exposed.\(^\text{101}\) This protection gave the southern peoples a head start, especially in Western education. During the struggle for independence, northern leaders were afflicted by a constant fear of southern domination. Many of the northern responses to national politics to this day can be attributed to the fear. At the same time, with the creation of three regions that saw the northern region larger in size and population than the two southern regions, there was also a southern fear of northern domination.

Despite the periodic creation of more states during the postcolonial period, these regionalist feelings continued to affect national politics, especially in the distribution of national resources. One manifestation of this tendency was the ceaseless disagreements and bitterness over revenue allocation.\(^\text{102}\) Another consequence of these regional and ethnic divisions was the fragmentation of the national elite. Unlike a few other African countries, Nigeria had no fully national leaders at independence.


Nnamdi Azikwe, an Igbo, who had the greatest potential for becoming a national leader, was forced by regionalist pressures to become a sectional leader. The other leaders during the post-independence period Ahmadu Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Obafemi Awolowo, Micheal Okpara, Samuel Akintola, and Aminu Kano are best remembered as sectional leaders, even though they are usually called nationalists. This fractionalisation of the political elite in turn reinforced ethnicity, regionalism, and religious conflicts, as these sentiments were often aroused in the competition for power, material resources and privileges.

The colonial heritage, therefore, produced a country that was only weakly united. At some point, the regional leaders threatened to secede from the federation: in the early to mid–1950s northern leaders contemplated separation after their humiliation by southerners because of their refusal to support a nation for achieving self-government in 1956; in 1954 the Western Region threatened to pull out itself if the colony of Lagos was not made a part of that region. Nevertheless, there were strong countervailing factors that prevented breakup of the federation. First, British colonial rule had held the country together as one unit. Second, the region had economic complementarity. The landlocked northern region depended greatly on the southern region that had access to the sea. Third, in the final days of colonial rule, Nigerian leaders recognised the

advantages conferred by the country’s large size and population. Given the territorially delineated cleavages abounding in Nigeria and the historical legacy of divisions among ethnic group, regions and sections the federal imperative was so fundamental that even military governments characteristically Unitarian hierarchical and centralist-attached importance to the continuation of a federal system of government. The federation began as a Unitarian colonial state but disaggregated into three and later four regions.

However, the “civilian federalism” and “military federalism” corresponded to civilian government and to military government, respectively. According to federal theory, civilian federalism was the true form of federalism. It entailed government based on a constitutional sharing of power between the federal and state governments (and local government as well), using the principle of decentralisation of powers. It was marked by party politics, which determined the nature of the federation, the configuration of powers, and the prevalence of the rule of law. The major elements of military federalism included the suspension an modification of the constitution; the omnipotence of the Supreme Military Council (SMC) at the center, and therefore, the existence of only one decision-making level of government; and the ban on all (civilian) political activities. Because military federalism had been more common
than civilian federalism, this model made federal government the “master” in relation to the “dependent” state government.\textsuperscript{104}

At independence, largely autonomous regions possessed the residual power in the federation and functioned almost independently. Even before the First Republic collapsed, the federal government was asserting greater power. In particular, it controlled the national economy and possessed emergency powers to intervene in any region where law and order had broken down, as it did in the Western Region in 1962.\textsuperscript{105} The regions were very powerful; they had separate constitutions, foreign missions, and independent revenue bases. All this changed under military rule. The FMG expended its control over the economy to the extent that by late 1980s the states depended on it for up to 90 percent of their revenue.

The federal government also took over such matters as education, which formerly belonged to the president; the states had little autonomy, except in deciding how to implement policies formulated by the federal government. Attempts by state governments to reassert their autonomy during the Second Republic were aborted by the return of military rule. Some state governments that were controlled by parties other than the NPN took NPN-controlled federal government to court on many occasions over matters of jurisdictional competence. Another area in

\textsuperscript{104} http://www.nigeria.gov.ng/... Accessed on 28-02-2017
\textsuperscript{105} Falola, et al, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 93-113
which successive military government had changed intra-governmental relations was in the bolstering of local government as a third tier of government.

The functions and jurisdiction of local governments were streamlined and state governments were asked to stay out of local affairs. These measures increased the importance of local governments and infused in their civilian –elected functionaries a certain stubbornness that led to open conflicts with state government over matters of jurisdiction. In several cases, these conflicts become the subject of litigation. State governments resisted the loss of jurisdiction, and many underscored the subordinate status of local governments at every opportunity.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that local governments were sufficiently autonomous to be an effective tier of government. The allocation of federal revenues was a problematic aspect of fiscal federalism because the states were unequally endowed and were virtually dependent on allocations from the federal government. Several revenue allocation commissions were set up, among them was the National Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission established during the 1980s. The major problem arose from disagreements over the criteria that should be used in allocation derivation, population, need, equality, or minimum government responsibility. The federal-character principle emerged as a balancing formula in the 1979 constitution to
forestall the domination of the government or any of its agencies or resources by development among the states and sections. The principle was largely responsible for the tension and controversy associated with its application complicated by the pattern of distribution of the major ethnic groups. The issue of state creation derived from the very nature of the federation. From three regions in 1960, the number of constitution units had increased to nineteen States and the Federal Capital Territory.  

Summary

The peopling of Nigeria indicates that the country has over 250 ethnic groups with Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba as the three major nationalities. Northern Nigeria has more ethnic groups than its Southern counterpart, as two out of the three regions (in Southern Nigeria) have, to some extent, only two ethnic nationalities- the Igbo and Yoruba. The country’s administrative structure after the British occupation began as Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria, then to three and later four Regions and finally to creations of twelve States which later became nineteen States by 1976. Islam came to Northern Nigeria in 11th Century, through Kanem-Bornu Empire during the reign of Umme Jilme.

106 Falola et’al, op. cit., pp. 93-170
CHAPTER FOUR

DEMOCRACY AND THE FORMATION OF

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA UP TO 1951

“All modern political parties and all modern party ideologies originated as a reaction on the part of special group interests fighting a privileged status against liberalism”\textsuperscript{107}

The chapter studies the evolution of Nationalism, democracy, formation of political parties, party politics and pioneer politicians in Nigeria. These developments culminated in the Nationalists Movements—first by Herbert Macaulay and later by Nnamdi Azikwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Sa’ad Zungur, Mallam Aminu Kano and the rest. Prior to the 1951 elections in Nigeria, only Lagos and Calabar had the opportunity to exercise their “universal suffrage”, by relatively electing a few representatives after the introduction of the Clifford Constitution in 1922. The whole of the northern region and most parts of the southern region were disenfranchised for reasons which the colonialists claimed, bordered on lack of Western education and political exposure. Western education which was introduced in the first half of the 19th century in Lagos only came to the northern region in the opening years of the 20th century; and this, to some extent, created uneven development in the political arena of Nigeria as a nation. The creation of regions by Richards Constitution in 1946 further exacerbated the hitherto existing regional politics which continued to impede proper democratisation of Nigerian politics since the 1940s. The epitome of regional politics can be illustrated on how the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) dominated the eastern region; the Action Group (AG) dominated the western region and the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC) dominated the northern region. In the end, this research will give a background in Nigerian democracy and
unearth the origins of ethnic and regional politics in Nigeria. The research
will also stimulate debate and upsurge knowledge about the impact of
political parties’ accountability on social contract as well as who
championed democracy in Nigeria.

Prelude to Nigerian Party Politics and Democracy

After the invasion and subjugation of the Nigerian area by the
British which began in 1861, colonialism existed for decades without
the formation of any formidable union, association or political party. By
the first quarter of the 20th Century, the evolution of Nigerian constitution
began with the introduction of the “Order in Council” in 1912 after which
the Amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates followed
in 1914 by Governor Lugard. This development led to the introduction of
the Clifford Constitution in 1922. The Clifford Constitution is a child
birth of the West African Conference in London, in 1900 and other
conferences that followed which demanded for democracy and elective
principle in West Africa.

The Clifford Constitution opened a new vista in the political history
of Nigeria, as it allowed the formation of political parties and introduced
elective principle in Lagos and Calabar. The formation of government
officials was made clearly and separately by the 1922 constitution. It
constituted the office of the governor and Commander in-Chief, the

109. Odenigwe, op. cit., p.88

As G. Odenigwe clearly points out, this Council involved indigenous Nigerians to form part of government as unofficial, three Members from Lagos and one from Calabar. Elected Members of the Council were chosen by some specific electorates and residents within the Municipality of Lagos and Calabar. One can hold the view that this is the evolution of democracy in Nigeria. It is crystal clear by now that Nigerian residents in Lagos and Calabar began to form part of government through election.

Shortly, Electoral Law was introduced. Electoral disputes were referred to the Supreme Court of Nigeria for adjudication. The Governor presided over all sittings and did not usually cast his vote in any decision except when voters were equally divided. It is worthy to note that the Council’s power of law making was only restricted to the colony of Lagos and Calabar. By 1923, the first political party known as Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) was formed by Herbert Macaulay and his friends, in the same year, the first elections were conducted. Subsequently, elections were also conducted in 1928, 1933, and 1943 which the entire Northern Nigeria did not partake. The first elections that the whole country participated took place in 1951. It is however,

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112. Falola et ‘al, *op. cit.*, p.62
noteworthy that though the NNDP was the first political party to be formed in Nigeria. However, J. H. Pongri notes that the evolution of political parties began in 1908 when Herbert Macaulay led the Peoples Union in Lagos to protest against the tax and land policies of the British colonial government.\footnote{Pongri, op. cit., p. 635}

Meanwhile, it is significant at this point to clearly, but briefly spelt who was Herbert Macaulay, being the first famous democratic champion in Nigeria. Macaulay was a grandson of one of the most famous and popular evangelist in person of Samuel Ajayi Crowther. S. A. Crowther was a Yoruba slave, taken during one of the Yoruba inter-tribal war in 1822. The slave ship in which he was being carried was seized and taken to Freetown and he was liberated and educated in the Church Missionary Society School and proved to be very bright. In 1825 he was baptised as Samuel, a name he continued to answer for the rest of his life. To cap it all, when he was sent to provincial school in Liverpool Street, Islington, London, he took the name Crowther from a renowned church member of the CMS. By 1864 Ajayi was blessed as the first Bishop of the Niger territories of the CMS. This milieu therefore, no doubt paved way for Ajayi’s dexterity to move from one part of Nigeria to another and establish Christian Mission Schools.
Crowther made an attempt to establish Christian mission schools in Northern Nigeria, but was resisted by Fredrick Lugard, the then High Commissioner of Nigeria who later became the Governor General and who had already pronounced to the Northern Emirs that he would not tamper with Islam. After the defeat of Sultan Attahiru of Sokoto Caliphate in Bormi by the British forces in 1903, virtually the whole of Northern Nigeria had come under colonial domination. Lugard therefore, felt that allowing Crowther to establish schools and evangelisation would go against what he earlier proclaimed to the Emirs. However, it was in the same year the colonial administration opened its first schools in Northern Nigeria which were named “Home Schools” in Lokoja, a place that had already witnessed the influence of the Christian Missionaries due to Crowther’s activities in the area.114

Herbert Macaulay was born in Broad Street, Lagos on 14th November, 1864 to the family of Thomas Babington Macaulay and Abigail Crowther. Macaulay started primary school in 1869 to 1877; he was educated at St Paul's Breadfruit School, Lagos and Christian Missionary School Faji School, Lagos. From 1877 to October 1880, Macaulay attended CMS Grammar School, Lagos for his secondary education. During his school days in Grammar School, Macaulay lost his

father in the year 1878. In 1880, he joined his maternal uncle’s trade steamer and embarked on a trade and missionary journey traversing the Niger River visiting Bonny, Lokoja, Gbebe and Brass. After going to a Christian Missionary School, he secured a job as a clerical assistant and indexer at the Department of Public Works, Lagos. Subsequently, with the support of the colonial administration; Macaulay left Lagos on 1st July 1890 to further his training in England. From 1891 to 1894 he studied civil engineering in Plymouth, England and was also a learner of G. D. Bellamy, a borough surveyor and water engineer in Plymouth. In 1893, he became a graduate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, London. Macaulay was also an accomplished musician who received a certificate in music from Trinity College, London and a certificate in violin playing from Music International College, London.\footnote{https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbert_Macaulay} His sound family and educational backgrounds culminated in Macaulay’s political exposure, which gave birth to the first political party in Nigeria- the crux of this thesis’ subject matter.

**Conceptual Clarifications**

Before examining the core of the subject matter, let us begin with the challenge of definition: what is democracy? What is a political party? What is party politics? What are party systems and their types?
Democracy

T. S. Elliot argues there is no universally accepted definition of the term democracy. The concept “Democracy” has a variety of meanings, ranging from electoral process, to a liberal democratic system subject to its working pattern of a given society. Conceptualisations of the concept democracy with the upholding events here and there remain challenging. Though there are alternative forms of definition of the theory as observed by different schools of thought, basically because democracy as perceived in the West may not automatically have the same perception in the Eastern World. Just as the Russian President in his response to Western critiques on the Russian conduct of election that “if the international systems have found a wrong doing is another thing but, the issue of Russian political system is none of their business”. This is somewhat true, as the world is composed of differences of cultures and religions. Therefore, the way democracy is practiced in United Kingdom may not automatically be the same in Iran, India or Malaysia. Nevertheless, different scholars have opined a variety of definitions of the term and its origin. A. M. Jega opines that the “term” democracy originated from the ancient Greece around 500 BC. In consonance with Jega, R. Anifowose adds that the term “demons” means

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“the people” and the “kratein” means “rule of or by”- both from Greek words, in essence therefore, democracy simply means rule by the people.\textsuperscript{118} A. Appadorai maintains that democracy is a system of government that people exercise their franchise. By this, the people are critical stakeholders of determining who gets what, when and how in a given society by either participating directly in governance or by electing representatives.\textsuperscript{119} Abraham Lincoln sees democracy as government of the people, by the people and for the people. To sum it up, these definitions are virtually the same, all of which give their centrality on “the people”.

It is equally important to note that there are various forms or types of democracy which may not be discussed broadly in this thesis. Representative democracy, liberal democracy, direct democracy, socialist democracy, parliamentary democracy, consensus democracy, non-government democracy and supranational democracy are some of the popular democracies we have around the world. Nonetheless, this thesis will differentiate the democracies we had in Nigeria’s First and Second Republics.

\textsuperscript{119} A. Appadorai, \textit{The Substance of Politics}, Oxford University Press, 1942, p.137
Political Party

J. C. Johari defines political party as a group of people who come together to contest for elections and hold power in government. The party in its procedure agrees on some proposed policies and collective good on furthering supporters’ interests. Anthony Downs describes political party “as a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election”. Going by these two concise definitions, it is evidently clear that democracy cannot exist without political party, a platform which every contender struggles for elective position. Thus, one can conclude that political parties are indispensable in any democratic setting.

Party Politics

According to J. Olaniyi, party politics are activities of political parties in democratic setting to wrest for control of political offices by means of elections. In essence, party politics exist only when elective principles are obtainable and also by implication the government recognises the legitimate choice of the citizen to select or elect people to represent them in government bureaus. As earlier mentioned in the introduction, since the occupation of the Nigerian area by the British, party politics saw the

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120. J. C. Johari, *Comparative Politics*, Sterling Publishers Limited, New Delhi, India, 1972, p. 254
light of the day after the introduction of the Clifford Constitution in 1922. In this regard, a history of party politics cannot be complete without mentioning Clifford Constitution. M. Okeye holds the view that “party politics are activities of formal structure, institution or organisation which competes through electoral process to control the personnel and policies of government, and with the aim of allocating the scarce resources in a State through an institutionalisation or procedure”. Okoye and Olaniyi’s views are in consonance with each other. This research therefore, adopts and aligns itself with their definition of party politics.

**Party Systems**

Different democracies operate different party systems. M. Coppedge points out that party system affects the democracy at certain stage of democratic process. This begins with management of preference by citizens and by means of the representation of preference, decision making, policy execution and policy adjudication. In other words, party systems affect the feature of representation by outlining the number and quality of selections of the electorates for expression of their preference in a democratic setting. It can be argued therefore, the stronger and more elaborate party programmes are; the more different they are from those

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parties in the system and the better the quality of representation. Accordingly, there is need to concisely outline party systems. The following are party systems: (i) One-Party System (ii) Two-Party System and (iii) Multi-Party System.

(i) One-Party System is a type of party system where only a single party dominates the party politics. It could be the only party that exists or it is the most dominant political party, where every successful candidate is expected to emerge. Uganda, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Malawi are epitomes of such countries that practice one-party system. Socialists States usually practice one-party system to the core. Instances of such countries include Union of Socialist Soviet Republic (USSR) under Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin; China under Chairman Mao Tse Tung and Cuba under Fidel Castro. However, in some views, these socialists’ countries are not regarded as democratic States.

(ii) Two-Party System is a system where only two political parties are dominant. There could be smaller parties, but not very

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124 M. Coppedge, “Party System, Governability, & the Quality of Democracy in Latin America”, Kellogg Institute, Hesburgh Centre, University of Notre Dame, 2001, p.1
126 Microsoft Student Encarta, 2008, Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, History of China, Cuban Revolution
successful. The United States of America is a typical illustration of this practice.\footnote{\textit{A Report of the Committee on Political Parties: Towards a More Responsible Two-Party System}, in American Political Science Review, Volume 44.3, Part 2, 1950, pp. 303-306}

(iii) Multi-Party System is a kind of system where a good number of political parties exist. Usually, this structure culminates in coalition in order to form government. There could be only few strong or dominant political parties with many smaller parties. Nigeria is a fine instance of such practice. Due to large number of political parties in the First Republic, the NPC and the NCNC had to form a coalition government.\footnote{E. D. Mushemeza, “The Functioning of Multi-Party System in Local Government: Challenges of Transition in a Movement System in Uganda”, Advocates Coalition for Development & Environment (ACODE), Policy Briefing Paper No.20, 2007}

**Functions of Political Party**

Political parties as platforms for wresting power may differ in their manifestos, but their functions are usually the same. This research may not go in-depth in analysing the functions of political party, but the below discussion tersely speaks volumes.

i. Recruiting and nominating candidates: It helps in the recruitment of leaders. One of the critical functions of any political party is to recruit men of integrity, knowledge, action, leadership to its fold as members and organise them for election in future. Because it is these members of party who propagate
the party ideologies, discuss the burning issues and hold meetings and press conferences to mobilise public support. It is these leaders again who contest in the election and form government if elected to power. Such leaders being drawn from public life are expected to understand expectations of the common people and formulate public policies accordingly. Parties always get popularity and recognition through their leaders only.

ii. Educating the electorates about campaign issues: Political parties educate Public Opinion. Parties in any system of government educate, formulate and organise public opinion. They also help in the growth of the level of political consciousness of common citizens, who otherwise have no time to peruse and study issues of the state. Political parties in their effort to come closer to the people organise public rallies, meetings, press conferences on important issues and make their views clear. The common people are made aware of the economic, social, and political conditions of the country. The general public is made aware of their voting rights. This provides the common people with opportunities to analyse the pros and cons of various important issues. This process leads to organised and formulated public opinion on important issues.
The common people who otherwise have no time to devote to politics immensely benefit by these meetings, etcetera and understand different aspects of the basic issues involved in administration.

iii. Reduction of conflict: Political parties provide political stability. The political parties in more than one way unite, simplify and stabilise the political process of the country. The destabilising forces of localism, regionalism, section, interests and geographical situations are tackled through political parties by making them parts of their party ideologies, thus, pacifying the disintegrating forces and inducing cohesion. The political parties mainly perform the functions of ‘aggregation of interests’. Besides, the political parties in a representative democracy play a great role in maintaining the stability by performing their roles in the legislature. The majority party forms the government and the other small parties form the opposition.

iv. Monitoring actions of office holders: The party in power has to conduct itself very responsibly. The opposition party keeps a close eye on the working of the ruling party. Because any unwise move on their part would throw it off the power and help the opposition parties to take over the reins of
administration. Opposition not merely criticises the government; it also provides an alternative programme and alternative government in the eventuality of any crisis in the government. As such it contributes to the stability of the government. Hence, healthy opposition is very important for the success of democracy.

v. Loyal opposition – watchdog: It makes the working of the Legislature possible. A parliament consists of the representatives of the people. The political parties organise these representatives on party lines. The electorates choose their representatives on the basis of their party affiliation. The party which gets the majority of votes forms the government and runs the state and the other parties in the legislature constitute the opposition and try to find fault with the government, thus making it more responsible. In the absence of political parties, the elected representatives may work at cross purposes just making the formation of a government or opposition impossible.

vi. Political Parties formulate public policies. Each political party fights the election to achieve its objectives incorporated in their political manifesto. Soon after the election the majority party forming the government seeks to formulate its policies of
administration on the basis of promises made in the election manifesto. These policies are made keeping in mind the interest of general public. The most important objective behind most policies remains the betterment of general condition. Other than this, they make policies on national security, internal law and order, etcetera. Besides, each party has its own ideology. It is assured that the majority party gets the mandate of the electorate to implement its own political programmes.129

The Evolution of Political Parties and Democratisation of Political Leadership in Nigeria

By first quarter of the 20th century, a number of the British colonies around the world were exposed to Western education. This played a significant role in the birth of Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in Africa, which later culminated in truncating colonialism. P. O. Esedebe argues that an attempt to trace the year Pan-Africanism began and who started it, is a futile exercise. He further maintains that the term “Pan-Africanism” was not even created when the movement it describes first emerged. Labels are often conceived when after a movement has established itself; just like a baby does not need a name to exist, so an ideology does not

call for a label to be a fact. Esedebe views Pan-Africanism as “a political and cultural phenomenon which regards Africa, Africans and African descendants abroad as a unit. It aims at the regeneration and unification of Africa and the promotion of a feeling of solidarity among the people of the African world. It glorifies the African past and inculcates pride in African values”. C. Legum defines Pan-Africanism as “the expression of a desire for African unity. It is at the same time an expression of a sense of unity between all people whose ancestors originally came from Africa. As it assumes a common brotherhood of black peoples everywhere- in Africa, North America, the West Indies”. Both O. Esedebe and C. Legum’s definitions are virtually the same, as they both aim at promoting Africa. Legum further maintains that the birth of idea of Pan-Africanism occurred in the New World, not in Africa.

It is easy to comprehend why and how Pan-Africanism traced its roots outside Africa, taking into cognisance the evacuation of Africans to the New World through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade which existed for about three centuries. This research views Pan-Africanism as the father of Nationalism, while the latter as father of both democracy and party
politics in Africa. In other words, African democracy is an element of Nationalism, and the later, a component of Pan-Africanism. Even though, some scholars use the term Pan-Africanism and Nationalism interchangeably. This research does not share this idea, as it will discuss the term “Nationalism” later. The research holds the view that Pan-Africanism is a broader term encompassing Nationalism.

The introduction of Western education in African is linguistically important as it paved the way for Africans to use foreign language as a medium of communication. This, no doubt grew a new life-force. Negroes such as Bishop Alexander Walters of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and Dr Edward W. Blyden began to propagate the concept of “common destiny” and “one united Africa”. Despite Blyden advocacy on Africa, a number of scholars maintain that Dr Willam E. Burghardi Du Bois is the “father” of Pan-Africanism. The following is one of his famous quotes: “The problem of the 20th Century is the problem of colour line- the relation of the darker to the brighter races of men in Asia, and Africa, in America and the Islands of the sea”.\textsuperscript{133} Du Bois, Blaise Diagne, Marcus Garvey, Herbert Macaulay, George Padmore can be regarded as the pioneer exponents of Pan-Africanism, who held series of conferences within and outside Africa, which culminated in the struggle for self-determination. Conversely,

\textsuperscript{133} Legum, op. cit., p. 530
Esedebe argues that Edward Wilmot Blyden should be regarded as the father of Pan-Africanism for the simple fact that it was Blyden who began the advocacy and wrote essays such as “Hope for Africa”, “The Negro in Ancient History”, and “Africa’s Service to the World”, as well as his lecture “Study and Race”, which are excellent negation of eighteen and nineteenth century anti-African propaganda.\(^{134}\)

Before discussing the formation of political parties in Nigeria, it is appropriate to outline the origins of political parties in Africa. According to G. M. Carbone, the first political party to emerge in African continent was the True Whig Party, in 1860, in Liberia. Shortly, a few more parties emerged. The African elites that formed this political party meant to express their political demands.\(^{135}\)

In Nigeria, the first political party was the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) founded by Herbert Macaulay and his friends. Precisely, the party was formed on 24\(^{th}\) June, 1923, where Joseph Egerton Shyngle and Eric Moore served as pioneer president and vice president of the NNDP respectively; and Herbert Macaulay served as the Secretary. The party has the following objectives: “to secure the safety and welfare of the Colony (Lagos) and the Protectorate of Nigeria as an integral part of the British Imperial Commonwealth and to carry the banner of “Right,  

\(^{134}\) Asiwaju et’al, op. cit., p.10  
Truth, Liberty and Justice” to the empyrean of democracy until the realisation of its ambitious goal of government of the people, by the people and for the people”.  

Of all the African educated elite, movement for emancipation of Africans from the shackles of colonial domination was one of their major drive and priorities. In Nigeria, Herbert Macaulay and his friends could be regarded as the pioneer politicians to come to the limelight in the arena of party politics in Nigeria. However, it is noteworthy that a number of political organisations such as Peoples Union, Reform Club, and National Congress of British West Africa existed which their main thrust was self-determination of the black peoples. Conversely, these are not political parties as they lack features and some ingredients of political parties. The first political party (NNDP) won seats in the Lagos Legislative Council in 1923, 1928, 1933 and 1943 elections. Moreover, the party also won elective seats in Lagos Town Council between the year 1925 and 1938.

The NNDP as a result of its stratagem and effective organisation recorded success. The party disseminated its idea and criticised the colonial government via Lagos Weekly Record Newspaper.  

Despite the fact that the constitution only provided for election in Lagos and Calabar, the UNDP was very determined in its democratic struggles.

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136 Falola et’al, *op. cit.*, p.62
138 Odenigwe, *op. cit.*, p.133
For years, the party held sway in Nigerian political landscape. However, the formation of the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) led to the degeneration of its political ascendancy. By 1944, the Nationalists Movement was at its prime and this paved the way for the formation of the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) by Herbert Macaulay. This period witnessed the proliferation of political organisations which later metamorphosed into political parties in Nigeria.

The Nationalists Movements and Formation of Political Parties

The politics of the 1940s in Nigeria was a *politics of emancipation*. This period witnessed the emergence of a new set of political leaders namely: Nnamdi Azikwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Sa’ad Zungur, Abdallah Raji and a host of others. And by the 1950s, Ahmadu Bello, Mallam Aminu Kano, J. S. Tarka, Anthony Enahoro and a few others came to the limelight. By 1940s, Herbert Macaulay, the man that founded NCNC died. Nnamdi Azikwe therefore, took over the party leadership and began to spread its appendages across the country. Obafemi Awolowo, on his part, transformed the Nigerian Youth Movement to Action Group, which later became so dominant in Lagos; Mallam Aminu Kano joined and later took over the leadership of Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU). And, to truncate the *leftist* ideology as being championed by NEPU,
Ahmadu Bello, Ibrahim Imam, Isa Kaita and a host of others formed the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC).\textsuperscript{139}

The Richards’ Constitution of the 1946 balkanised Nigeria into three regions and established Regional Houses of Assembly and House of Chiefs. S. Ifamose argues that the incorporation of Regionalism in the 1946 constitution projected drive for ethnic politics.\textsuperscript{140} One could argue that formalisation of regionalising the country further augmented regionalism and ethnicity. Both the Western and Eastern Regions had unicameral legislature. The Northern Regions had House of Chiefs; simply because the traditional institution formed by the Sokoto Caliphate had a sound administrative system with centralised bureaucracy unlike the Eastern Regions which was regarded as \textit{stateless society}\textsuperscript{141} by some scholars. The Western Region could not have House of Chiefs too as a result of the existence of different independent chiefdoms and kingdoms.

It is important to note that, Ahmadu Bello posits that prior to the incorporation of the vast area and population otherwise known as Northern Nigeria, in the legislature with a view to have a say, was as a result of agitations. Prior to the application of elective principles in the North, the area had no say in legislation and finances of the country. It is

\textsuperscript{139} Dudley, \textit{Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria...}, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.80-82
\textsuperscript{141} Horton, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 72-113

126
however, worth mentioning that there were ten (10) senior officers in the legislative council, being lawfully exercising the roles of Senior Residents in Nigeria, some of whom came from the North. Agitations led to the formation of Regional governments of which the Northern Nigeria had a House of Assembly and House of Chiefs and could debate Bills likely to affect the Region.\textsuperscript{142}

Nationalism brought together the regional political leaders, having \textit{national feelings}. These leaders believed that the British have overstayed their welcome on the Nigerian soil. Nnamdi Azikwe fully utilised the power of the pen via his newspapers: The Comet, West African Pilot, The Spokesman and the Guardian\textsuperscript{143} to criticise the British administration in Nigeria and West Africa vigorously. The Western part of the country where Obafemi Awolowo came was a melting pot of educated elite. And the Northern region was occupied by the NEPU radical politicians such as Mallam Sa’ad Zungur and Mallam Aminu Kano; and by the middle to late 1950s Ahmadu Bello also emerged as a political force to reckon. The whole regions appeared very tough to the British colonialists in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{144}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{142} Bello, \textit{My Life}, Cambridge University Press, 1962, pp. 60-62
\item \textsuperscript{143} N. Azikwe, \textit{My Odyssey}, Spectrum Books Limited, Ibadan, Nigeria, 1970, pp. 384-400
\item \textsuperscript{144} E. O. Abiola, \textit{A Textbook of West African History ( AD 1000 to the Present Day)}, Omoloya Standard Press & Bookshop Company Nigeria Limited, Ado Ekiti, 1974, p. 183
\end{itemize}
L. H. Hydle opines that the nationalists stood strongly to ensure the Africanisation of the civil service, changes in local government, a development plan for the country, mass education and the choice of leaders through elective principle. The British had to comply with the demands of the nationalists. This paved way for the Nigerian leaders to maintain their base of popularity in growing electorate with some collective interest and idea. The press played a significant role in propagating the position of the nationalists. In the Southern Region, the newspapers were printed in English: The Comet, The Daily Times of Nigeria, West African Pilot, Lagos Daily News, Daily Telegraph and the Daily Service and so on. While in the Northern Region the press voice of the educated was *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* “Truth is worth than a Penny”, which was first published in the year 1939. Mallam Abubakar Imam was the first editor- who worked from 1939-1951. Hydle further stresses that the Northern *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*’s method of disseminating information was more informative and moderate than the Southern nationalists’ press.\(^{145}\)

The emergence of new radicals who had their studies overseas further strengthened the nationalists’ movement in Nigeria. The Richards’ Constitution that fanned the embers of regionalism and ethnic rivalry as well as the North/South dichotomy was criticised by these young radicals.

\(^{145}\text{Hydle, } op. cit., p.145\)
Prominent among was Anthony Enahoro, who later became the Editor of The Comet Newspaper in 1945. Enahoro described the Richards’ Constitution as “divide and rule” tactic fashioned to “Pakistanised” Nigeria by the British government. He was jailed later for mutiny. The Editor of the Nigerian Spokesman A.Y.S. Tinubu was also charged for sedition. The Zik’s Press Limited was fined 300 pounds for a number of seditious papers in Spokesman.146

Sa’ad Zungur, prominent Northern educated elite held from Bauchi Province of North-eastern Nigeria was among the significant players of the Nationalists movements in Nigeria. He was a Correspondent for the West African Pilot from 1943-1947. Zungur was also a public commentator in series of Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo, the then only newspaper in Northern Nigeria. A. M. Yakubu notes “Sa’ad Zungur is one of the unsung heroes of Nigeria’s anti-colonial struggle. A perspicuous mind, effulgent poet, visionary, erudite scholar, radical politician and nationalist, he demonstrated an enviable anti-imperialist profligacy in verse and prose”.147

J. S. Coleman, in his pioneer work “Nigeria: Background to Nationalism” explains the role played by the Northern educated elite in struggle against colonial government in Nigeria, particularly the roles

146  Ibid, p. 168
played by Mallam Saa’adu Zungur and Mallam Aminu Kano.\textsuperscript{148} Moreover, there is a plethora of evidence that Northern Nigeria, at the early stage of the nationalists’ movement lacked organised educated element to stand against the colonial government for a number of reasons; one, for the simple fact that Western education only came to the Northern Nigeria in the opening years of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century, unlike the Southern part of the country that was introduced since in the 1840s. Secondly, for the fact that the first educated elements of Northern Nigeria were largely enrolled into civil service and the colonial government restricted them from partisan politics. These, among other things, necessitated the resignation of both Mallam Sa’ad Zungur and Mallam Aminu Kano, with a view to freely participate in the anti-imperialist struggle in Nigeria. J. S. Coleman clearly highlights the significant role of these great patriots and nationalists in his work. Both Zungur and Aminu Kano were pioneer members of the NEPU, a party formed, as A. Abba and A. Feinstein argue, to fight for freedom for the Nigerians from the bonds of colonialism. The motto of the party is “\textit{Sawaba}”, “Freedom”.\textsuperscript{149} The members and leaders of the party stood for this principle of freedom and equality from the formation of the party to its dissolution. Therefore, any attempt to undermine their sacrifice and contribution in Nigeria’s independence and nationalism is subject to examination and critique. Y.

\textsuperscript{148} Coleman, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 357-358
\textsuperscript{149} Abba, “\textit{The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)…}”, \textit{op. cit.}, p.113
B. Usman clearly points out the roles played by the Northern political giants in the struggle for independence, particularly Sa’ad Zungur, Aminu Kano, Raji Abdallah and Abdulrahman Ibbo, in his selected writings.\textsuperscript{150}

It is however a common knowledge that the Northern region, at the early nationalists movement lacked organised educated elite forum except that of the Sa’ad Zungur (\textit{Bauchi Discussion Circle}). The likes of Ahmadu Bello and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa only supported self-government at the closing years of the 1950s. This arose from the simple reason that Ahmadu Bello believes Northern Region was educationally (in Western education) backward compared to the Southern Region and self-government means a lot.\textsuperscript{151} Ahmadu Bello foresaw domination by the Southerners if the country attained independence in the early 1950s. It is worthy of note that by the time NCNC began its agitation for self-government in the 1940s, there were some political elements already existing in Northern Nigeria for almost a decade. The campaigns of the NCNC therefore, stimulated the organisation of political parties in the North.

By the 1940s, political parties with relatively regional coverage and popularity came to the limelight almost all over the country. In some views, the British government in Nigeria seemed to accept agitation for

\textsuperscript{151} Bello, \textit{My Life}, op. cit., p. 115
self-government under the auspices of political parties. This, obviously stimulated the growth of party politics and democracy in Nigeria as it culminated in the formation of the Action Group (AG) led by Obafemi Awolowo; the NCNC, led by Nnamdi Azikwe; the Northern Elements Progressive Association, led by Habib Raji; the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), led by Mallam Aminu Kano; Jam’iyan Mutanen Arewa which later metamorphosed to Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC), led by Ahmadu Bello; Middle Zone League (MZL) and Middle Belt Peoples Party merged to form the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), led by J. S. Tarka. These political parties, put together played a significant role in truncating colonialism in Nigeria.

The NCNC, being the oldest among the aforementioned political parties, enjoyed the patronage of Sa’ad Zungur and other educated elements in Northern Nigeria. This party was strong in the South West and strongest in the South Eastern Region of Nigeria. This arose as a result of the role played by Nnamdi Azikwe. The party had its convention in Kaduna, the Headquarters of the then Northern Protectorate and the Headquarters of Northern Region. During the convention, Sa’ad Zungur, Habib Raji Abdallah and Abubakar Sadiq Zukoji were invited under the platform of Northern Elements Progressive Association as representatives. NEPA agreed to be an embryonic Pan-Northern Nigerian political party. The NEPA joined NCNC in its struggle against colonial
domination and exploitation. This party made some efforts to establish its branches in Northern Nigeria. Zukoji happened to be one of the prominent activists of Zikist movement and one of the NCNC/NEPA agreement and therefore toured Bauchi and mobilised likeminded youths like Garba Kafin Madaki, Dungus Borno and Abdullahi Lame. Zukoji’s systematic campaign against colonialism was therefore, so intense.\textsuperscript{152}

\textit{The Formation of Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)}

Arguably, of all the parties that were formed in the 1950s, NEPU stood to be one of the most famous and significant political party, perhaps, because it was formed by the radical and “\textit{left wing}” politicians from the Northern Nigeria; and, possibly, being the earliest to come to the limelight in the North. The threat to the break-up of Nigeria in late 1940s informed the six weeks tour of the NCNC Federal Secretary in person of Mallam Sa’ad Zungur and one of the figures of Northern Elements Progressives Association across the Northern Region. The tour aimed at meeting, conversing and marshalling opinion of northern educated elements in contrast to the activities of the Native Authorities personalities who were finalising the art of using the name of the people of Northern Nigeria and the region, to pursue their political schema, and those of British imperialism. In the end, NEPU was inaugurated in Kano.

\textsuperscript{152} Abba, \textit{“The Significance of Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...”}, op. cit., pp.103-119
in August, 1950. The people that announced the formation of the party were Abba Maikwaru, Magaji Danbatta, Musa Kaula, Abdulkadir Dandaji, Bello Ijumu, Babaliya Manaja, Garba Bida and Mudi Sipikin. *Sawaba* (freedom and liberty), was the slogan of the party. Magaji Dabatta, one of the above founding members of the NEPU disclosed that they were inspired and encouraged by the writings of fearless and principled nationalists like Mallam Sa’ad Zungur, Abdallah Raji and Mallam Aminu Kano to form the party (NEPU) on 8th August, 1950. This assertion is in congruence with the position of A. Feinstein, as the later demonstrates that, two months after the formation of the party, Mallam Aminu Kano resigned from teaching career with the aim of joining a platform that would enable him to fight against social, political and economic exploitation by both the colonialist and the Fulani aristocracy. The NEPU, in his view, was the right party to belong- he therefore, joined the party. NEPU became revolutionary movement under the leadership of Mallam Aminu Kano within short period of time. This could be seen from the numeric strengths of the seats the party won in 1951 elections. Aminu Kano had enjoyed the encouragement of George Padmore, one of the exponents of Pan-Africanism and anti-colonialism, first in England, then in Ghana. At a point in time, Padmore had a feud

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153. Ibid, pp.136-156
with Kwame Nkrumah, saying the NEPU was the best platform for class struggle than Nkrumah’s party, the Convention People’s Party (CPP). He further upholds that the struggle for African self-determination or self-government should be founded in Nigeria and cash for that struggle should go to NEPU. This can be viewed as another fact solidifying the position of both Y. B. Usman and A. Abba that Northern educated elements played a significant role in nationalism and struggle for independence in Nigeria; and thereby buttressing the position of J. S. Coleman, which indicates that Northern educated elite did a lot in the nationalists’ movement in Nigeria.

Conversely, considering the fact that NEPU failed to get members across the country as NCNC did, one can conclude that the former (NEPU) was a regionally based political party and thereby stimulated regional politics in Nigeria which continued to impede the process of democratisation to date. The ruling class of Northern Nigeria viewed the NEPU as a threat and therefore, began to form a new political party that could compete with NEPU favourably, as the latter was against colonialism and Native Authority. This informed the formation of the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC).\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{155} Feinstein, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 139-142
The Birth of Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC)

M. Y. Mangvwat dates 1950 as the birth year of the Northern Peoples’ Congress and 1951 as the year for the formation of the NEPU,\(^{156}\) which this thesis regards as an oversight for the following reasons. The emergence of Northern Peoples’ Congress as a political party was, according to B. J. Dudley, A. Abba,\(^{157}\) G. A. Kwanashie,\(^{158}\) and J. S. Coleman\(^ {159}\) meant to check the radical movement of the NEPU as a political party. M. H. Kukah maintains the same position that the formation of the NPC in 1951 was a result of the election victories recorded by NEPU, which sent a vulnerability waves to the ruling class and its interest.\(^ {160}\) Moreover, B. J. Dudley presents the 1951 election results of Kano as follows: NEPU (12 seats), NCNC (5 seats), Native Authority (6 seats), and Independent (3 seats).\(^ {161}\) NPC was not reflected for the simple reason that it was not formed at this period. It is thus; more authoritative to rely on 1951 and 1950 for the years of formations of NPC and NEPU respectively, considering the fact that NEPU participated in 1951 elections while NPC did not. Due to struggle for power within the same block (Northern Nigeria) the relation of both the parties was

\(^{156}\) Mangvwat, op. cit., p. 443
\(^{157}\) Abba, “The Significance of Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)…”, op. cit., pp. 322-331
\(^{158}\) Kwanashie, op. cit., pp. 105-153
\(^{159}\) Coleman, op. cit., p. 363
\(^{160}\) Kukah, op. cit., p.7
\(^{161}\) Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria…, op. cit., p. 80
contradictory, despite the fact that the founding members of both the parties belong to pan-Northern Nigerian body, the *Jam’iyyan Mutanen Arewa* in the year 1949--a party which was converted to NPC in 1951. Due to its patronage by the aristocrats and sympathy of the British government, the NPC remained the most dominant party from its formation to its dissolution in the 1960s. NPC was formed and opened to “the people of Northern descent”, under the chairmanship of Sir Ahmadu Bello, a descendant of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, the founder of Sokoto Caliphate. Ahmadu Bello was later Premier of Northern Nigeria. The period 1951-1960s witnessed antagonistic relationships between NPC and other opposition parties. These parties, as K. Marx and F. Engels learned about the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed generally, that is relationship of bitterness and clash to some extent than agreement and accommodation.\(^{162}\) Clear evidence is the point that NPC was a child brain of the Native Authority (NA) and also conservative in nature, while NEPU was radical and revolutionary, as A. Feinstein noted.\(^{163}\)

Like NEPU, NPC’s nomenclature also sounds regionalistic. In summary, this party also lacked national coverage and therefore, fell short of uniting and defending the interest of the indivisibility of Nigeria as a

\(^{163}\) Feinstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-142
single entity. NPC, in this sense, contributed in planting the seed of ethnic and regional politics in Nigeria.

**The Founding of the Action Group (AG)**

The Action Group is another significant political party during the period under review. The AG, like NPC, was also formed in 1951, as A. Abba clearly points out. The AG traces its roots to the *Egba Omo Oduduwa*, (a Society of the Descendants of Oduduwa) which was initially formed by Obafemi Awolowo and others in London in 1945 and re-launched by prominent conservative Yoruba and probably some British bureaucrats in 1948. For a clearer understanding of who Oduduwa was, in Yoruba history, he was the Emperor and first ruler of Ife and the ancestor of many independent dynasties in Yoruba land. Today, he is revered as the father of Yoruba race. The formation of the Action Group was meant to struggle for power in the Western Region, encouraged regional politics, which clearly weakened the pan-Nigerian politics played by the NCNC under the leadership of Azikwe. Right from the onset, the AG believed in strong region and weak central government. This thesis holds the view that AG is one of the political platforms that also created ethnic and
regional politics which continued to hinder the advancement of democracy in Nigeria prior to and after the Nigerian independence.\textsuperscript{164}

From the origin of this party (AG), it sounds more of tribal or ethnic association than a political party. The party looks exclusively for the Yoruba only. It falls short of most qualities and features of any proper political party that was meant to champion nationalists’ movement. More so, looking into the statement of the founder of the party (Obafemi Awolowo) that “\textit{Nigeria is a mere geographical expression}” presupposes that AG is an ethnic flag-waver which immensely fanned the ember of disunity in Nigeria.

The Action Group was seen as a liberal and, later, left-leaning political party which was supported mostly by the peoples of the then Western Region of Nigeria. It also had call in the later South-South and Middle Belt regions of the country. The party won regional power in Western Nigeria while Nigeria was still under British colonial rule. It took part in the national elections on the eve of Nigerian independence in 1960, but was able to garner little support outside the Western Region and the Nigerian federal capital city of Lagos. A conservative coalition was formed between the NPC and the National Council of Nigeria and

Cameroon (NCNC) excluding the Action Group from national power.\textsuperscript{165}

The research intends to have an elaborate discussion on the alliance of NPC and NCNC in the next chapter.

\textit{The Formation of the Northern Nigerian Non-Muslim League (NNNML)}

The NNNML was established to create a political platform for the non-Muslim and other different ethnic groups in central Nigeria. Its formation was an act to guarantee an alternative minority voice in the Northern Nigeria Assembly which was controlled by the Northern People's Congress, a political party which the central Nigerian leaders felt had the latent to control the Middle Belt's political voice.\textsuperscript{166} As J. Ibrahim points out, the NPC had two opposition borders, from the left in the form of Aminu Kano's Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and the other from Northern Christians in the form of NNNML, which later metamorphosed to United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). This research learns that organised opposition to what was professed as the emergence of Hausa-Fulani domination was voiced among the non-Muslim populations in Benue, Niger, Plateau, Bauchi and Zaria provinces. That points out that the opposition first took an organisational form with the


\textsuperscript{166} Dudley, \textit{Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria…}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 92
formation under Birom enterprise of the Northern Nigeria Non-Muslim League in 1950s, abetted by the Christian Missions. Immediately after that, a number of political organisations developed in the area such as the Tiv Progressive Union, Wurkum Tribal Union, Middle Zone League and the Middle Belt Peoples Party, with the last two merging to form the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) in 1955. B. J. Dudley agrees that the UMBC was formed as a front to contest Muslim Hausa-Fulani ascendancy. Central to the politics of the Middle Belt therefore, is their relationship with the Hausa-Fulani. Major exponents and founding members of this party were Pastor David Lot, J. S. Tarka, Bello Ijumu, Jonah Assadugu, Yerima Balla etcetera. In essence, going by the above exponents, it is clear that the formation of UMBC was highly influenced by the NEPU. The Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP), the Borno Youth Movement and the UMBC were formed in 1954, 1954 and 1955 respectively. Thus, beyond the period we covered in this chapter.

G. N. Hembe also demonstrates that the formation of NNNML under Pastor David Lot aimed as a counter to the Islamic expansionist movement towards the Middle Belt. At first, the Christians thought that building a chain of mission stations over the Sudan from Lokoja on the Niger, down to Khartoum on the Nile, the “danger” of Muhammadanism

168 Ibid.
could be waded off and the pagan would be converted to Christianity. However, this dream failed to be realised, as over 50 years of Missionary activity in the Sudan, the Missionaries understood that their preaching alone would not be able to withstand the expansion of Islam; and so decided to use a political party as a tool in driving their cause. This paved way for the Missionaries to secure “in group” solidarity with a view to fighting against “Muslim threat” to the people of the Middle Belt.169

Based on the treaty brokered by the Governor General of Nigeria, Fredric Lugard and the Emirs of Northern Nigeria, the Christian Missionaries were not permitted to establish missionary schools, except in “pagan” areas.170 In this regard, the Christians seized the opportunity to fight shrewdly when a Motion was moved in Northern Assembly in 1949 pressing on the government to check missionary interference with the work of the Native Authority (N.A) in Northern Nigeria insinuating that there was an official move to restrict the activities of the Christian Missionaries in the North. As a counter, the Missionaries prevailed upon their converts to fight against Islamic influence and spread in the Middle Belt.171

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169 Hembe, op. cit., pp. 141-142
170 Fajana, op. cit., p. 213
171 Hembe, op. cit., p. 141
Summary

The chapter’s main thrust is the presentation and explanation of the evolution and how, when, where and why democracy emerged on the Nigerian soil as well as who championed the formation of political parties and party politics and what are the root causes of ethnic and regional politics. The constitutional developments in Nigeria were seen to be the gateways and, or foundation stones of democracy and party politics in Nigeria; starting from the Clifford’s Constitution in 1922 down to Macpherson’s Constitution in 1951. Agitations for self-determination under the banner of Pan-Africanism and Nationalism opened a new vista in the struggle for the unity of Africans in Africa and in Diaspora as well as African nations. Vast majority of the champions of these movements later became spearheads in the political movements of their respective nations or regions. In Nigeria, the likes of Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Mallam Sa’ad Zungur, and Mallam Aminu Kano stood tall in nationalists’ movements, formation of political parties and party politics.
CHAPTER FIVE

FORMATIVE YEARS OF DEMOCRACY IN NORTHERN NIGERIA  1951-1960

“The ballot is stronger than the bullet”172

The chapter’s preoccupation centres on the formation of more political parties with particular reference to the intrigues in inter and intra party politics that existed during the elections of the 1951, 1954, 1956 and 1959 in the Northern region; the functions of the legislature etcetera. The chapter also looks at the problems of ethnicity, religion and political repression in the early democratic settings in Northern Nigeria, an issue which lingers for decades and continues to hinder party politics and democracy in the whole country. During the late 1950s, various groups played a significant role in the struggle for self-determination, particularly the political parties (which seek to replace power by colonial subjects) through the efforts of some nationalists; some of whom their ephemeral biographies would be given. The chapter concludes by looking at Nigerian transition to self-determination in the year 1960.

**Historical Background of Party Politics in Northern Nigeria**

In the last chapter, it was discussed that Mallam Sa’ad Zungur from Bauchi Province, Northeastern Nigeria, was among the nationalists who fought against colonial domination in Nigeria under the banner of Zikism and later through the political parties, particularly the NCNC and the NEPU. Zungur, a teacher, was a mentor to Mallam Aminu Kano, later the president of NEPU (the first political party formed in Northern Nigeria). In essence, Mallam Sa’ad Zungur can be regarded as the father of
Northern Nigerian politics, who gave birth to the party politics in the 1940s.\textsuperscript{173} B. J. Dudley,\textsuperscript{174} R. N. Sklar\textsuperscript{175} and J. S. Coleman\textsuperscript{176} have buttress this position of singling Sa’ad Zungur as the most prominent Northerner in both nationalism and in laying the foundation of party politics which evolved the formation of \textit{Bauchi Discussion Circle};\textsuperscript{177} a group that served as an eye opener to political movement in the area and beyond. Conversely, political struggles prior to1951 did not witness the ballot box. In other words, no elections were conducted in Northern Nigeria before the year 1951. By this period, so many things came to play in the history of political development of Northern Nigeria. The analysis in this chapter presents the formation of more political parties and the first elections in Northern Nigeria, hence, the justification of the above title.

\textbf{The formation of New Political Parties in Northern Nigeria}

As pointed out in the last chapter, there were political groups which later transformed to political parties, beginning with the NEPU as the pioneer one in Northern Nigeria. The period 1951-1960 witnessed the formation and transformation of more political parties and activities. Political parties that were formed between 1951 and 1960 in Northern Nigeria

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{173} Yakubu, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 1-18
\item \textsuperscript{174} Dudley, \textit{Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria…}, \textit{op. cit.}, p.75
\item \textsuperscript{175} Sklar, \textit{op. cit.}, p.88
\item \textsuperscript{176} Coleman, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 357-358
\item \textsuperscript{177} Yakubu, \textit{op. cit.}, p.36
\end{itemize}
included, but not limited to: Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP), Borno Youth Movement (BYM), and United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC). Conversely, it is worthy to note that there were a number of political groups such as Igbirra Tribal Union (ITU), Berom Progressive Union (BPU), Tiv Progressive Union which were also formed and had participated in elections, but would not be discussed here in details.

**The Founding of United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC)**

United Middle Belt Congress was a political party in Nigeria during the formative years of democracy in Northern Nigeria in middle 1950s and during the nation's First Republic. The Party was a merging of two major middle belt organisations, the Middle Zone League and the Middle Belt Peoples' Party. As was pointed out in the last chapter, the party’s history stretches to 1950. Abba demonstrated that the UMBC was established on 10th June, 1955.\textsuperscript{178} The party was formed to create a political platform for the numerous ethnic groups in central Nigeria covering parts of the present-day Benue State, Kogi State, Plateau State, Nasarawa State, Niger State and Kwara State. Its establishment was an act to ensure an alternative minority voice in the Northern Nigeria Assembly which was dominated by the Northern Peoples’ Congress; a political party which the central Nigerian leaders felt had the potential to curb the Middle Belt's

\textsuperscript{178} Abba, "The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)…", op. cit., pp. 293-297
political voice and find a means of ventilating their agitations. The UMBC in due time, became the third largest opposition party in the Northern Nigeria Assembly.\(^{179}\) A. Abba maintains that UMBC was one of the significant opposition parties in the Northern Region which also suffered in the hands of the NPC.

Some of the early leaders of the UMBC were Pastor David Lot, who became its founding father; Pastor Dusu Ladan, Vice President and Pastor Dagaya Kagoro, Treasurer. Other officials include Musa S. I. M. Bukar, Assistant Treasurer; Moses Rwang Pam, Secretary General; Joseph Kanwai, Assistant Secretary General; Jonah Asadugu Numan, Divisional Field Secretary; Dankawam Billiri, Spokesman and Musa Wang, Assistant Spokesman.\(^{180}\) Some prominent party members were: Joseph S. Tarka, Patrick Dokotri, Edward Kundu Swem, Ahmadu Angara, Isaac Shaahu, Solomon Lar, D. Bulus Biliyong, D. D. Dimka, V. T. Shisha, M. D. Iyorka, Ugba Uyeh and Vincent Igbarumun Orjime. The party adopted a decentralised nomination system whereby local ethnic unions or special committees in a given area nominated and presented candidates for local


\(^{180}\) Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...”, op. cit., p. 296
elections, this was partly used to validate the ethnic diversity of the party.\textsuperscript{181}

In later years of the UMBC, J. S. Tarka emerged as the most prominent figure. One can argue that Tarka’s emergence to prominence was associated with his political exposure during his years in the NEPU as a member. Meanwhile, it is important to note that Tanko Yakasai, one time National Publicity Secretary of the NEPU, posits that the formation of the UMBC was influenced by the NEPU, thus: …\textit{in 1952 we went round the North and were well received by the people in the Middle Belt, but they would not join the party. We decided that card-carrying members of the NEPU from the Middle Belt should withdraw openly from the Party and go and organise various Middle Belt organisations, in order to intensify the struggle and the involvement of the people in the overall effort to fight the colonialists. It was the NEPU meeting in Bida in 1952, that decided to ask Mallam Bello Ijumu then Secretary General of the party and people like Jonah Asadugu, Mallam Yerima Balla, who is here, late Senator Abagu from Benue, the late Isaac Akpu, Chief J. S. Tarka and many others were asked to go and organise the Middle Belt...}"

\textsuperscript{181}“https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=United_Middle_Belt_Congress&oldid=670418286
Accessed on 26-10-2017
Peoples’ Party, which they eventually did. Mallam Bello Ijumu was the National Organiser… ¹⁸²

**The Creation of Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP)**

R. L. Sklar gives a painstaking analysis on how and why ITP emerged as a political party. At the beginning of party politics in Northern Nigeria, the indigenous people of Ilorin and Kabba were removed from the Middle Belt, for the simple reason that they wanted to be amalgamated with their Yoruba brothers of the Western Region. Ilorin, being the last Emirate to be subjugated by the then Sokoto Caliphate, was directly administered by a Fulani Emir via his appointment as District Head. On the other hand, the south-easterly districts are largely occupied by the Igbolo, Igbomina and Ekiti Yorubas who are mostly from the Christian faith. ¹⁸³

Perhaps, the variance between Fulani and Yoruba idea of chieftaincy has been the fundamental element for political unrest in Ilorin. The Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC) and the Action Group (AG) were accredited in part to the Fulani institution of complete empire and the Yoruba tradition of incomplete kingdom. Emirs ruled in the North with restrictions and through democratised councils under the administration


of government, while Obas merely control in the West. Whichever it is, it appeared that the autocratic dispositions of the Fulani Emir of Ilorin had been ostracised by the Yoruba chiefs and the non-metropolitan districts.\footnote{184}{Sklar, \textit{op. cit}, pp. 350-352}

R. L. Sklar further maintains that in the Metropolitan districts, the movement for restructuring of the Native Authority, being an administration under the Fulani domination, was initiated by educated elements whose social status was parallel to that of the founders of Northern Peoples’ Congress. At first, their denunciation of the Native Administration made it uneasy to the traditional rulers and chiefs of Ilorin, both Fulani and Yoruba.\footnote{185}{Ibid} The educated elite of Ilorin joined hands together with the commoners, just as the case of Mallam Aminu Kano joining hands with the common people at the grassroots to fight against the Fulani aristocracy and the Native Authority in Kano under the auspices of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) in the same period (1950s). The struggle between the \textit{Talakawa} (commoners) and those in power is in consonance with the Marxist ideology. According to Marxism, there are two Classes of people: The bourgeoisie controls the capital and means of production, and the proletariat provides
the labour. Marx and Engels maintain that there has been a tussle between these two classes; and this struggle is known as *Class Struggle*. Therefore, it can be concluded that the situation of Ilorin which gave birth to the formation of Ilorin Talaka Parapo is similar to that of Kano which gave birth to the founding of the Northern Elements Progressive Union. Once people are suppressed or oppressed, they would be compelled to find a way out with a view to salvaging themselves. That has been the cases of the French Revolution, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, the Iranian Revolution and a host of others that took a different outlook and nature. On the other hand, the formation of the Labour Party (LP) to protect the interest of the working class in the United Kingdom parliamentary system of government could be seen to share some similarities with Ilorin Talaka Parapo, NEPU and other political parties formed to champion the course of the common man.

Paradoxically, the traditional chiefs of metropolitan Ilorin were buttressed by potentially radical Yoruba businessmen, successful traders, typically non-literate merchants, contractors and weavers. These classes of people were antagonistic to the administrative reformers, including men of Yoruba ethnic group, simply for the fact that the reform movement was branded with the “Fulani dominated” administrative elite.

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186. [https://simple.m.wikipedia.org](https://simple.m.wikipedia.org) Accessed on 12-11-2017
These people therefore, organised first mass political party in Ilorin, to be called as Ilorin Talaka Parapo (Ilorin Commoners Party), in 1954. Sklar further maintains that this party was more closely acknowledged with commercial interest.\textsuperscript{187} Somewhat, one can argue that the party was borne out of social discontent in Ilorin.

The pioneer Ilorin Talaka Parapo party leaders were Alhaji Suleman Maito, cattle dealer, president; Jimoh Adelabu, trader and contractor, first vice president; Saliman Baruba, barber and trader; Yakubu Alowo, cattle dealer; Bodinrim Tinko, machine sewer; Salalu Gedele, agent in the motor park; Mallam Adebinpe, cloth seller; Dogo Agbogi, cloth seller; Jima Goroso, Qur’anic Teacher, party manager; Alhaji Aremu Alayaba, trader. Nonetheless, ITP did not clearly state its objectives, but it was clear that they opposed the power that be and aimed at restoring the former power and authority of the Emir and Chiefs. They also targeted at reducing taxation, as noted earlier that ITP aimed at economic or commercial interest of Ilorin.\textsuperscript{188} And considering the economic background of the party leaders, it is lucid that they came together to protect a common interest.

\textsuperscript{187} Sklar, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 351

\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 351-352
The Founding of Borno Youth Movement (BYM)

Like the above two political parties, Borno Youth Movement was also a political party that was formed by the locals of Borno to suit their condition. The Borno Youth Movement (BYM) was formed in the year 1954, by a group of young men in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno Province as a result of their exposure in Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU). The Borno Youth Movement was formed as a counterpart party to the NEPU, with Kanuri and other ethnic groups in Borno Province. The NEPU, though a popular political party in Borno, but it was largely viewed as a political party of the Hausas; hence the need to have a different political party on particularistic basis.\(^{189}\)

Like NPC, NEPU, UMBC and other political parties, A. Abba clearly points out that Borno Youth Movement also has its evolution. The party began as an organisation of Kanuri youth in 1949, as Borno Youth Improvement Association (BYIA) to struggle against the corruption and despotism of Borno Native Authority spearheaded by Ibrahim Imam. In 1951, Ibrahim Imam contested for Northern Region House of Assembly and won the election. The departure of Ibrahim Imam to Kaduna, weakened the fortunes of the BYIA, and the association became inactive

\(^{189}\) [https://wikipedia.org/wiki/borno_youth_movement#mw_head](https://wikipedia.org/wiki/borno_youth_movement#mw_head), Accessed on 30-12-2017. Also see Sklar, *op. cit.*, for more details
and gradually died out.\textsuperscript{190} However, when the party resuscitated in 1954 with little change in nomenclature, the pioneer members quickly sought the support and membership of Ibrahim Imam and Bukar Dipcharima; the latter declined, but Imam accepted the office of patron, as he appeared to have been among the initiators of the party right from the beginning of its formation as shown in the party records.\textsuperscript{191} The entry of Ibrahim Imam to the party led to an improvement in the fortunes of the party in Borno. Ibrahim Imam had earlier resigned his position as secretary-general of NPC and had joined NEPU. He merged NEPU activities in Borno with that of the Borno Youth Movement. One can argue that the formation of BYM like NEPU, ITP, and UMBC was as a result of social discontent. The founders of the party include Alhaji Sherif, trader, later President of BYM; Mallam Sanda na Alhaji Hamza, trader; Mallam Abba Kano Mattaden, Tripolitanian Arab-Hausa, Native Authority Treasury Clerk; Mallam Muhammad Bin Waff fi, (Shuwa Arab-Hausa), Native Authority Treasury Clerk; Muka Marwa, contractor; Mallam Kolo Kamkamba, trader; Mallam Lawan Goni, trader; Mallam Mai Kyari, trader; and

\textsuperscript{190} Abba, "The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)…", \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 291-298

\textsuperscript{191} Sklar, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 340
Mallam Ibrahim Imam, Supervisor of Native Authority, Works. The party was formally proclaimed on 14th July, 1954. ¹⁹²

**Some Pioneer Northern Prominent Politicians of the 1950s**

People are makers of history. The research has been discussing about parties and party politics, it is equally important therefore, to briefly give the backgrounds of some major actors in some political parties and party politics with a view to justify *who get what, when and how*, in the course of struggle for power, particularly in Northern Nigeria. To avoid ambiguity, some pioneer Northern prominent politicians to be discussed under this heading were those who emerged in the 1950s. Mallam Sa’ad Zungur has already been recognised as the father of nationalism and politics in Northern Nigerian who first came to prominence since the 1940s. The period 1951 – 1960 witnessed the emergence of more prominent politicians particularly Mallam Aminu Kano, Ahmadu Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Mahmoud Ribadu, Kashim Ibrahim, J. S. Tarka, Alhaji Aliyu Makama Bida, Alhaji Isa Kaita, Ibrahim Imam, Bukar Dipcharima, Shehu Shagari, Maitama Sule and so on. The study intends to tersely look at the backgrounds of these politicians as follows.

¹⁹² *Ibid*
**Mallam Aminu Kano**

Mallam Aminu Kano was born in 1920 to the family of an Islamic scholar by name Mallam Yusufu, a Fulani (Genawa Clan), in Kano. Apart from Qur’anic knowledge, Aminu Kano attended Shehuci Primary School, Kano Middle School, Katsina College and University of London. He was a teacher by profession and a radical politician. He served as President of the NEPU in the 1950s, and a Representative in the Federal House of Representatives where he served as the Deputy Chief Whip. In 1983, Mallam Aminu Kano was Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) Flag-bearer at presidential election. Aminu Kano began his partisan political activities in October, 1950 after he resigned from his teaching career.  

**Sir Ahmadu Bello KBE (Sardauna of Sokoto)**

Sir Ahmadu Bello (KBE), a descendant of Usman Dan Fodio, was born on June 12, 1910. He attended Sokoto Provincial School, and Katsina College and also studied local government in Yorkshire, United Kingdom. He was a teacher; chief secretary of the Native Authority and later nominated as Member, Northern House of Assembly (before the emergence of elected Membership under political parties). He was a Nigerian politician who was the first and only premier of the Northern

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193 Feinstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-18  
194 Bello, *My Life, op. cit.*, pp. 10-129
Nigeria region. He also held the title of Sardauna of Sokoto. Ahmadu Bello and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa were major figures in Northern Nigeria pre-independence politics and both men played major roles in negotiations about the region's place in an independent Nigeria. As leader of the Northern People's Congress (NPC), he was a dominant personality in Nigerian politics throughout the early Nigerian Federation and the First Nigerian Republic.  

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**Abubakar Tafawa Balewa KBE**  

Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was born in December, 1912 in Bauchi, Northern Nigeria Protectorate. He was the son of Yakubu Dan Zala, who was the Lere District Head, Bauchi Division. Balewa started his Qur’anic education in Bauchi and later studied in Barewa College, Zaria and also studied in University of London’s Institute of Education. He was a teacher and later a partisan politician, who, along with Ahmadu Bello formed the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC). Balewa was Minister of Works, and later Minister of Transport. He was appointed Chief Minister, forming alliance with the NCNC after the 1959 Federal election.  

The Cabinet of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was the government of Nigeria, headed by Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, in the years  

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leading up to and following independence. There were three cabinets. The first was established in 1957 when Balewa was appointed Minister by the British Governor-General. The second was formed after the Federal elections of December 1959, just before independence, in a coalition government. The third was formed after the disputed general elections of December 1964, and was dissolved after the military coup of 15th January 1966.  

**Mahmoud Ribadu**

Muhammad (Mahmoud) Ribadu was born in 1909 in the village of Ribadu, old Adamawa Province, the son of Ardo Hamza, the district head of Balala and AddaWuro, the daughter of Alkali HammaJoda from Yola. He started studies under the tutelage of Liman Yahaya, an Islamic scholar. He then attended Yola Middle School from 1920 to 1926. While in Yola, he received private tutorship under a colonial officer. Afterwards, he was a teacher at his alma mater, Yola Middle School. He was made a treasurer at the Yola Native Authority in 1931. On the death of his father in October 1936, Ribadu became the district head of Balala. In 1946, he proceeded abroad on a scholarship from the British Council to study local government. Like a few of his colleagues who partook in

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the scholarship, after his return, he became interested in the nation's political process and was elected in 1951. In 1948, he served in the Hugh Foot committee of the Nigerianisation of senior posts in the civil service, a year later, he was a member of the Nigerian Board of Agriculture and he also served in the Northern Regional Development Loans Board. In 1950, he was a delegate to the Constitutional Review Conference in Ibadan.

In 1952, he was made Minister for Natural Resources as part of an indigenous Council of Ministers. In 1954, he was elected the second Vice-President of NPC and became literally, the third Northern Nigerian leader behind Ahmadu Bello, NPC's president and Tafawa Balewa, NPC's First Vice President. He was federal Minister of Land, Mines and Power in 1954, and in 1959, he was federal Minister of Land and Lagos Affairs. In 1960, he was appointed the Nigerian Minister of Defence.197

**Kashim Ibrahim**

Sir Shettima Kashim Ibrahim (10th June 1910 – 25th July 1990) was a Kanuri politician who was head of the Native Administration in Borno and was a minister for Social Services in the 1950s. He held the traditional title of Waziri of the Borno Sheikhdom after two previous

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Waziris had been forced to resign as a result of scandals in the Borno local administration. He was a close associate of Sir Ahmadu Bello.

Ibrahim was born in Gargar Ward, Yerwa to the family of Ibrahim Lakanmi. He started his education learning Arabic and Qur’an before attending Borno Provincial School in 1922. In 1925, he was admitted into the Katsina Training College and finished his studies with a teacher's certificate in 1929. He started working as a teacher in 1929 at the Borno Middle School and by 1933 he had become a Provincial Visiting Teacher. He was later promoted to a Senior Visiting Teacher and education officer for the province of Borno. He was conferred with the title of Shettima of Borno in 1935 and for a while he was known as Shettima Kashim. He joined politics in 1951, when he was elected into the Northern Regional Assembly; he was nominated from the North as a cabinet nominee. Thereafter, he was appointed the Federal Minister for Social Services and later that of Education.198

*Alhaji Aliyu Makama Bida*

Alhaji Aliyu Makama Bida, (MHA) was born in 1905 in Bida, present-day Niger State. His father was a highly respected Qur’anic scholar in the

Court of the Nobility. He was the first Northern Minister of Education and Social Welfare, later Minister of Finance and Treasurer of the NPC.

As with most children from the Northern region, Aliyu started his early education in Qur’anic School in Bida before registering in the provisional Elementary school of Bida town. But unlike most children of that time, he did not terminate his education at that level. He went on to the popular Katsina College, where he met majority of the Co-Northerners. They were to take charge and responsibility in shaping the political, economic and social fortunes of the North and lead the region to self-government. After completing his secondary education from Katsina College in 1927, Aliyu started enjoying the fruits of education the same year, when he was employed to teach in Niger Middle School. In 1942 he was employed by the Bida Native Authority (NA) as a Councillor in charge of District Administration of education. 199

Alhaji Isa Kaita

Isa Kaita C.O.N., a Nigerian Politician was born in January 1912 at Katsina, Nigeria. Isa Kaita was born to the family of the Waziri of Katsina, Waziri Haruna. He attended Katsina Primary School (later named Barewa College) and later went to the Katsina Training College, a

notable college attended by many politicians from the North such as Ahmadu Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Aliyu Bida. After completing his studies in 1922, he started teaching at the Katsina Middle School. He taught at the school for nineteen years before quitting to become a radio announcer in 1941. In 1948, he travelled to the United Kingdom to earn a diploma in public administration at Exeter University, London, UK. He held the traditional title of Madawaki of Katsina and later, the Waziri of Katsina. Prior to joining politics, he was a distinguished broadcaster at BBC. In the 1950s and 1960s, he was a regional Minister for Works and Education in the Northern Region of Nigeria.

His political career started when he won a seat to the Northern Region House of Assembly. Prior to the election, he was a founding member and prominent campaigner for his party (NPC); he was also the party's financial secretary. In 1954, he replaced Ahmadu Bello as the regional minister for Works while also serving as the party's financial secretary. He was also an important adviser to Ahmadu Bello.200

Zanna Bukar Sulloma Dipcharima

Zanna Bukar was born in 1917 to the family of Lawan Ali Dipcharima. He attended the Elementary School, Dikwa and the Middle School, Maiduguri. He later proceeded to Katsina Higher Training College. He joined the teaching profession where he served in the period 1938-1946. His first political party was the NCNC. He, however, did not last long in the NCNC as he abandoned partisan politics and joined John Holt, where he served as a manager for some time. In 1954, Bukar left John Holt and moved to partisan politics where he joined the NPC.

Bukar was popular Bornu politician who served in the House of Representative from 1954-1966 and was later the leading member in the federal cabinet meetings following the death of the Prime Minister in January, 1966. He later led the NPC government in Lagos to pledge support to the military administration of Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi. Dipcharima was made the district head of Yerwa in 1956 and conferred with the title of Zanna. In 1958, he was appointed as the Minister of Commerce and Industry and later in 1964 he was relocated to the ministry of Transport.²⁰¹

Ibrahim Imam (1916 – April 1980), was a Kanuri man from the Yerwa district of Borno. He was born into an aristocratic family and his half-brother was the district head of Yerwa. He attended Katsina College and after completing his studies joined the Borno Native Administration as an engineering assistant and later became the supervisor of works in 1950. Ibrahim was the secretary of the Northern People's Congress and later became a patron of the Borno Youth Movement. He was elected into the Northern House of Assembly in 1961. Prior to his election in 1961, he had represented his district of Yerwa in 1951 after supporting a strike of Native Administration workers.

While working as an engineering assistant for the Borno Native Authority, he entered the political arena as the founder of the Borno Youth Improvement Association (BYIA) in 1949. In 1951, he contested and won a seat to the Northern House of Assembly defeating Waziri Muhammad. A year later at the inception of the Northern People's Congress, which later became the dominant party in the region, he was nominated as the party's secretary-general; he joined a large number of his colleagues from the regional house who enlisted on the political platform of the new NPC. As the general secretary of NPC, he became one of the party's prominent campaigners and was involved in political
tours, traveling for thousands of miles while providing support for the extension of the party through the establishment of branches in various towns and cities in the region.  

**Shehu Shagari**

Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari (1925-2018) served as the first and only President of Nigeria's Second Republic (1979–1983). Shagari also served seven times in a ministerial or cabinet post as a federal minister and federal commissioner from 1958-1975. He worked as a teacher for a brief period before joining politics in 1951 and in 1954 was elected to the Federal House of Representatives. Shehu Usman Shagari came into politics in 1951, when he became the secretary of the Northern People’s Congress in Sokoto, Nigeria; a position he held until 1956. In 1958, Shagari was appointed as parliamentary secretary (he left the post in 1959) to the Nigerian Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and that year he also served as the Federal Minister for Commerce and Industries.

In 1978, Shehu Shagari was a founding member of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). In 1979 Shagari was chosen by the party as the presidential candidate for general election that year, which he won.

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becoming the president and head of state of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This would be broadly discussed in chapter seven of the thesis. Shagari ran for a second four-year term in 1983 and won the general election, however, on 31st December 1983, he was overthrown by the military where major general Muhammadu Buhari was made the Head of State.  

**Yusuf Maitama Sule**

Yusuf Maitama Sule (1st October 1929 – 3rd July 2017) was a Nigerian politician, acclaimed orator, diplomat, elder-statesman and the Dan Masanin Kano. In 1955-1956 he was the chief whip of the Federal House of Representatives. In 1976, he became the Federal Commissioner of public complaints, a position that made him the nation's pioneer ombudsman. In early 1979, he was a presidential aspirant of the National Party of Nigeria but lost to Usman Shehu Shagari. He was appointed Nigeria's representative to the United Nations after the coming of civilian rule in October, 1979. After the re-election of President Shagari in 1983, Maitama Sule was made the Minister for National Guidance, a portfolio designed to assist the president in tackling corruption.

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Joseph Sarwuam Tarka

Joseph Sarwuam Tarka was born on 10\textsuperscript{th} July 1932 in Igbor, present-day Benue State to the family of Tarka Nanchi and Ikpa Anyam. His father was a village teacher of Tiv origin who later became a headmaster and then chief in Mbakor, Gboko area. He attended Native Authority Primary School, Gboko and Katsina Ala Middle School. After completing his education, he became a teacher at Katsina-Ala Middle School before going on to further studies at Bauchi Rural Science School. He was a member of the Tiv Native Authority Staff Union and of the Northern Teachers Association.

Senator Joseph Sarwuan Tarka (1932–1980) was a Nigerian politician from present-day Benue State and a former minister for Transport and then Communications under General Yakubu Gowon Military regime. He was one of the founding members of the United Middle Belt Congress, a political organisation dedicated to protecting and advocating for the Middle Belt people.

In 1954, on a ticket that was allied with the Middle Belt People's Party, Tarka was elected to represent the Jemgba constituency in the Federal House of Representatives. In 1957, the Middle Belt party decided to merge with the David Lot led Middle Zone League to form the United
Middle Belt Congress. Tarka then emerged as president of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the party soon formed an alliance with the Action Group during the 1959 Federal elections. In Tarka's UMBC, a predominantly Christian party contested the pre-independence election of 1959 and the subsequent election of 1963 against the mainly Muslim Northern People's Congress. Both elections led to violence in the Middle Belt, which contributed to the Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu's inspired military take-over on January 15th, 1966. Tarka was re-elected in 1959.

In the lead-up to restoration of democracy with the Nigerian Second Republic, Tarka aligned with northern politicians to form the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), on which platform he unsuccessfully competed in the presidential party primaries (nomination) as would be discussed in chapter seven of the thesis. He was elected Senator for Benue East in 1979, a position he held when he died on 30th March, 1980.205

The First Elections in Northern Nigeria prior to Independence

B. J. Dudley206 and M. Y. Mangvwat demonstrate that between 1951 and 1959, there were four general elections. The 1951 and 1956 were elections of representatives to the Northern House of Assembly in

206 Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria..., op. cit., p. 104
Kaduna, while the 1954 and 1959 elections were for representatives to the Federal House of Representatives in Lagos.\textsuperscript{207} Since the research is concerned rigorously with Northern Nigeria, the following analysis will therefore be restricted to the NEPU, NPC, UMBC and other political parties that were confined to Northern Nigeria. However, reference to NCNC and AG is necessary as the parties participated in the 1951, 1954, 1956 and 1959 elections in alliance with the NEPU, the UMBC etcetera.

The year 1951 is a watershed in the history of Nigerian politics, particularly the North. This year saw the emergence of many politicians and party politics; and both inter and intra political struggles and intrigues in Northern Nigeria. In fact, one can argue that the period 1951-1959, being the last decade of the colonial rule in Nigeria is the period dominated by party politics before the Nigerian independence, where the ruling class fought to entrench themselves as political leaders. Vast majority of the above mentioned people whose biographies were concisely illustrated participated in the first elections (1951, 1954, 1956 and 1959 elections) in the Northern region. As C.B.N. Ogbogbo demonstrates, the emergence of McPherson’s constitution in 1951 marked the inception of general elections all over the country and the establishment of a unicameral legislature which came to be known as House of Representatives. It had 148 persons; 136 of them were elected.

\textsuperscript{207} Mangvwat, op. cit., p. 458
by and accountable to the regional legislatures. Northern House of Assembly had the highest number of seats, as it had 68 seats, while the Eastern and Western Houses were allotted 34 seats. To some extent, even the members of the executive council were accountable to the regions. The members were made up of 18 persons, 4 from each region (Northern, Eastern and Western) while the remaining 6 members served as officials in the council. The 4 members coming from each region were selected from amongst the House of Representatives of their respective regional legislature.²⁰⁸

**Inter and Intra Party Politics and the Nature of Party Alliances**

Today’s intrigues in inter and intra party politics have a long standing history, as the different political parties affiliate or form alliance with one another at a point in time. Pioneer politicians in Nigeria like Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikwe and Sa’ad Zungur were also engaged in application of dexterity in the course of party politics and struggle for power in both inter and intra party affairs. The politics of the 1950s and beyond have not been different, as noted earlier; parties have the responsibilities of selling candidates to the voters and also compete

against each other. Individual candidates also struggled against each other to be flag-bearers of a particular political party during nomination.

To begin with party primary election or nomination in the Northern politics of the 1951 election, the first political party in Northern Nigeria (NEPU)\(^{209}\) and the NCNC went into alliance. These two political parties saw the emergence of Mallam Aminu Kano and many others as the candidates for Northern House of Assembly from Kano Province. A. Abba clearly illustrates how parties went into alliances or accords with one another to defeat other political parties or be defeated by the later.\(^{210}\)

A. D. Yahaya argues that Mallam Aminu Kano being a NEPU candidate had the belief in his party’s Declaration Principles that “the shocking state of social order as at present existing in the Northern Nigeria is due to nothing but the Family Compact Rule of the so-called Native Administration in the present autocratic form”.\(^{211}\) NEPU had the conviction that “Only by the emancipation of the Talakawa... by reform of the present autocratic institutions into Democratic Institutions and placing their democratic control in the hands of the Talakawa for whom alone they exist”.\(^{212}\) It should be noted that during the 1951 elections NEPU was the only political party in Northern Nigeria (though there

\(^{209}\) Feinstein, op. cit., p. 131
\(^{210}\) Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...”, op. cit., pp. 204-223
\(^{211}\) Yahaya, op. cit., pp. 7-8
\(^{212}\) Ibid, p. 8
were political and tribal associations), but because political parties were not formally registered by this period, the Native Authority also presented candidates along with other political parties from the Southern parts of the country that have some members in Northern Nigeria.

It is equally important to note the fact that there was no fixed allocation of seats in the Northern House of Assembly to “constituencies” or areas within the Provinces by 1951.\textsuperscript{213} In view of this therefore, the Native Authority who were largely Members of the House of Chiefs influenced the procedure of the 1951 elections as they constituted the majority in the Select Committee of the House of Assembly and the House of Chiefs which was formed by the Richards’ Constitution as a Regional Body of Northern Nigeria.\textsuperscript{214} The members of the Select Committee who were to recommend the electoral procedure were as follows:

1. Mr. L. H. Goble, Secretary, Northern Provinces, Chairman
2. Mr. C. V. Williams, Resident, Zaria Province, Member
3. Mr. L. Brett, Acting Senior Crown Council, Member
4. Emir of Bauchi, Member
5. Makaman Bida, Member
6. Emir of Gwandu, Member

\textsuperscript{213} Ibid, p.11
\textsuperscript{214} Anifowose & Enemuo, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 240-241
7. Shettima Kashim, Member
8. Chiroman Kano, Member
9. Emir of Ilorin, Member
10. Chief of Tiv, Member
11. Emir of Katsina, Member.  

The N.A. made sure that popular participation in the elections of the 1951 ended at the first stage- after which the N.A. would influence how the Returning Officers would announce results of the general elections. However, A. Abba argues that in spite of all the stumbling block placed on its path, the NEPU and its alliance partner, the NCNC, made remarkable performance in the 1951 elections. Instances can be deduced from the results of the seats contested in the city of Kano and Waje (outside) areas, as NEPU won 19 out of the 26 seats contested, and the N.A. notables won only 7 seats. This landslide victory compelled the Colonial newspaper, the Nigerian Citizen, to pronounce that:

“One of the reasons given for the success of the N.E.P.U and N.C.N.C. in the City area was the superior strategy adopted by the two parties. Prior to the election, the two parties met and nominated the same number of candidates, as there were seats to

216 The Nigerian Citizen, (Newspaper) op. cit., p. 2
be contested. The N.A., on the other hand, nominated more candidates than seats thereby splitting the vote”.

Moreover, the first electoral victories recorded by the NEPU and its alliance partner, the NCNC were not only circumscribed to Kano alone, as election results of Sabon Gari, Zaria, also indicated the two allied parties (NEPU and NCNC) won 64 seats for Sabon Gari, Zaria. A. Abba also points out that in Kaduna they won 144 seats out of 194 seats contested at the primary phase of the polls. In Maiduguri Township, the allied parties also won 25 seats at Hausari, Zango, Bulabulin and Fezzan wards. The 1951 general elections in Northern Nigeria, according to Ahmadu Bello had no delineated constituencies. Candidates were selected or elected from various Divisions to represent people in the Parliament. One of the distinctions between the 1951 election and further elections of the 1950s in Northern Nigeria is therefore; the issue of constituency; where the former had no specific constituencies the latter have defined constituencies. The Northern Nigeria currently has three zones namely: Northeast, Northwest and North Central and this research has cited illustrations of the 1951 in both Northeast and Northwest. In the present-day North Central, some of those

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217. Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...”, op. cit., pp. 204-223
218. The Nigerian Citizen, op. cit., 25-10-1951
219. West African Pilot, (Newspaper) 21-09-1951
220. Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...”, op. cit., pp. 251-226
elected were Pagher Mue, Gbile Gundu, Wuam Gambe, Akiga Sai and a few others from the Tiv land. G. N. Hembe argues that the election of these people was not based on party line, but tribal inclination of the Tiv Progressive Union (TPU). However, considering the fact that Mallam Aminu Kano was in contact with members of the Middle Zone League (MZL) party prior to the 1951 elections, one can infer that NEPU had certain influence in the emergence of the elected members from the North Central during the 1951 General elections- thereby justifying the role of party politics. The political relationship between Mallam Aminu and the people of the North Central has been buttressed by G.N. Hembe and A. Abba.

It is appropriate to mention that all the alliances discussed above were basically “electoral” alliances, which is distinct from “parliamentary” alliances. Political parties may form accord at both primary and popular elections, but differ and oppose each other in the parliament. Instances can be demonstrated in the fact that between 1951 and 1955, the Middle Belt Zone League was in alliance with the NPC in the Northern Regional Assembly, but the latter contested against the former in the 1954 Federal Elections. We shall also see how NPC,

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221 Hembe, op. cit., pp. 108-204
222 Ibid, p. 111
224 Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria..., op. cit., p. 104
NEPU and NCNC formed alliance after the 1959 Federal Elections to form government. The research contends that the Regional election of 1951 is significant in the history of Northern Nigeria, not only because it was the first, but also because it decided which of the political parties would form the first Northern Regional Assembly after the introduction of elective principle in Northern Nigeria. See appendix 1 for list of Members of Northern Regional House of Assembly elected in 1951.

The 1954 Federal Elections in Nigeria

The 1954 Federal elections was a watershed in the political history of Northern Nigeria. According to the Colonial Office Report, on 21st May, 1953, in the House of Commons, the Secretary of State gave a number of reasons for the need to amend the constitution. Thus: “The Nigerian Constitution would have to be redrawn to provide for greater Regional autonomy and for the removal of powers of intervention by the Centre in matters which could, without detriment to other regions, be placed entirely without regional competence”.225 One can argue that the emergence of the Lyttleton’s Constitution of 1954 to succeed the Macpherson’s Constitution of 1951 was not unconnected with the series of crises it faced; as there was riot in Kano; there was crisis in the House of Representatives on the issue of Self-determination, based on the

Motion moved by Anthony Enaharo, which sought for Nigerian independence; and the crisis within the NCNC in the Eastern Region and so on and so forth. These, among other problems culminated in the 1954 Lyttleton’s Constitution.²²⁶

The 1954 Constitution made some provisions of relatively specific constituencies during the elections all over the country as G. Odenigwe indicates,²²⁷ even though there was no constituted Electoral Body to supervise the elections of the 1954. By this period, most, if not all the political parties this research discussed in the last chapter have come to existence (NPC, UMBC, ITP, BYM etcetera) in Northern Nigeria. A number of scholars pointed out that the 1954 elections as the Lyttleton’s Constitution lay in the fact that under it, Nigeria emerged as a federation with three self-governing Regions independent of the Centre. All legislative and executive powers were therefore, transferred to the Regions, with some exclusively reserved and others at the Centre. Lagos became a Federal Territory and no more part of the Western Region. Each of the Regions had a Premier, a cabinet and a legislature.²²⁸ The Northern Legislature was bicameral, apart from the House of Assembly

²²⁶ Anifowose & Enemuo (eds), *op. cit.*, p.242
²²⁷ Odenigwe, *op. cit.*, p. 269
in Kaduna; there was an Upper House of Chiefs. As Odenigwe points out, the bicameral legislature of the Northern House of Assembly was already formed in 1951; therefore, the 1954 Constitution only maintained status quo. This thesis argues that the nature of legislature bears a historical background of the Sokoto Caliphate, which the British adopted the latter’s administrative structure through the application of the Indirect Rule after the conquest of the Caliphate.

The North, which has the highest number of population, got more elected officials in the House of Representatives in Lagos. There was to be a dissection of residual powers, some to be conferred to the new Federal authority. Another important item provided for, was election to the Federal Legislature to be divided from election to the Regional Assemblies. No Member could maintain a seat in both Regional and Federal Legislatures at the same time. Nevertheless, a Member of one legislature could stand for election to the other. This research holds the view that, the Regional Assembly transformed to be the present-day State Houses of Assembly after the creation of States in Northern Nigeria, while the House of Representatives metamorphosed to the Bicameral Legislature after Nigeria switched from Legislative to Presidential system.

230. Odenigwe, op. cit., p. 272
231. Nelson, op. cit., p.130
232. Odenigwe, op. cit., p. 269
of government in 1979. In sum, the NPC got 79 out of 184 seats and other political parties got 13 seats at the House of Representatives totalling 92 seats from the Northern Region.  

The 1956 Northern Nigeria Regional Elections

R. Sklar points out that the year 1956 saw the emergence of Borno Youth Movement (BYM) as a dominant political party in the Yerwa-Maiduguri urban area. By November, 1956, two candidates were returned under this platform.  

J. O. Ojiako gives the account that the 1956 Regional Elections took place in November, where 131 seats were contested. NPC being the party in power won 100 seats; while NEPU secured only 5 seats in the Regional Legislature. The United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) won 12 seats. Action Group (AG), a Western predominant political party, won 2 seats, just like the Borno Youth Movement. Conversely, B. J. Dudley demonstrates that the Ilorin Talaka Parapo (Ilorin Commoners Party) defeated the NPC candidates in both Igbira North and South constituencies during the 1956 Regional Elections. After the victory, both the Igbirra Tribal Union (ITU) men declared for the NPC; one of them (Mr George Ohikere) was therefore, rewarded with the appointment of a Minister in the Regional Government. Ohikere later decided to vie for

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233 Ojiako, op. cit., p. 21  
234 Sklar, op. cit., p. 340  
235 Ojiako, op. cit., p. 28
Member, House of Representatives in the 1959 Federal Elections, but he was defeated by the ITU candidate Muhammadu Kokori Abdul. Moreover, Muhammadu Kokori too declared for the Northern Peoples’ Congress after his victory in the 1959 Federal Elections. It is therefore, crystal clear that defection or decamping from one political party to another has a long standing political history in Northern party politics and democracy. \(^{236}\)

### The 1959 Federal Election in Nigeria

The 1959 Federal Election was the last election conducted prior to Nigeria’s self-determination and was conducted on 12-12-1959. This is significant in Nigeria’s political history, not only because it was the last election before the independence, but also because it decided which political party would form the first government after independence. For the first time voting was by secret ballot system; a process which continued to exist till date. However, all adults in Western and Eastern Regions were eligible to vote, except the North, which despite all the changes made in electoral process; only registered male adults were eligible voters. During the 1959 Federal Election, only 312 seats were contested, because 8 seats for Southern Cameroon were suspended pending the outcome of the plebiscite which was arranged to take place in

\(^{236}\) Dudley, *Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria*…, *op. cit.*, p.104
1961. 174 seats of the House of Representatives were in the Northern Nigeria during this election and voting was by secret ballot system all over the country for the first time.\textsuperscript{237} Prior to this election, NPC had resolved not to enter alliance with any “Southern based” political party like the NCNC and AG. However, in 1958, the NPC decided to reverse this plan and declared its readiness to collaborate at the parliamentary level with any political party or individuals interested in its ideology. Thus, after the 1959 elections, the NPC and the NCNC agreed to form a coalition government.\textsuperscript{238}

The aftermath of the 1959 Federal Elections saw the creation of the Senate due to amendment to the Constitution Orders in Council. About 56 members were appointed in addition to those members of House of Representatives who were members of the Council Ministers. The amendment also stipulated that Senators should not be less than 40 years of age;\textsuperscript{239} a practice which continued to exist through the Second Republic. In essence, there was no formal election or voting exercise in the constituencies for the establishment of the Senate body.

\textsuperscript{237} Ojiako, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 67
\textsuperscript{238} Dudley, \textit{Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria...}, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 103-109
\textsuperscript{239} \textit{Electoral Act 2010} (as Amended) Independent National Electoral Commission, Abuja, 2010, p.39
The Functions of Legislature

The functions of legislature are explicitly illustrated in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on Sections 80-89 and Sections 120-129. These functions revolve around (1) Law-Making (2) Representation (3) Oversight Functions. The functions remain the same from the onset of democratic settings up to the period of writing this thesis. A practice that remains unchangeable in parliaments virtually all over the world. A legislature is a deliberative assembly with the authority to make laws for a political entity such as a country or state. Legislatures form important parts of most governments in democracies; in the separation of powers model, they are often contrasted with the executive and judicial branches of government. Laws enacted by legislatures are known as legislations. Legislatures observe and steer governing actions and usually have exclusive authority to amend the budget or budgets involved in the process. The members of a legislature are called legislators. In a democracy, legislators are most commonly popularly elected.

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**Internal Organisation of the Legislature**

Each chamber of legislature consists of a number of legislators who use some form of parliamentary procedure to debate political issues and vote on propose legislation. There must be a certain number of legislators present to carry out these activities; this is called a quorum. In Nigeria, we have two chambers at the National Assembly- the Senate and the House of Representatives as well as State Houses of Assembly at State levels. While in the United States of America we have the Senate and Congress Men; United Kingdom has House of Lords and House of Commons at the Centre.

Some of the responsibilities of a legislature, such as giving first consideration to newly proposed legislation, are usually delegated to committees made up of small selections of the legislators. Committees on education, agriculture, security, appropriation, finance, public accounts, rules and business, ethics and privileges, petition and so on normally exist in the legislature.

The members of a legislature usually represent different political parties; the members from each party generally meet as a caucus to organise their internal affairs. The internal organisation of a legislature is also shaped by the informal norms that are shared by its members.
Powers of the Legislature

Legislatures vary widely in the amount of political power they wield, compared to other political players such as judiciaries and executives. In M. S. Fish and M. Kroenig, a Parliamentary Powers Index was constructed in an effort to enumerate the diverse degrees of power between national legislatures. The German Bundestag, the Italian Parliament, and the Mongolian State Great Khural are considered as the most powerful; while Myanmar's House of Representatives and Somalia's Transitional Federal Assembly (replaced by the Federal Parliament of Somalia) are noted for least dominance.

Various political systems follow the principle of legislative supremacy, which holds that the legislature is the supreme branch of government and cannot be bound by other institutions, such as the judicial branch or a written constitution. Such political system renders the legislature more powerful. While, in parliamentary and semi-presidential systems of government, the executive is accountable to the legislature, which may remove it with a vote of no confidence. This was the case of Nigeria between 1951 and 1966. South Africa is another illustration of parliamentary system of government. On the other hand, according to the separation of powers doctrine, the legislature in a presidential system is considered an independent and coequal branch of government along with
both the judiciary and the executive; as can be seen in the Second Republic of Nigerian government which would be discussed later. This system provides a level playing ground for checks and balances of power.

Membership of the Legislature

Legislatures are made up of individual members, who vote on propose laws or motions. A legislature usually contains a fixed number of legislators; because legislatures usually meet in a specific room filled with seats for the legislators, this is often described as the number of "seats" it contains. It is also called “chamber”. For example, a legislature that has 100 "seats", has 100 members.241

Ethnicity, Religion and Politics in Nigeria

M. A. Bello argues that ethnicity is one of the glitches of Nigerian politics. Or, rather, ethnic politics counts as one of the major helix of problems bedevilling the Nigerian polity ranging from the colonial era to post-independence period. Ethnicity is simply defined as individual or group behaviours based on ethnic group differentiation, usually in a competitive situation. Politics is seen as the quest for power, order and justice in the society. Unlike religion and politics both of which can be

changed, ethnic background remains static and permanent; thereby easier to create the “we” and “them” syndrome in any political setting or society. M. A. Bello further argues that religion as a political apparatus tends to re-enforce and not supplant ethnicity in Nigeria. Ethnicity is at the hub of politics in divided societies. The most essential strains in the world could be found, among others, in Nigeria, Israel, Algeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, India, and Yugoslavia. This shows that globally, ethnicity has beleaguered the human race. Studies have shown that from the political parties of the 1950s up to the late 1980s, a lot of the parties that operated emanated from ethnic or regional viewpoint in Nigeria. In other words, it was during this period in question that the kernel of ethnic politics was sown, incubated in the First Republic and from then continued to blow-out through the Second Republic.\(^\text{242}\)

**The Origin of Ethnic Politics in Nigeria**

One cannot adequately explain the origin of ethnic politics in Northern Nigeria without tracing its roots from the three regions brought about by the Richards’ Constitution of the 1946. Moreover, one also needs to look at it from broader perspective. The current fracas on ethnic rivalry and bigotry in the Nigerian politics could trace its starting point from the establishment of the *second generation political parties*. These were:

Northern People’s Congress (NPC), Action Group (AG), National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) and Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and so forth. Albeit, these political parties were considered and viewed as Nationalists’ parties whose resolve was to wrestle power from the colonialists. Conversely, as a result of inter and intra party rivalries, these parties were reduced to more or less ethnic pressure groups - a development which ultimately led to the fall of the First Republic in Nigeria. M. A. Bello also contends that the three major political parties (NPC, AG and NCNC) strangulated national unity and cohesion and consequently stimulated ethnicity as a result of unhealthy party politics.243

In essence, one can argue that the AG controlled the West and led by Obafemi Awolowo, NPC in the North was led by Ahmadu Bello and the NCNC controlled the East and led by Nnamdi Azikwe laid the foundation stone of ethnic politics through their regional leaders who employed ethnic connexions in either forming or spreading their parties. This has further brought about political unsteadiness as a result of the fashion that Nigeria is a heterogeneous society with a high population, whereby inter-ethnic jealousy has in some occasions heated the political

243. Ibid, pp. 380-284
entity. Scholars like George Padmore, would argue wrongly, in one’s view- that Azikwe was the only “Nationalist” politician who stood for “Pan Africanism”, unlike his counterparts in the Northern and South Western Regions, who were viewed as dedicated defenders of ethnicity and regionalism. At this point, Padmore fails to ponder on the statement of Azikwe which lucidly portrayed him as an “ethnic jingoist”. Thus, “It would appear that the God of Africa has created the Igbo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of ages ...”. 244 At this juncture, one can argue that Azikwe’s postulation clearly depicts him as an “ethnic flag-waver”. Femi Fani-Kayode further argues that the first statement from Charles Onyeama, (a prominent Igbo lawyer and Member of the Central Legislative Council, 1945) which was made in 1945, was the first covertly ethnic and contentious comment that was made and recorded in the politics of Southern Nigerian history. That is where and when ethnicity in the South truly started. Thus, “Igbo domination of Nigeria is only a matter of time”.245 After the above aphorism, and as an undeviating reaction to it, the Yoruba, under the headship of Chief Obafemi Awolowo founded the “Egbe Omo Oduduwa” (a Society of the Descendants of Oduduwa) in 1945 to promote and safeguard Yoruba interests, and after

244 Ifamose, op. cit., p. 62
that came the establishment of the Action Group in 1951, after re-launching the former in 1948 in Lagos.  

The succeeding avowal from Azikwe, which was made in 1949, as mentioned above (and which evidently shows that the great Azikwe of Africa had failed to recall that the NCNC was not an Igbo party from the onset, and that it had in fact been founded by an upper class and very well educated Yoruba man by the name of Sir Herbert Macaulay, one of the legendary ”Black Victorians” from the Lagos Colony, and who, at his death bed, was courteous enough to hand over the headship of the party to him even though he was Igbo) inveterate that ethnicity has come to stay in the South and since then the Igbo had an agenda to control others. This sentimentality and this ill-omened Igbo-centric attitude arguably cost Azikwe the Premiership of the Western Region in 1953 when the NCNC scarcely lost to the Action Group.  

T. Falola is of the view that regional/ethnically based politics was the principal factor for the political violence of the 1960s which culminated to a war following the declaration of the “Republic of Biafra”, by the Igbo led Colonel Odumegu Ojukwu. This inflicting political upheaval brought about by ethnic chauvinism led to the death of many Nigerians in  

247. Ibid., pp. 380-381
both the North and South and later turned to a Civil War between the Nigerian troops and that of the Biafra. This is to conclude that ethnicity, shrouded under party politics, led to the most horrible political crisis in Nigerian history from the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1914 to the period of writing this thesis.248

S. Ifamose argues that the incorporation of Regionalism in the 1946 constitution catapulted impetus for ethnic politics. That notwithstanding, the statements of Azikwe and Charles Onyeama including the formation of *Egbe Omo Ududuwa*, which was also aimed at upholding regional and ethnic politics in Nigeria were publicly glaring prior to the emergence of the Richards Constitution which came into being in 1946.249 Here, one can comfortably conclude that even before the balkanisation of the country into three Regions, ethnic politics superficially came into play. Thus, this Thesis observes that all the British constitutions from the Clifford’s Constitution (1922), the Richards’ Constitution (1946), Macpherson’s Constitution (1951) and Lyttleton’s Constitution (1954) should not be fully responsible for igniting ethnic politics, but can be questioned for fanning the ember of home loyalty and ethnic politics in Nigeria.

249. Ifamose, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-75
At this point, it is germane to quote Sir Ahmadu Bello, when he realised that the country was drifting to ethnic rivalry instead of political competition. Thus, “Tribalism is a destructive force and its worst and most evil form is the appeal to a group of regions to come together against another region. This surely should not happen in one country, a country which daily proclaims its desire for unity. It is both dangerous and short-sighted. It is unwise to found solution to a problem on the basis of hatred and inordinate ambition. Hatred and inordinate ambition are the driving forces behind whose have been appealing to some regions (not parties) to come together and line up in battle array against another”.

The Consequences of Ethnicity on Political Development

The implications of ethnicity and, or ethnic politics in Northern Nigeria and the country at large are not far-fetched. C. Umezinwa argues that the real issue connected with ethnic group stems its ugly head when it comes into interaction with other ethnic groups. The need to dominate or the fear of being subjugated by other ethnic groups, therefore, reigns extremely. This often leads to absolute affirmation of antagonisms resulting inevitably in loss of lives and property. Nigeria was overwhelmed in thirty months civil war as a result of ethnic tension that had developed for

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a reasonable period of time. The war was fought, won and lost but the ethnic uncertainties and animosity still remains undiminished. Just like how the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 was caused by ethnic conflict between the Hutus and the Tutsis. The encounter brought the country to a standstill. More than 800,000 people lost their lives in the entanglement. Similarly, in Kosovo, it was ethnic purging. The Serbian forces engaged themselves in the threatening project of annihilating the Kosovar Albanians. Other countries that have experienced ethnic or sub-ethnic conflicts are Somalia, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Ethiopia and Uganda. Ethnic influence is still having its toll in these countries.

The height of ethnic contention in Nigeria has made it difficult for it to produce the right leaders who live above boards, who display un tarnished and predictable character, and who are prepared to spend themselves for the development of the country. Ethnic attachment has not allowed such leaders to surface. At each election period, the stress has always been on where the contestants came from rather than on the right aspirants/candidates for the election. This explicates why the National Assembly is brimming with many people who are there neither for the interest of the nation nor for their own ethnic groups. They shot themselves up into the National Assembly by weeping ethnic sentimentalities. They parade themselves as best contenders to fight for the rights of their own ethnic groups. Their behavioural and attitudinal
M. A. O. Aluko and O. A. Ajani contend that another aspect of the problem with ethnic nationalism is that most Nigerians are not patriotic. Right from 1960, patriotism, as far as Nigeria is concerned, has been strangulated, as it was somewhat, exchanged by personalism, selfishness, sectionalism, prejudice and narrow-mindedness. Worst part of the issue is that, in an ordinary Nigerian, you scarcely could find allegiance to a cause, a synergetic construct of patriotism. The peak levels of nationalism are voiced at the sub national stages; the common interpretation for this is that Nigeria is not doing enough to draw the loyalty of its people. Without nationalism, there could hardly be unity in a plural country like Nigeria; and ultimately, underdevelopment shall come to play.252

Political Repression in Northern Nigeria

Opposition political parties like the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), Borno Youth Movement (BYM) and Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP) and so on suffered a variety of undue domination from the “major” political party (NPC) in the history of political relations of inter party politics in Northern Nigeria.


The NPC as a dominant political party in Northern Nigeria suppressed the NEPU as Abba points out. The Native Authority, traditional institutions, judiciary, police and the prison were transformed into the mechanisms of suppression and violence against the members of NEPU and other minority parties. A gangster group called Jam‘īyyar Mahaukata (the party of “crazy” people) was formed to fish out, mistreat and brutishly attack anybody linked with NEPU. This form of violence was stirred from 1951 and progressively advanced into full-blown and well-coordinated political violence across the Northern Nigeria. Mallam Aminu Kano, who was the President-General of NEPU from 1953-1956 was one of the recorded victims. On his part, (Mallam Aminu Kano) documented the following in one of his memorandum prepared for submission to Minority Commission in 1957:

“A week before the Kano convention {of NEPU in 1951}, when the aims and objectives of the convention was published in the papers, a Northern Government paper was known as Gaskiya, published in its issue of 28th March, 1951 an editorial condemning the NEPU all it stood for by exploiting the religious sentiment of the Muslim section of the Northern Region”.\(^{253}\) This research argues that the major problem of Nigerian democracy is not religion, region or ethnicity. Going by the above, it is crystal clear that unhealthy or highly polarised party politics is the main

\(^{253}\). Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...”, op. cit., pp. 293-298
problem, as both members of the NEPU and NPC shared the same religion, region and ethnicity, but that did not stop the latter from suppressing and oppressing the former. Similar issue is that of the Akintola and Awolowo’s bitter political relationship despite sharing the same region, religion and ethnicity as would be discussed in the next chapter.

The Struggle for Independence of Nigeria

The year 1951 remains a harbinger for the march to independence with which everything hinges on, considering the fact that even the British began to see it coming after the first elections in Northern Nigeria. G. O. Olusanya maintains that once the process of handing power to the colonial subjects begun; there could be no retreat.254 A number of factors culminated in Nigerian freedom and pundits believed that Nigeria did not get its independence on platter of gold. One of these exponents was Y. B. Usman, a renowned Nigerian historian. Usman maintains that different groups such as labour unions, ex-service men, political parties, student bodies and so on played a significant role for the attaining of independence in Nigeria. He further argues that the struggle for self-determination in Nigeria was not embarked upon by Urhobos, Yorubas, Efiks, Nupes, Fulanis, Idomas, Ogonis, Hausas, Kanuris, Angas or

Ogonis, but by Nigerians who were also Urhobos, Yorubas, Efiks, Nupes, and Fulanis and so on. With the British subjugation, the hitherto sovereign territorial rights of the citizenry and governments of the pre-colonial polities of Nigeria were rescinded. In this regard, there was no longer Dar-al-salam of Sokoto (Sokoto Caliphate), Borno Empire, and Yoruba land, Jukunland Urhoboland or Kasar Kebbi. These polities died away to exit and were supplanted by the British colonial territory of the Colony and Protectorates of Nigeria.²⁵⁵

Summary

This chapter discussed the formative years of democracy in Northern Nigeria; arguing that the Macpherson’s Constitution of 1951 is very significant in the history of party politics in Nigeria generally, particularly in the North; as for the first time general elections were held in every part of the country and Northern Nigeria witnessed its first franchise in elective principles. The year also witnessed the establishment of the House of Assembly, Kaduna, (with elected representatives).

²⁵⁵ Usman, Selected Writings on Politics & Society, Centre for Democratic Research & Training, Zaria, Kaduna, 2015, pp. 247-250
Elections into Regional and Federal legislatures were later separated by Lyttleton’s Constitution of 1954 and this differentiation continued to exist up to the end of the First Republic. The period 1951 to 1960 witnessed a Parliamentary System of government in Nigeria, having NPC, NEPU, UMBC, ITP, BYM and other tribal unions and political parties that wrested for power during the 1951, 1954, 1956 and 1959 elections. Nigerian party politics and democracy are bedevilled by ethnic, religious and regional differences lingering for decades. Mallam Aminu Kano, Ahmadu Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, J. S. Tarka, Bukar Dipcharima, Kashim Ibrahim, Ibrahim Imam, Mahmoud Ribadu, Aliyu Makama Bida, Isa Kaita, Maitama Sule and a few others are regarded as Northern Democratic heroes in the period 1951 and 1960; who also played a significant role for the attainment of independence in Nigeria.
CHAPTER SIX

POST INDEPENDENCE PARTY POLITICS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA 1960-1970

“I don’t believe that military intervention is always the right approach. What we need is a comprehensive strategy, one that advances democratisation…”

The chapter looks at the politics of Northern Nigeria after the independence. Democracy lasted for only six years, after which the military took over power in 1966 due to political upheaval brought about by highly polarised party politics. The period 1963-1966 saw the emergence of what is termed as the First Republic. The political actors of the 1950s in the North, particularly Mallam Aminu Kano, Sir Ahmad Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, J. S. Tarka, Ibrahim Imam, Bukar Dipcharima and a few others continued to hold sway through the 1960s before the truncation of democracy and party politics in 1966. The NPC, NEPU and UMBC were the most prominent political parties in the North. The 1960s witnessed the worst political crisis in Nigerian history, particularly in the Northern and Western Regions; later to Kano crisis of Araba (let’s separate); and what the Tivs called Atemityough (smashing the head) in the uprisings of the 1960 and 1964 in Tiv land, as a result of what the downtrodden viewed as political imposition and economic exploitation; while the Western Region was consumed by the Action Group crisis which gave birth to “Operation Wetie”. Ugly party politics, ethnicity, corruption and regionalism culminated in the January 15th, 1966 coup and a counter coup in July 1966 where the two most prominent Northern leaders (Premier Ahmadu Bello and Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa) along with others were assassinated. By 1967 Nigeria was engulfed in Civil War which continued till 1970.
Party Politics, Violence and Intrigues in the North

The Nigerian independence which was attained on 1st October, 1960 quickly witnessed a Regional election in the following year (1961). By this period, the NPC and its members were fully entrenched in Northern Nigerian politics.257 This period saw the re-emergence of most of the politicians and political parties of the 1950s. In the lower north (present-day North Central), the UMBC was reduced to more or less a protest movement, due to domination by the NPC.258 The NPC, being a party with the slogan of One North, One People, had the advantage of having the royalties’ support and vast majority of the members of the party had a link or the other with the royal families, due to the fact that Western education was first introduced through the Emirs and Chiefs of Northern Nigeria. Before construction of classes, Emirs voluntarily provided space within their palaces for lessons to take place. At a point in time, the Emirs had to give their subjects some encouragement by enrolling their (emirs) daughters in Western schools.259 NPC therefore, had the opportunity of having a good number of Northern educated elements within its fold. These factors (the royalties and the educated elements) gave the NPC both political (administrative) and social powers to easily dominate the political environment of Northern Nigerian via the use of its own slogan.

257 Mangvwat, op. cit., p. 458
258 Ibid, p. 462
259 NAK SNP Bauprof 907 (National Archive Kaduna, Secretariat of Northern Province)
The NPC government had the powers to dethrone or enthrone Emirs under the Native Authority. The Emirs and Chiefs, in paying allegiance to party in power, and in fear of losing their thrones had to be loyal to the NPC and canvass for its support during the election period through the Districts and Village Heads under their respective emirates and chiefdoms.

According to A. Feinstein, Mallam Aminu Kano who was the leader of NEPU became the chief victim, as his alliance partner, the NCNC had formed government with the NPC at the Centre after the 1959 Federal Election. The 1959 Federal election was therefore, fresh in the minds of the NEPU members such that parents were calling their sons to leave the party (NEPU) in fear of victimisation by the NPC government. Over 2,000 of NEPU members were jailed and hundreds were injured. On its part, the UMBC also lost political strength because of its alliance with the Action Group (AG) during the 1959 Federal elections, as neither the UMBC nor the AG was in control of the Centre. Clearly therefore, the two major opposition parties in the North were technically reduced to mere pressure groups. B. J. Dudley states that at a certain conference, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the leader of NPC referred NEPU members as “prodigal children who have temporarily strayed from the fold of the NPC but who

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260. Feinstein, op. cit., p. 186
sooner or later would return to the fold”. Albeit, Ahmadu Bello’s prediction did not come to pass, as the opposition got some support during the 1961 Regional election; the NPC government, however continued to suppress both the UMBC and NEPU in their strong domains through the coercive apparatus of government and the Native Authorities. One can conclude that both NEPU and the UMBC were discontented. Dudley argues that the transfer of power during the transition to independence was handed over to traditional oligarchy. This provided the opposition parties led by the middle class a radical and revolutionary ideology in their political struggles to entrench liberal democracy in Northern Nigeria. This resentment of ideas manifested itself as a class struggle between the members of that vicious circle of the Native Administration (N.A) on the one hand and the Talakawa on other, both expressing their interest through their political parties; NEPU being the party of the Talakawa has its interest completely different from those of the NPC.

Dudley further argues that the society was divided into two classes whose interests were divergent to each other in Northern Nigerian society. NEPU’s ideology sought for the restructuring of Northern Nigeria with a view to paving way for the participation of the commoners in political and economic development. NEPU also called for reforming

261 Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria…, op. cit., p.165
the economy on “socialist” ideology, which the party construes to mean the “conversion of villages into cooperatives and the gradual nationalisation of some assets, the final and total elimination of poverty”. One can argue that the rise of Socialism which originated from the then USSR and its spread to China, an ideology which opposed capitalism in the 1960s influenced the NEPU. This ideology was brought about by K. Marx and F. Engels in their thesis- *The Communist Manifesto*, where it prophesied the end of exploitation; identifying class struggle as the primary dynamic in human history. Marx and Engels viewed the struggle between the ruling bourgeoisie (the capitalist) and the downtrodden proletariat (working class) where the former controls the means of production. According to the *Manifesto*, the increasing number of the working class and political awareness heightened the antipathy which would inevitably see the defeat of the ruling bourgeoisie.262 Despite the fact that this theory failed to be fully realised, it influenced a lot of the common men around the globe in standing against undue exploitation by the ruling class, such that in one of the interviews of Mallam Aminu Kano, the President of NEPU posits that one of the achievements in his political career was his ability to influence the common man to say “no” to the ruling class.263 These waves of change in political order brought

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263. BBC interview of Mallam Aminu Kano, 1983
about by Marxism, influenced the Chinese and Cuban revolutions headed by Chairman Mao Tse Tung and Fidel Castro respectively.

While the opposition political parties like the NEPU and UMBC were busy resisting the dominance of the ruling NPC, the later was so determined to maintain power and political control in the Northern Region. R. Anifowose points out that the NPC succeeded through the use of both inducement and force in placating the opposition parties. However, the turbulent Tiv Division where the UMBC enjoyed the overwhelming support of the Tiv people was something to reckon with.\(^{264}\)

No political party would allow power to slip out of its grip easily, because with political power, a party influence or controls the economy of a given country or region which everything revolves around.

**The Tiv Riots of the 1960**

Anifowose maintains that the first signs of political upheaval in the Tivland began to show after the 1959 Federal elections which gave the NPC opportunity to entrench itself as a political force in both the northern region and the central government. During this period, an NPC candidate was beaten and thrown in the pond; three policemen were also driven outside a traditional title holder’s palace. Strong armed men of the UMBC dispersed the market; this brought about a relative lawlessness in the Tivland as people began to defy constituted authorities, making it

\(^{264}\) Anifowose, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-113
necessary to reinforce the coercive apparatus of government from other quarters with a view to quashing the mayhem and avoid escalation to other parts of the Tivland. Wukari (present-day Taraba State capital) and Lafia (present-day Nasarawa State capital) also sprang up in riots against the authorities, where great disturbance broke out later. Clearly, the UMBC suffered the same fate with the NEPU in the hands of the NPC. In other words, the UMBC was also suppressed by the NPC in its domain. The UMBC rioters stroke out entirely at what they believed to be the cause of their protests. They attacked and burnt down the houses of their fellow Tivs whom they understood were supporters or members of the NPC. In the process of these attacks, as it was more of a class struggle and party politics, the Tiv teamed up with some Hausa and Fulani to lay siege on what they termed as “traitors” of the Tivland.\textsuperscript{265} G. N. Hembe maintains that a number of schools of thought presented different theories on why the Tiv revolt took place. However, most, if not all the schools hold the view that the Tiv uprising was a reaction against the Native Authority under the NPC government as a result of economic and political domination. It is worthy to note that the NPC in its attempt to entrench itself as a political force in the Tivland, three methods were used- namely, the persuasion, the rewards and the coercive measures.\textsuperscript{266}

\textsuperscript{265} Ibid, pp. 120-122
\textsuperscript{266} Hembe, op. cit., pp. 183-190
The Census Crisis of the 1962/63 in Nigeria

The 1962/63 crisis was brought about as a result of the first Census in Nigeria where the North had the highest population and thereby having the highest voting power. This sharpened regional rivalries as T. Falola notes. The fears of the Action Group (AG) and the NCNC was the domination of the NPC in central government, as the latter would have the advantage of voting power and therefore, produce more representatives at the parliament. This fear is not uncommon, as politics is a game of number. The AG and NCNC were older political parties compared to the NPC; and the regions they controlled (West and East) were more “politically enlightened” compared to the strong hold of the NPC (Northern Region). When the results of the 1962 census were announced, they generated a lot of heat in the polity, thus its cancellation warranted with a view to conducting a fresh one. Nonetheless, even the 1963 census did not enjoy a unanimous endorsement across the regions. But the federal government under the auspices of the NPC obtained approval for the results, where the Northern region remained politically advantaged due to voting power. J. O. Ojiako also demonstrates that numbers of parliamentary seats were distributed based on population. The

1962 figures were first questioned by the civil servants, who could be regarded as the educated elite in the country.\textsuperscript{268} One has reason to believe or conclude that the dispute of the 1962 was basically fear of domination by one region against the other. B. Ige demonstrates that the 1962 census created resentment amongst the NPC/NCNC led administration at the Federal Parliament. This research has already noted that the NPC and the NCNC formed a coalition government after the 1959 Federal Elections, as no political party had the majority seats to form a government on its own. Dr Okpara and the NCNC openly condemned the census, alleging that the Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was deceitful in their coalition.\textsuperscript{269} A. Chapman argues that the 1962/63 period of census was a trying moment for the survival of Nigeria as an indivisible country. The attacks on Hausa/Fulani people in the Igbo land ignited revolts in Kano which resulted in attacking the Igbos as a reprisal. This violence escalated to other towns and cities in northern Nigeria; it was, however, quashed. It should be noted that the crisis consumed thousands of lives.\textsuperscript{270} This thesis holds the view that the census crisis of 1962/63 in Nigeria revolves around party politics, where each party was struggling to get a higher figure in its region in order to take that advantage during election.

\textsuperscript{268} Ojiako, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 150-151

\textsuperscript{269} Ujo, \textit{Understanding Election in Nigeria- The First 50 Years, op. cit.}, p.63

\textsuperscript{270} Chapman, \textit{op. cit.}, 1967, p. 65
The Tiv Riot of 1964

A. A. Ujo argues that the UMBC as a party formed by the minorities in the Northern Region had a running battle with the law enforcement agencies, which were used as an informal structure of the NPC in the region. This clampdown resulted in the “Tiv Riot” of 1964 or what is generally known as “Atemyough”, (cutting/breaking the head).²⁷¹ Vaaseh and Ohinmore maintain that the first major turbulences originated in Tombo Mbalagh where the clan head Gbagbar Apinega a pro-NPC on the 12th February was grabbed by rioters and slaughtered along with three others. Moreover, the hands of Gbagba’s (Tiv chief) clerk were cut off by the demonstrators. A squad of N. A. police which had been sent to the area to re-establish peace had to return to Gboko when they found enormous crowd in the area. Nevertheless, a small number of arrests were made, the massacre of Gbagbar led to a free for all fight between followers of the NPC and fans of the UMBC. This chaos led to an ambush of eight policemen who were killed and their guns grabbed by the rioters. The slaying of Gbagbar manifests effectively the beginning of Atemityough. Later, the violence blew-out to some other parts of the Tiv land.²⁷²

²⁷¹ Ujo, Understanding Election in Nigeria: The First 50 Years, op. cit., p. 63
G. N. Hembe, argues that the future phases of the uprisings were to mark themselves in clashes comprising the Ichongo and Ipusu subdivisions of Tiv society. The riots were more or less transformed into an Ipusu/Ichongo fight with the Ipusu (UMBC), led by Tondo Agede fighting against the Ichongo (NPC) led by one Aernyi Kangur. Most of the fighting throughout the conflicts took place at night. The UMBC members signified their fight with the broom (chancha) to sweep out Baja or Shoja petali (NPC). At Mbaiase in Masev, the people there were largely NPC but they were always confronted by the few UMBC members in the area who were reinforced by nearby Ipusu areas. This led to severe fighting amongst the NPC and the UMBC with each side getting supports. Other serious battles were fought in Mbachin, Aliade and Mbayi in areas of the Tivland. 273 Y. B. Usman maintains that the outbreak of the 1964 Tiv riot was a clear indication that the problem of the 1960 riot was not adequately addressed. Usman further asserts the intensity of the 1964 uprising was worse than that of 1960. The loss recorded in both civilian and police was substantial. However, Y. B. Usman and R. Anifowose maintain that reliable official figure was not available. However, twelve policemen were confirmed dead, and some were

273. G. N. Hembe, op. cit., p.225
The study views this uprising as purely a party politics issue, simply because the Tivs attacked and killed their kinsmen who were members of the NPC. More so, they united with the Hausa and Fulani people who were members of the UMBC and attacked their victims collectively.

**Elections, Collusions and Political Crisis in the First Republic**

In this thesis, the 1961/1965 regional and the 1964 federal elections are considered to be the elections of the First Republic, despite the fact that Nigeria was proclaimed as a *Republic* in 1963. In both the Regional and Federal elections, the research has briefly touched on the Western and Northern Regions with a view to getting the clearer picture of the harbingers of the 1966 military coups that truncated party politics democracy in Nigeria for 13 years. We have seen clearly, the intrigues of the 1960s and power tussle between and amongst the political elites. In other words, the research has not conversed on specific details of the elections of the 1960s, but has dwelled on the whole political atmosphere with a view to unfolding why the First Republic failed, so as to learn lessons from the weaknesses of the then party politics and democratic governance with a view to proffer solutions to similar existing problems in the current party politics and democratic governance.

The regional election of the 1961 in Northern Nigeria was a new dawn in its political history. For the first time, elections were conducted in an independent country which was hitherto under the colonial power for over half a century. A. Feinstein denotes that in the middle of the 1960s, Mallam Aminu Kano was at low ebb, his spirit was drooping and his party (NEPU) was crushed with no representation either in the Northern Regional or Federal Parliament; and it was somewhat a political death blow to Aminu Kano’s NEPU. Considering the fact that the elections of the 1960s culminated in the 1966 coup and the Nigerian civil war, this research looks at party politics surrounding the 1960s elections only with a view to explaining a clearer picture of how democracy was strangulated in the mid-1960s.

This thesis holds the view that the First Republic in Nigerian political history was somewhat a political decimation on the Yorubas as a people and AG as a political party. This can easily be apprehended or demonstrated by looking at the history of party politics in Nigeria from the onset. The Yorubas were the first to form a political party (NNDP) in the early 1920s, with Herbert Macaulay as the spearhead; and in their land and soil (Lagos). Conversely, by 1960s, the people (Northerners)

275. Feinstein, op. cit., p. 220

276. Falola, op. cit., p.62
who the Yorubas viewed as “less educated” and somewhat backward took the helm of affairs. Naturally, the Yorubas would feel dominated and their superiority complex of being more educated and politically enlightened had been sub-zoomed. These factors and the Akintola vs Awolowo political turmoil led to the AG crises which climaxed in what came to be known as the *Wild-Wild- West*, a period marked by destruction, deaths, loss and pains in the Western region of Nigeria as a result of unhealthy party politics. In fact, one can comfortably say that it was the first major test of the post-colonial Nigeria in the Western Region; this is also one of the major problems that played a role and culminated in the fall of the First Republic.

**The Wild-Wild-West**

The *Wild-Wild-West* broke out as a result of power tussle between Obafemi Awolowo and Samuel Akintola and other factors surrounding the politics of the Western Region, where the former was the Premier of Western Region and the latter was Deputy Premier of Western Region. Akintola was initially a very loyal political ally to Awolowo, but the latter had interest of playing his politics at the Centre and therefore, relinquished the position of Premiership to his Deputy (Akintola). 277

After Nigeria attained Republican arrangement, Sir Abubakar Tafawa

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Balewa emerged executive powers and Nnamdi Azikwe, the leader of the NCNC emerged as the first post-colonial Nigerian president; leaving Awolowo, the leader of AG as opposition leader at the centre. In the course of fighting the ruling parties (NPC/NCNC) at the centre, Awolowo and his close political allies from the AG were charged and found guilty for financial impropriety in their dealing with some banks, especially National Bank, Western Nigeria Finance Bank and the National Investment Property Company. They were also found guilty on treasonable felony of trying to overthrow the government of the country.278

Meanwhile, before Awolowo was charged for sedition, the AG crisis has reached its climax. Awolowo was of the view that the AG should not cooperate and align itself with the NPC/NCNC coalition government; while some of the prominent AG members held the opinion that their party should cooperate with the ruling parties in order to benefit from national projects and other goodies- an intra party politics at play. At the same time, Awolowo wanted his former Deputy (S. L. Akintola) now the Premier of Western Region to remain absolutely loyal to him. This did not come to pass, as Akintola cooperated with the ruling parties instead. Here, one can say that Awolowo failed to reckon with the incumbency factor and power culture. A famous British historian, politician and

278. *Ibid*, p. 32
member of the parliament in person of J. Dalberg-Acton indicates that “power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely.”\textsuperscript{279} This observation was from experience, being a Member of the Parliament for Bridgnorth and a member of Liberal Party. In essence, Acton’s famous quote argues that a person’s sense of morality declines as his power rises.\textsuperscript{280}

R. Anifowose argues that in post-colonial states, there are limited illustrations where the ruling parties have changed by means of ballot box or in a truly competitive manner. Up to 1970, only three out of the forty two independent African countries actually changed their governments by elections- Sudan, Morocco and Somalia.\textsuperscript{281} Anifowose further points out that an election serves two purposes. Firstly, there is the competitive function, where the political elites compete for office; and then, there is a ratificatory function, which means that the voters are simply made to ratify a single list of party candidates without rivalry. Hence, there is a lucid distinction between the two. The Soviet Union, China and some African countries epitomise a single party system, thereby afford examples of the ratificatory function of election. The Western Region of Nigeria and the country at large opted for a competitive function of election, where a number of candidates are presented to the electorates by

\textsuperscript{279} \url{https://www.pharase.org.uk/.../absolute-power-corrupts-absolutely.html}, Accessed on 25-04-2018

\textsuperscript{280} Ibid

\textsuperscript{281} Anifowose, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 201
different political parties to make a choice. Despite the function of this
elective system, the Premier of Western Nigeria (Chief Akintola) and his
Deputy, in their campaigns during the 1965 Regional Election were
alleged to have bragged that no Regional Government had lost election in
the last one decade and a half. And further denote that the Regional
Governments control the electoral machinery. This implied that whether
the electorates voted for their party or not, their candidates would be
returned to power. The 1965 Western Regional Election therefore,
presented a war-time atmosphere, as constitutionally democratic elections
were expected to be held in the First Republic.282

According to R. Doorenspleet, the existence of political parties
wrestling for political power within a background that guarantees equal
chances for all is one of the essential features of a democratic
government. Political regimes that ban the opposition parties and
competition among political parties for the votes of the people are not
“competitive” and a consequence can be regarded as undemocratic.283 It
has been already noted how the Western Region of Nigeria fought for the
emergence of party politics and democracy in the country from the
opening years of the twentieth century; a struggle which saw the exodus

282 Ibid
M. Salih (ed.), African Political Parties- Evolution, Institutionalisation & Governance, Pluto Press,
London, 2003, p. 170
of the colonial power in the 1960s. To them (the Western Region), therefore, the political environment of the 1960s was a blow to the labour of their heroes past and a draw back to their political survival. J. A. S. Grenville further argues that the impact of the Second World War and the emergence of an educated and well-to-do African leadership protesting against certain disadvantages and voicing African criticisms began to bring about change. The question here is- could the Western Region afford to fold their arms watching their fellow westerners depriving them from exercising their civic rights of voting or be voted for? The answer is not far-fetched. Therefore, one can conclude that Nigerian democratic system which is liberal in nature had been manipulated by the ruling parties in their respective regions; hence, the agitations by the opposition to reclaim their universal suffrage or political rights and liberties.

A. Okpaga argues that in the West and North, power was taken by regionally based political parties formed by ethnic elites for the express drive of winning regional power against the challenge of Igbo-led NCNC which had a national outlook. In the end, the sharing of national power and resources became more aggressively ethnic and fierce after the 1965

Western Regional election. As U. Faruk clearly points out, the 1964/65 elections were critical in two perspectives. Firstly, it was the first national election after Nigeria’s attainment of a Republican status. Secondly, it was the first to be conducted by Nigerians for Nigerians. In other words, Nigerians have never conducted any national elections in their history prior to the 1964/65 elections, as all the previous ones were conducted under the close supervision of the colonial officials. By implication therefore, all eyes were on Nigeria; and a good number of Nigerians were anxious to witness how the country would conduct its elections without the European masters and also see how the hard earned freedom and democracy would be nurtured.

During the 1964 federal elections, the ruling NPC formed alliance with the Akintola faction of AG, which was by now transformed to Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP)- the nomenclature of the first political party formed by Herbert Macaulay in the 1920s. On the opposing side was the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA), formed by the Awolowo faction of the Action Group. The alliance of the NPC/NCNC received a death blow as a result of the 1962/63 census and other political issues. As such, both could not enter a new accord to

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wrestle power again. This brought about the new alliance of NPC and NNDP in 1964. During this time, the Federal Government manoeuvred and appointed two prominent NNDP members in persons of Chief Ayo Rosaji and Chief Adisa Akinloye into the Cabinet. This masterstroke caused a lot of political setback to the Awolowo’s UPGA, as the NPC gave the Western Region a great deal of recognition at the Centre. The NPC/NNDP alliance yielded better results after the 1964 federal elections with an increased majority. However, Awolowo challenged the outcome of this election results.

Politicians who were not happy with the outcome of the 1964 Federal elections began to unleash mayhem targeting Hausa-Fulani people in the Western Region and government officials who were believed to be sympathetic to the NPC government. This is what later came to be known as *Operation Wetie* (Operation wet it).²⁸⁷ Action Group faction of Awolowo who were members of UPGA were the perpetrators of this pandemonium as U. Faruk who was an eye witness and a police officer who transferred to Lagos to join other officers to quash this mayhem illustrates. Thus: “The mode of operation of the Action Group thugs was to recruit and train young boys, (forerunners to present-day area boys), to move into busy streets armed with only two simple but very lethal weapons- a bottle of petrol and a matchbox. As soon as they

²⁸⁷. *Ibid*, pp. 41-42
sighted any person dressed in Hausa dress of flowing gowns with the appropriate cap to match, one of the leading boys would shout the signal of “wetie”. He would then sprinkle the petrol on the apparel of his northern victim. Next, his colleagues, following him with a match box, would instantaneously ignite the victim. Within seconds the latter would be engulfed in flames and set off running helter-skelter seeking for rescue, which would never be given by the happy crowd of Lagos citizens, until he fell dead! Other thugs would take pains to mark the residence of all northern Nigerians at night. Once your residence was marked, some irresponsible hooligans would ring you up or even walk to your residence and demand a ransom. Failure to pay the ransom would result in your residence being set ablaze”.

U. Faruk further argues that sometime in 1965, it was an objective reality that no Northerners or their families were safe in Lagos and the entire Western Region. Even highly placed individuals who were of Northern origin were not safe. A simple example was the attempt to burn Ibrahim Dimis of Bauchi Province along with his friend when they visited the Prime Minister in Lagos. R. Anifowose further buttresses the position of U. Faruk by asserting that: Thugs were given special training before being deployed to various areas. Thus, between 1964 and 1965, the UPGA was alleged to have operated training camps at various

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288. Ibid, pp. 43-44
centres- including Benin, Enugu and Ibadan- where the thugs were given lessons in the use of cudgels, cutlasses and guns, in dodging opponents, and spraying petrol on people and property before setting them on fire. Each trainee was also given lesson on party beliefs and ideology. Training at the local level included, among many specialities, memorising the plate numbers, the colours and the make of the cars of their party and of the opposing parties. This was necessary to facilitate recognition in the event of a violent conflict and to enable the thugs to attack the enemy with speed as well as prevent mistaken attacks of party members”.  

Anifowose further maintains that during an operation, sieges were laid in order to hinder the movement of the police. It was dangerous for the police to remove such road blocks because occasionally, some thugs laid surprise attacks and shot any person who tried to remove them. Moreover, to carry out such task, the thugs used various strategies including intercepting and destroying of vehicles and beating up of political opponents. Vehicles, houses and people were wet with petrol and then set ablaze. These types of violence were new to the Western Region, as well as the country at large.

The End of an Era in Nigeria’s First Republic

When the pandemonium in the Western Region became unbearable and continued to escalate, on January 14\textsuperscript{th}, 1966, the Premier of the Western Region, Samuel Akintola flew to Kaduna to see his counterpart, the Northern Region Premier, Ahmadu Bello to find a lasting solution to the crisis in the Region. It was said that the two Premiers and the Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa have perfected plans to drastically quash the crisis by arresting all the leading UPGA, disbanding those units in the army suspected of identifying with UPGA, and send Ironsi, the Military Commander, who was also suspected of being UPGA sympathiser on leave; then a section of the army finally intervened in a coup which led to the overthrow of the civilian government throughout the country in which Balewa, Ahmadu Bello, Akintola and many others were killed. Anifowose contends that a number of scholars believed that the direct consequence of the crisis in the Western region was the January 15\textsuperscript{th}, 1966 coup.\textsuperscript{290} Considering how the above events unfolded; one can comfortably argue that party politics can make or mar the peace, tranquillity and development of any democratic nation.

As L. H. Hydle points out, earlier at the 1959 Federal elections the Action Group threatened the peaceful co-existence of Nigeria as an

\textsuperscript{290} Ibid, pp. 250-251
indivisible entity. AG states that “The forthcoming general election is going to be a battle of life and death. We admit that “life and death” is quite a strong phrase to use. But we are just being very plain and realistic. It is now clear beyond cavil that it is going to be a battle between a single political party and a combined force of autocracy, bad faith and brutality. The naked truth is that the Action Group must win the election. Any other choice means that the Federation of Nigeria is doomed. It might as well go to the dogs”. In analysing the utterances and actions of the Action Group against the NPC/NCNC coalition before and after the 1959 and its actions after the 1964 Federal elections, one can easily see the desperation of the AG to entrench itself at the Centre. B. J. Dudley enumerates that the 1964 Federal elections gave the NPC, the major political party championing the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) during the 1964 Federal elections a total control of the Northern Nigeria; such that out of the 167 seats contested, NNA returned 163, losing only 4 seats to the UPGA. It should also be noted that, out of the 163 seats won by the NNA, 68 were returned unopposed because of the difficulties encountered by the opposition (UPGA) in the process of nominating their candidates in the Northern Region.

291 Hydle, op. cit., p. 225

292 Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria..., op. cit., pp. 264-267
In essence, it is evident that the UPGA, under the watch of Awolowo and AG, sowed the seed of political turmoil in Nigeria as a result of unhealthy party politics. The research has earlier noted that the Action Group, like the Northern People’s Congress, was a political party formed to champion a regional politics and power. Its dominance remained in the Western Region throughout its existence as a platform to wrestle for power, until the emergence of Akintola as Western Premier. Therefore, it can be deduced that failure to achieve its desired ambition in the series of both regional and federal elections frustrated the party and plunged the country into crisis. Lagos as the home base of the AG and the Capital of Nigeria has potentials to attract migrants from various urban and rural areas across the country. Lagos was no doubt the melting pot of both economic and political activities; therefore, competition for resource control would be tough and eminent. As B. Ijomah aptly illustrates, the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups that moved out of northern region, normally ended their destination in the Western Region. Therefore, the more the society becomes heterogeneous, the more the likelihood of ethnic unrest. Ijomah further stresses that the political parties in Africa have been the main causes of instability, particularly at the election period.\footnote{Ijomah, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 240 -260} The research contends that the Western Region crisis coincided with the fact that the NPC as a Hausa/Fulani dominated political party, is
enough reason that made the latter and the former a prey to the Action Group members, considering the fact that the NPC, which was more of Hausa/Fulani controlled the centre. The NPC, as the name implies, was meant to speak for the Northerners; the AG too, was not a nationalistic party- thus, the building of indigenous grievances. As Madeira Keitz of Sudan described, the politicians, because there are no impartial cleavages on which to base their political contribution resort to opportunism, and the only way to be effective is to take advantage of ethnic and regional loyalties. To some extent, this is typical of Nigerian situation, considering the nature of the modus-operandi of the parties’ leadership in the course of wrestling power.

The Roles of the Talakawa (Commoners)

The roles of Talakawa are numerous, but M. Yahaya enumerates three critical ones as follows: through their voting power; served as ginger group, and helped in shaping policy.

The Voting Power (numeric strength):

As the saying goes, politics is a game of number. The Talakawa constitutes the majority in the Northern Nigeria. The domination of Talakawa is a common feature or characteristic of all the societies around

294. Ibid, p. 281
the globe. This clearly signifies that without the support of the commoners, no political party can survive or win elections. This research has already discussed that the NPC, NEPU and the UMBC were the major political parties in the North, where the first above mentioned party held sway and the last two parties played the role of the opposition either in the parliament or at the grassroots party politics. However, the NPC as a ruling party had never relented in its efforts to canvass for the support of the *Talakawa* through the application of a variety of mechanisms in order to retain power. The support of the *Talakawa* had therefore, being the bedrock for any political success during this period. The study holds the view that this is crucial in any competitive election, as the NPC applied three strategies – persuasion, reward and coercion in its quest to retain power.

*Policy Shaping:*

Policy shaping is another important role of the *Talakawa*. The presence and support of the *Talakawa* contributed meaningfully in shaping the policy of both the political parties and the government. At first, political parties have to present their *manifestos* to the electorates, where the commoners are the majority. The manifesto contains campaign promises and programmes a particular party intends to execute if it wins election. Many critical issues discussed or mentioned in the manifesto such as
water, electricity, road networks, health facility, free education, security, housing and so on were usually infrastructure that were aimed at alleviating the difficulties of the *Talakawa*. Though there were limitations to how the political parties keep to fulfil their campaign promises; it was however, clear that the commoners determined how the manifesto of a given political party and government in power are drawn. M. D. Suleman illustrates as follows: “in Lokoja as in other places NEPU election campaigns were among other things based on its opposition to haraji (pool tax) and high water rate; forced labour and exploitation. In Lokoja however, the NPC could justify some of its actions especially as regards to taxation and water rate. The NPC controlled Northern Nigerian government had expanded the town’s general hospital by adding more wards and building a large and separate theatre block. The water-works services were boosted as new engine was installed for improved water supply to the town. It also built what was then the most imposing office building which today is being used as Kogi State Secretariat. It was also the NPC federal government which in 1960 constructed the laterite motorable road linking Koton Karfe with other parts of the North”.

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295 M. Yahaya, *Interviewed* on 11-11-2018 at his residence in Dawaki Quarters, Gombe, Gombe State, Nigeria

**Ginger Group**

The *Talakawa* gives liveliness and excitement to the political parties and the government in power. This role denotes that the more commoners a political party has, the more invigorated the party is. The leaders of political parties or party in power are normally motivated by the support they have at the grassroots.¹ Ginger group is common even in Western World like the UK and Canada. The group’s main function is to enliven and stimulate the office holders and party politics in their domain.²

**The Functions of House of Chiefs in Northern Legislature**

The traditional rulers who occupied the Upper House have significant role in running the day to day affairs of the Northern Regional Legislature, as B. J. Dudley cogently demonstrates. The traditional rulers were not elected officials in the Regional House, but selected from various emirates and chiefdoms to form part of the parliament. The House of Chiefs, being the Upper Chamber in the Northern House of Assembly, had the constitutional power of holding the government to ransom; and in the event of divergence between the two Houses (Upper and Lower Houses), the constitution made provision that a joint meeting of an equal number of members chosen from the members of both the Houses should

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¹ Yahaya, *op. cit.*, (Interview)
be presided by a member from the House of Chiefs. And when there was any difference in the meeting, it could be resolved by simple majority vote; but in the case of an even division votes the Chairman had a casting vote. In essence, the Upper Chamber had the final veto power over the Assembly. However; B. J. Dudley describes the roles of both the traditional chiefs and Native Authority as somewhat “rubber stamp” to the NPC regional government, as those constitutional powers of the Members of House of Chiefs have to a certain extent never been exercised.

Some Differences between the Northern House of Assembly and the House of Representatives

Despite the fact that both the Houses had similar functions, they however, differ in structure and other bureaucracies. Firstly, unlike the Federal Parliament, both Hausa and English were accepted as official languages in the Northern Parliament. Secondly, there existed Business Committee in the House of Representatives, but the Northern House of Assembly had no any. Thirdly, Federal Parliament before the 1960s was unicameral in structure as there was House of Representatives only without the existence of the traditional rulers as this thesis clearly points out in the last chapter. Conversely, the Northern Regional Legislature was

299. Dudley, Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria..., op. cit., pp. 199-211
bicameral legislature, having Upper House, which was the House of Chiefs; and Lower House, which was the House of Assembly and the body that consisted of elected officials or representatives. The House of Assembly consisted of 230 members, while the House of Chiefs had 110 members nominated from first class and second class chiefs and other selected chiefs across the Northern Region.

It is however, worthy of note that the House of Chiefs had been in existence since the year 1932 when a conference of Emirs and Chiefs was summoned by the colonial government. Dudley argues that apart from the colonial Legislative Council, the House of Chiefs was the oldest legislative assembly in the country. The advent of party politics, and what F. Fukuyama terms as political accountability, saw the emergence of elective principles which later gave birth to the House of Assembly with representatives from various constituencies across the region/country. As the Northern Region had Indirect Rule during colonialism, it continued to recognise the roles of the traditional institutions; hence, the retaining of the House of Chiefs in the Northern Parliament and Native Authority.

300 Ibid
Politics and Leadership of Nigeria’s Parliament

The Federal Parliament played politics in selecting its leadership as the issue of the *majority* and the *minority* were some of the most frequently used terms in the chambers. In essence, the survival of any political party and its success to dictate or reject a certain policy, motion or bill depends on the strength of its support in the parliament. This gave birth to the alliance of the NPC and the NCNC after the federal elections of the 1959, with a view to controlling the centre. At the onset of the Federal Parliament in 1952, it was led by a Briton, known as Sir Frederick Metcalfe up to the year 1959. The federal elections of 1959 informed the decision to have a Nigerian to preside over the affairs of the parliament. Jaja Wachukwu of the NCNC emerged as the first indigenous Speaker of the House of Representatives.\(^{302}\) Wachukwu’s emergence as Speaker was not unconnected to the coalition of the NPC/NCNC to form government on 20\(^{th}\) December, 1959. The coalition government agreed that NPC and NCNC would appoint seventeen Ministers as follows:

1. Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa - Prime Minister
2. Alhaji Muhammad Ribadu - Lands and Lagos Affairs
3. Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh- Finance
4. Mr Raymond Njoku - Transport and Aviation

\(^{302}\) *List of Speakers of House of Representatives* - Clerk to the National Assembly records, 20-10-2017
5. Alhaji Inuwa Wada- Works and Survey
6. Zanna Bukar Dipcharima- Commerce and Industries
7. Mr Joseph Johnson- Labour and Welfare
8. Mr Aja Nwachukwu- Education
9. Maitama Sule - Mines and Power
10. Shehu Shagari - Economic Development and Natural Resources
11. Mr Olu Akinfosile - Communications
12. Mallam Usman Sarki - Internal Affairs
13. Mr Theophilus Benson - Information
14. Waziri Ibrahim - Health
15. Mallam Isa Yar’Adua - Pensions, Establishment & Nigerianisation
16. Mr Mathew Nbu - Minister of State
17. Mr Olarenwaju - Minister of State

However, when the Senate was formed after the independence, Nnamdi Azikwe emerged as the First Senate President, and later Governor General of Nigeria. Mr Dennis Osadebay succeeded Azikwe and finally, Nwafor Orizu took over from Dennis and served for three years before the military coup. While in the House of Representatives,

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303. Ojiako, op. cit., p.77
Ibrahim Jalo Waziri (NPC member) served as the Speaker up to 1966, after Jaja Wachukwu was appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs.

**Political Repression in the First Republic**

The political repression in the First Republic has been technically discoursed in broader light under the Tiv riots, which typifies the suppression of the UMBC in today’s north central; and the oppression of the NEPU in the core north, or what B. J. Dudley describes as *lower* and *far* north respectively. The repression gave birth to political unrest all over the country and eventually led to the coup of the January, 15th of 1966. This is evidenced in the series of demonstrations in both the Western and the Northern Regions. Anifowose noted that there were no local elections in the Western Region throughout the period of Akintola as a Premier. All the local councils in the Western Region were dissolved and replaced by Caretaker Committees, which were solely selected by the NNDP who were minorities in vast majority of the communities. In sum, this typifies that between the periods 1963-1966, the majority were not allowed to democratically elect their leaders - a technical disenfranchisement of UPGA and all its political associates in the

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region.\textsuperscript{306} This is typical of what ABBA, a Swedish Pop Group termed as \textit{winner takes all}.\textsuperscript{307}

There is no provision of Caretaker Committees in the Nigerian Constitution. Therefore, what the ruling party (NNDP) of the Western Region imposed between 1963 and 1966 was merely puppets who were ready to comply with the power that be. By implication, only a few would benefit from resources and patronage of the local governments’ scholarship, loans to farmers, contracts, issue of licence to traders, employments and other assistance provided by the local government councils. Thus, the opposition political party was of the conviction that the Caretaker Committee was used as a mechanism to intimidate, victimise and suppress them. Oba Samuel Akinsanya termed the Caretaker Committee of the Local Governments as \textit{undesirable elements}, who caused all the misfortunes of western Nigeria.\textsuperscript{308}

Moreover, to obliterate or emasculate the western region from its political strength particularly in voting, the Federal Government created Mid-West Region out of the western region in 1963. This no doubt undermined the voting power of the Western Region and hindered the

\textsuperscript{306} Anifowose, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 238

\textsuperscript{307} \textit{The Winner Takes All-} \url{https://en.m.wikipedia.org}, Accessed on 02-02-2018

\textsuperscript{308} Anifowose, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 239
AG from extending its political friendship or alliance to the new region (Mid-West). The Mid-West region had been a conglomeration of various ethnic nationalities including the Efik, Urhobo, Ibibio, Ogoni, Ijaw, Edo and Itsekiri etcetera. The nationalities in the Mid-West would be easily incurred politically, giving their heterogeneity, unlike the Western Region which was predominantly Yorubas. The crux of the matter here is, the ruling party (NPC) manoeuvred to find easy access in penetrating the AG strong hold. The ruling party concealed this game plan, by pretending that the creation of the Mid-West was a clarion call by the minorities who have been agitating for the creation of a region of their own. The NPC led administration, therefore, used this opportunity to heed to this call. As L. O. Odo argues, the creation of the Mid-West was evidently political, not a response to the agitation of the minorities. Linus further posit that “it was little wonder therefore, that the genuine demands for the creation of Middle-Belt Region was vehemently opposed by the NPC... that the north was and must remain one north, one people, irrespective of religion, rank or tribe”. This thesis contends that the Middle-Belt also consists of different ethnic nationalities and had made agitations for self-determination. Albeit, because the NPC was determined to maintain its

**Motto of One North, One People**...\textsuperscript{310} it resisted this genuine demand, which in the real sense was a covert party politics. Furthermore, during the 1959 federal election, the UMBC, being the most popular political party in the lower North (Middle Belt/ present-day North Central) entered into alliance with the AG;\textsuperscript{311} the NPC, therefore, found it as a political hara-kiri to allow the middle belt to be a Region of its own.

In the North, the NPC suppressed the opposition at the eve of the 1964 Federal elections via the use of government coercive apparatus. The Premier, Ahmadu Bello turned down or rejected applications for permits to hold meetings. At a point in time, public meetings were banned. In one occasion, the UPGA campaign group which left the Southern part of the country to support their northern partners were prohibited by the Premier to arrive the town of Gusau. Members of UPGA continued to suffer series of intimidation, arrest and imprisonment. There was a time UPGA lawyer was arrested and incarcerated without the alternative of a fine on the grounds of holding “illegal” meeting and using abusive semantic. The NPC led government detained a number of the UPGA allies and other Opposition parties. For instance, potential candidates of Northern People

\textsuperscript{310} G. A. Kwanshie, *op. cit.*, p. 153

\textsuperscript{311} Sklar, *op. cit.*, p.349
Front (NPF) such as Mallam Abdullahi Adamu, Lawan Maiturare, Bello Dawa were detained in prison for the period of the nomination.

The troubles faced by the opposition in the hands of the ruling NPC necessitated the Federal Electoral Commission (FEC)\textsuperscript{312}, under the chairmanship of Chief E. E. Esna\textsuperscript{313} to extend the closing date for nomination during the 1964 federal elections. The chairman of the FEC disclosed that there were anomalies in so many places and therefore, advocated for a rescheduling of elections in the affected areas. A total number of 68 constituencies which was equivalent to 40 per cent of the Northern Region were returned unopposed by the NPC\textsuperscript{314}. This is a clear obliteration on the part of the UPGA in the Northern Nigeria

**Formation of the Nigerian Army**

Before delving into the formation of the Nigerian Army, it is appropriate to give a background of the formation of the military in West Africa. Meanwhile, it is equally apt to mention that even before the coming of the Europeans into African soil, the continent had its military outfits in various chiefdoms, empires and emirates. W. Rodney argues that prior to the so-called discovery of Africa by the Europeans in the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, in

\textsuperscript{312} Dudley, *Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria...*, op. cit., p. 147


\textsuperscript{314} Dudley, *Parties & Politics in Northern Nigeria...*, op. cit., pp. 264-266
Oyo Empire, there were military generals. Ajaye State was founded by a military general known as Kurumni, where *Ologun* (War Chiefs) were politically and socially powerful.\(^{315}\)

The Nigerian Armed Forces or the Military, which the Nigerian Army is part of, are the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which included the Army, Navy and Air force. Its roots can be traced to the components of the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF) that became Nigerian Army when independence was granted in 1960. In the year 1956 the Nigeria Regiment of the Royal West African Frontier Force was renamed the Nigerian Military Forces, and in April 1958 the colonial government of Nigeria took over from the British War Office control of the Nigerian Military Forces.\(^{316}\) The military in the first half of the 20\(^{th}\) Century participated in both World Wars I & II.\(^{317}\)

*Roles of the Military in Nigeria*

The role of the military as T. Falola rightly explains was the defence of the territorial boundaries of the country. The military is not supposed to rule a country. In fact, even internal security issues are normally handled

\(^{315}\) Rodney, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-138

\(^{316}\) [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigerian_Army](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigerian_Army), Accessed on 16-04-2018

by the Police. Therefore, except that only when the police failed to control internal fracas that the military should step in; and once the situation is put under control, the military should go back to the barracks. Nonetheless, in Nigeria, as in some African countries that had not been the case. The military after re-establishing peace and order in Nigeria sat tight in power. The military, whenever it wanted to take over power claimed to establish what is termed as “corrective regime”. In essence, the military claimed to only put the country or return it to normalcy and hand over power to civilian administration; but that had not been the case, except the Obasanjo led government in 1979. Conversely, this does not suggest that the military did nothing good in Nigeria; in fact, the military created all the existing States in Nigeria and fought so many wars within and outside the country.

**Military Coups in Nigeria and Some African Countries**

Before delving into the crux of the matter, it is important to give a brief background on what led to the Nigerian coups. A number of issues were raised by different scholars on the immediate and remote causes of the 1966 coups, which revolve around tribalism/ethnicity, regionalism, corruption, unhealthy party politics and so on. The study points out how

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318. Falola et’al, *op. cit.*, pp.133-134
the 1962/63 census generated dissonance between and amongst the political parties in Nigeria and how each party was pointing accusing finger to the other. Even the NCNC/ NPC alliance was dislocated as a result of the 1962/63 census in Nigeria. An eye witness and participant of the Nigerian civil war, Assistant Commissioner of Police (rtd) Alhaji Usman Faruk, who was also the governor of the defunct North-Western State (which comprised today’s Niger, Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States) demonstrated that on the 15th January, 1966 a group of five Igbo majors who thought the Yoruba political thugs were not performing their assignment in liquidating the Northerners fast enough; in a swift operation, the majors, under the leadership of Chukwuma Nzegwu Kaduna toppled the Federal Government of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, as well as those of the northern and western Regions. U. Faruk argues that the defeat of UPGA in the hands of the NNDP during the Western Regional election was the catalyst that climaxed in non-stop violence by the end of 1965.\(^{319}\) Usman Faruk’s position was buttressed by the accounts of J. O. Ojiako, who maintains that by Tuesday 12\(^{th}\) October, 1965 the NNDP had won 51 out of 94 seats in the Western Region. Later in the evening S. L. Akintola had started forming his government. Conversely, on 13\(^{th}\) October, 1965, the result changed whereby NNDP had 65 seats instead of the earlier 51 seats. UPGA was said have only 10 seats in the

\(^{319}\) Faruk, *The Victors & Vanquished of the Nigerian Civil War..., op. cit.*, pp. 47-50
Regional election. A prominent member of the UPGA, Alhaji Adegbenro announced that his party got 68 seats, while NNDP got only 25. Adegbenro was arrested along with some UPGA members and were refused bail for unlawfully forming “an interim executive council for government of Western Nigeria; Adegbenro himself was charged with attempt to act as unlawful Premier of Western Nigeria without lawful authority”. 320 This impasse or civil unrest lingered in the Western Region up to the following year (1966) and finally ended up in the 15th January, 1966 coup in Nigeria which installed General Aguiyi Ironsi, from the Eastern region as Head of State. 321

By 29th July, 1966, a counter coup followed, and that saw the emergence of Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, from Northern region as Nigerian Head of State. Pundits hold the view that the July 1966 coup was a counter or reaction by the Northerners against the Eastern domination. Both U. Faruk and O. Obasanjo who were eye witnesses and actors during the Nigerian Civil War that took place between 1967 and 1970 argue that the attempt by Ironsi to install unitary government was the major factor that led to the counter coup. Ironsi unified the civil service, abolished all the regions and substituted the provinces. The North, therefore, revolted with a view to dividing the country- the genesis

320. Ojiako, op. cit., p. 218
321. Falola et’al, op. cit., p.123
of *Araba* (let us separate). U. Faruk argues that after Ironsi took over power and appointed four governors to take charge of the four regions as follows: General David Ejor, Military Governor of Mid-West Region; Col. Oduemegu Ojukwu, Military Governor of Eastern Region; Lt Col. Hassan Usman Katsina, Military Governor of Northern Region and Col. Adekunle Fajuyi as Military Governor of Western Region. Northerners were keenly watching the steps of Ironsi with high hope that the coup plotters who were arrested would be punished; but that did not materialise. Ironsi usurped so many powers to his office among others, as Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) of the Armed Forces of Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chairman of the Military Supreme Council and Chairman Nigeria Police Council etcetera. The study contends that such powers were excessive and no right thinking society that fought for independence with a view to having self-determination would allow such administration to continue without any form of resistance. Ironsi evidently inherited the powers of the executive, legislature, the military and the police- all in one. The northerners therefore, viewed the Ironsi government as an attempt to dominate the North, hence, the 29th July, 1966 counter coup. Meanwhile, it should be noted however, while not disputing the events of 15th January, 1966, A. Ademoyega, who was among the five Majors that

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323. Falola et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 131-135
planned and executed the coup, describes the whole event as “revolution”.\(^{324}\)

On 30\(^{th}\) May, 1967, Lieutenant Colonel Chukwuemeka Ojukwu, who was Governor of Eastern Region declared that the area known and called as Eastern Nigeria together with her continental shelf and regional water shall henceforth be independent sovereign state of the name and title of “The Republic of Biafra”. C. Young argues that Nigeria, Bangladesh and Southern Sudan have been agitating for politics of secession. The Nigerian Civil War lasted up to 10\(^{th}\) January, 1970 when Ojukwu ran for exile\(^{325}\) and on 12\(^{th}\) January, 1970, the leaders of the secessionist army under the leadership of Philip Effiong surrendered to the Nigerian Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon.\(^{326}\)

It is common knowledge that the middle of the 20\(^{th}\) century witnessed the proliferation of struggles for self-determination in African countries and the entrenchment of the African educated elite as new leaders under the auspices of political parties. Shortly, the area witnessed the emergence of military leaders across most African countries, brought


about via coup d’états. With the coup of the 1966 in Nigeria, the term parliament ceased to exist and was replaced by the Supreme Military Council up to year 1979 when General Olusegun Obasanjo led administration conducted elections and handed over to a democratically elected government. Also, a departure from parliamentary system of government to presidential system of government ensued. By this, Nigeria now looked towards the United States of American system of government from the hitherto British Parliamentary system of government. The study will broadly uncover this theme in the next chapter.

Though Sudan has the highest frequency of coups, it is however noteworthy that very few were successful. In November 16\(^{th}\), 1958, Ibrahim Abboud overthrew Abdallah Khalil. And in 1964, the October Revolution in Sudan, driven by a general strike and revolting, forced President Ibrahim Abboud to handover executive power to an interim civilian government, and finally to resign. And in May 25\(^{th}\), 1969, Gaafar al-Nimeiry overthrew Ismail al-Azhari’s government. So far, these are the only successful coups in the Sudan in 1960-1970.\(^{327}\) P. J. mcGowan

\(^{327}\) https://en.m.wikipeadia.org/wiki/List_of_coup_d%C3%A9tat_and_coup_attemps_by_country Accessed, on 20-06-2018
further stresses that Sudan has a high number of what he terms as TMIS (Total Military Intervention Score).\(^{328}\)

**Causes of Coup d’états in Africa**

Military coups or interventions are usually indicative of unstable or crisis-prone countries. A number of scholars have demonstrated different causes of coup d’états in Africa. Some of which are colonial background, contagion effect,\(^{329}\) arms transfer, political instability and so on. While some scholars believed it was due to corruption and some reasons revolving around socio-economic issues. The contagion effects of coup d’état overwhelmed most of the African countries shortly after the continent had regained its independence from the colonial masters. The departure of the British, Portuguese, French and other colonial powers witnessed the reign of the military in Africa, particularly in the period 1960s to 1980s as a result of coup d’états. Countries opted to copy what the other did. Using arms transfer as T. Y. Wang argues, is a means of appeasing the military’s demand for weapons in post-colonial Africa. This however, made the military stronger and civilian administration

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vulnerable to overthrows. The contention here is that the civilian administration may have little or no control over the well-armed military. Thus arms transfer strengthens the supremacy of the military.\(^{330}\) A. A. Mazrui describes and summarises the turbulence in Africa, thus, Africa was caught between the danger of tyranny and the risk of anarchy as a result of the political upheaval in the post-colonial era.\(^{331}\)

Summary

The chapter discussed the post-independence era party politics and democratic governance in Northern Nigeria and the country at large; a period where the political atmosphere sowed the seed of disunity brought about by unhealthy party politics and culminated in tribalism/ethnicity, regionalism, corruption and greed and so on. The 1959 Federal elections that paved the way for the NPC/NCNC alliance to form the central government was a harbinger that foretold the outcome of the 1961, 1964 and other subsequent elections that culminated in social, economic and political discontents on the part of the opposition and other minority parties in Nigeria. The sequence of political repression via the imprisonment, suppression, oppression and imposition of heavy tax,


coupled with the 1962/63 census sparked the Tiv riots of the 1960 and 1964 and other revolts in the Northern Nigeria and the political upheaval in the Western region (*Wild-Wild-West*). In the end, the January/July 1966 military coups culminated in the thirty months Civil War where lives and properties were destroyed – and also led to the deaths of prominent Nigerians like Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (the first and last Prime Minister of Nigeria); Sir Ahmadu Bello (Premier of Northern Nigeria); Samuel Akintola (Premier of Western Nigeria) and a host of others. The functions of the House of Chiefs were tersely conversed. The chapter ends by looking at the series of military coups that took place in many African countries, due to military background, contagion effect, arms transfer, economic and political conditions etcetera.
CHAPTER SEVEN

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC 1979-1983

“We are imperfect. We cannot expect perfect government”\textsuperscript{332} ~ William Howard Taft

\textsuperscript{332} \url{http://www.quotegarden/government/html}, Accessed on 10-10-2018
The chapter covers the transition period from military to civilian government—where General Olusegun Obasanjo’s administration conducted election and handed over power to Alhaji Shehu Shagari under the banner of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in 1979; thus, marking the advent of the Second Republic in Nigeria. As in the 1960s elections, Mallam Aminu Kano, Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikwe remained politically relevant and powerful up to the Second Republic; an impetus that gave them the opportunity to contest presidential seat in 1979, and or in 1983. 19 States and 299 Local Government Areas were created by the military governments. The political parties registered in 1978 were NPN, UPN, GNPP, PRP and NPP. Corruption, ugly party politics and political repression of the minority parties continued in the Second Republic. Despite the change of political system from parliamentary to presidential system in the Second Republic, the 1983 general election was regarded as unfair and lacked credibility. These among other things, culminated in the truncation of party politics and democracy in Nigeria on 31st December, 1983 via military coup d’état.

**A New Dawn in Political History of the North**

The North championed the affairs of Nigeria in the First Republic, and that influence did not change in the Second Republic. After General Yakubu Gowon took over the mantle of leadership in July 1966, it was
expected that the military would only restore peace in the country and conduct elections and hand over power to a democratically elected civilian government. However, that failed to transpire at the expected time. The military remained in power for good 13 years (1966-1979).

Gowon created 12 States in May, 1967 as follows:

Table: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Governors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>Brig. Abba Kyari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>North Eastern</td>
<td>Maiduguri</td>
<td>Brig. Musa Usman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>North Western</td>
<td>Sokoto</td>
<td>A.C.P Usman Faruk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>C.P. Audu Bako</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Benue-Plateau</td>
<td>Jos</td>
<td>C.P. J.D. Gomwalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>Ilorin</td>
<td>Col. David Bamigboye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>Brig. Mabolaaji Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
<td>Brig. Oluwolotimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mid-Western</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>Brig. S. Ogbemudia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>East-Central</td>
<td>Enugu</td>
<td>Ukpabi Asika (Administrator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>South Eastern</td>
<td>Calabar</td>
<td>Brig. Jacob Esuene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Faruk, *The Struggle of the National Association for the Creation of More States…*, p.13

G. N. Hembe argues that the creation of the twelve states out of the hitherto existing four regions was aimed at thwarting the plans of Odumegu Ojukwu, the then governor of Eastern Region, from opting out of Nigeria along with other ethnic nationalities of the Eastern Region, as well as for ensuring political stability in the country.\(^{334}\) This clearly indicated that the break-up of Biafra by the Ojukwu, which led to the 30

\(^{333}\) Faruk, *The Struggle of the National Association for the Creation of More States…*, p.13
\(^{334}\) Hembe, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-299
months civil war in Nigeria, was a long term plan. Therefore, optimisms were raised as a result of the creation of the above States and in considering the title of the Decree-: “States (Creation and Transitional Provision) Decree No. 14 of 1967”. This development was welcomed by various parts of the country. Nevertheless, Gowon continued to hold power and initiated a number of programmes for the military administration to achieve. The military autocracy was not a new thing in world history. Illustrations can be made from words of E. Gibbon on emperor Septimius Severus of the Roman Empire- “although the wounds of civil war appeared completely healed, its mortal poison still lurked...the vanity of his soldiers was flattered with the honour of wearing gold rings...he increased their pay beyond the examples of former times...”.

The military in Nigeria entrenched itself solidly. Quite a number of the military officers also nurtured excessive political ambition. They viewed the army as the only set-up in the country which as time goes on, would offer them openings to exercise political power. These army officers wanted power not because they would use it to develop the country, but to wield influence and amass wealth. At a point in time, Gowon once “complained” that his single difficulty was what to do with so much cash, as a result of better crude oil prices. The country

335 Faruk, The Struggle of the National Association for the Creation of More States…, op. cit., p.13
had to host World Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in 1977 to demonstrate that Nigeria and truly Africa had a rich culture.\footnote{Falola et’al, op. cit., pp. 142-150}

**Transition to Democracy in Nigeria**

Yakubu Gowon had administration that can be regarded as *all inclusive government* for the simple reason that Gowon appointed police officers as governors, top politicians as ministers and also empowered the Permanent Secretaries of various ministries in the country. In 1974 Yakubu Gowon announced that his administration’s proposed plan to hand over power to a democratically elected civilian government was not feasible. This dashed the confident of the Nigerian people. One year later, General Murtala Muhammad took over the mantle of the leadership via coup d’état in July, 1975, and immediately announced that the military would hand over power by 1\textsuperscript{st} October, 1979. Albeit this arrangement was actualised, but Murtala did not live to witness it, as he was assassinated on 13\textsuperscript{th} February, 1976. However, his Second in Command, General Olusegun Obasanjo, who succeeded him as Head of State set every mechanism to achieve a hitch free transition to civilian democratically elected administration on 1\textsuperscript{st} October, 1979.
On 21st September, 1978, Olusegun Obasanjo lifted the ban on political activities to pave way for party politics and reintroduction of democracy in the country. For fear of the unknown, and for using history as a light, Obasanjo stated that: “Let all players be good sportsmen. No matter the result of the competition, let all players remain friendly and without bitterness and look forward to another competition. Let the players, the spectators and the umpires all resolve to make the competition a successful one, and let the umpire be fair and firm and just...I wish all of you peaceful excitement in the weeks ahead”.

Obasanjo learned from what G. Santayana demonstrates in one of his speeches to the House of Commons in 1948: “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it”; or in clear terms of Winston Churchill, who slightly paraphrased Santayana’s quote thus: “Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it”. Obasanjo was a commandant during the Nigerian Civil War that lasted for thirty months. He knew what transpired in the First Republic that culminated in the first coup d’état. He was therefore, trying to avoid another upheaval in the country. Nigeria’s election have never been perfect, and usually left the loosing parties in dissatisfaction of outcomes. This research contends that while most elections were usually rigged,

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338. Falola, et’al, op cit., p. 158, also see Kukah, op. cit., p. 146
both the competing political parties always bear in mind that for their members to share what is termed as “national cake”, they must entrench themselves in power; and the only way to wield power is to win election. Thus, party politics endanger the democracy in Nigeria.

It is noteworthy that before the assassination of General Murtala Muhammad he broadcast a five-stage leading to the military transfer of power to a democratically elected government. These programmes were (1) Appointment of Constitution Drafting Committee (2) Creation of more States (3) Election into a Constituent Assembly by August 1977 (4) Ratification of the Draft Constituent Assembly by October 1978, and lifting of the 1966 ban on political parties (5) States and Federal Elections in 1979. A 50-man committee was set up to draft the constitution under the chairmanship of Rotimi Williams. Like Yakubu Gowon, Murtala too did not do away with the prominent politicians. In the Constitution Draft Committee (CDC), a number of prominent politicians such as Obafemi Awolowo, Mallam Aminu Kano, Nuhu Bamali, S. Gaya and Ibrahim Imam, and some others were included. On 19th September, 1976, the constitution draft committee submitted its report to the Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo. However, the CDC which also had some academics as members faced serious criticisms from two prominent

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341 Hembe, op. cit., p.302
342 Ojiako, Nigeria: Today, Tommorrow, and ?, op. cit., p. 228. also eee Hembe, Ibid, p. 305
scholars in persons of Dr Olusegun Osoba of University of Ife and Dr Yusuf Bala Usman of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The two scholars gave a Minority Report pointing out where they differed with the main committee.\textsuperscript{343}

Another important step achieved by the military administration was the election into the Constituent Assembly (CA) which took place throughout the country on 31\textsuperscript{st} August, 1977, with the 299 newly created local government councils as electoral colleges. The 230 seats of the Constituent Assembly were distributed to the nineteen states of the federation on the basis of population. The whole exercise was conducted under the chairmanship of Justice Udo Udoma. When the Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo was addressing the constituent assembly in its inaugural meeting, he reminded the members that they had an exceptional opportunity to lay the foundation for the nation’s future which was aimed at institutionalising a democratic government. The CA was the first of its kind in the history of Nigeria.

Unlike the first republic when political parties had either regional, ethnic or religious contents or inclinations in their numenclatures, the 1979 constitution prescribed stringent conditions with which the political parties should be guided. It was noted earlier that vast majority if not all

the second generation political parties had one predisposition or the other.\footnote{Hembe, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 309-311} Perhaps, only NCNC had national outlook. The Northern People’s Congress (NPC), Action Group (AG), Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), Borno Youth Movement (BYM) and so on had regional or ethnic disposition; while Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP) had social class inclination. Prior to its adjustment in nomenclature, the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) initially had religious inclination before the merger of Northern Nigeria Non-Muslim League (NNNML) (later Middle Zone League) and Middle Belt People’s Party to form it (UMBC).\footnote{Abba, “The Significance of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)…” \textit{op. cit.}, p.293}

There were heated debates in the CA during its assignment and the North remained divided; where the upper North is predominantly Muslim, the lower North, particularly the Tivland is predominantly Christian- thereby having sharp contrast in religious views. Arguments on the Sharia issue came up on 6\textsuperscript{th} April, 1978, where the pro-Sharia group who were mostly CA members from the Hausa/Fulani nationalities staged a dramatic walk-out, when the anti-Sharia group who were non-Muslims from Benue and Plateau States opposed them. The dispute originated when the pro-Sharia group advocated for the establishment of Federal Sharia Court of Appeal. On 19\textsuperscript{th} April, 1978 the head of state General
Olusegun Obasanjo accompanied by members of the Supreme Military Council (SMC) met the CA members and drew their attention on the need to avoid anything that would threaten the stability of the country. In obedience to the head of state, the pro-Sharia group returned to the CA on 24th April, 1978 to continue discussions. The Sharia issue did not scale through in the 1979 Constitution; an issue that the pro-Sharia group were not satisfied with.\textsuperscript{346}

The Supreme Military Council (SMC) broadcast the Draft Constitution into law in September, 1979 and the CA thereafter officially dissolved itself. The new constitution which became effective on 1\textsuperscript{st} October, 1979, contained some provisions which were aimed to improve national integration in Nigeria. Instances could be deduced from the provision of presidential system where the president is not only elected on grounds of recording highest number of votes, but also through widespread electoral support throughout the country. By this, a presidential candidate was not expected to emerge victorious with only regional votes. Also, to check the powers of the president, the constitution provided for a strong National Assembly which is Bicameral in nature; consisting of five members of the senate from each State and a number of representatives shared based on population of the States. It also provided \textit{National}

\textsuperscript{346} Hembe, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 310
Character, which would pave way for carrying the minorities in every aspect of life. The 1979 constitution however, retained multiparty system, but with strict conditions on party formation as noted above.  

Some Political Actors of Northern Nigeria in the Second Republic

Man is the maker of history. It is therefore; appropriate to tersely look into the makers of history. There was little or no difference between the political actors of the first and second republics in Nigeria. Despite the fact that two of the most powerful politicians of the Northern Nigeria (Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Ahmadu Bello) had fallen during the first coup d’état in 1966; the likes of Mallam Aminu Kano, J. S. Tarka, Waziri Ibrahim, Shehu Shagari, Maitama Sule, Adamu Chiroma and so on remained politically relevant. That notwithstanding, the second republic witnessed the emergence of new breed politicians from the North such as Muhammad Abubakar Rimi, Alhaji Abdu Dawakin Tofa, Sabo Bakin Zuwo, Adamu Gaya, Hamisu Musa, Ahmed Birniwa Zakari and Usman Danbatta, Kano State; Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa, Abba Musa Rimi, Lawal Kaita, Mamman Abubakar Danmusa, Abba Ali, Bello Bakori, Ibrahim Barau, Yusuf Ali Daura, Jacob Madaki, Ishaya Audu, Abubakar Iro Danmusa and Umaru Dikko, Kaduna State; Solomon Lar, Isaac Shaahu, John Kadiya, John Wash Pam, Muhammadu Musa,  

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347. Ibid, pp. 310-311  
Abubakar Ibrahim and Garba Matta, Plateau State; Olusola Saraki, Adamu Atta, Cornelius Adebayo, Justus Olabode, Isa Abaro, Aliyu Muhammad Gani and Akanbi Mahmoud Oniyangi, Kwara State; Shehu Kangiwa, Garba Nadama, Mukhtari Abdulkarim, Garba Kware, Haruna Musa, Hassan Zuru, Ibrahim Gusau, Sokoto State; Mallam Awwal Ibrahim, Jibril Salihu, Garba Musa Dada, Ibrahim Kolo, Abubakar Magaji, Abdullahi Muazu and Garba Wushishi, Niger State; Abubakar Barde, Bamanga Tukur, Luka Zing, Iliya Audu, Bitrus Kajel, Mahmud Waziri, Gayus Gilama, Iya Abukakar, and Wilberforce Juta, Gongola State; Muhammad Goni, Asheik Jarma, Idrisa Kadi, Muhammad Lawal, Bukar Sanda, Umaru Bama, and Adamu Chiroma, Borno State; Abubakar Tatari Ali, Ibrahim Jalo Waziri, Uba Ahmed, Ibrahim Dimis and Muhammad Ibrahim Hassan, Bauchi State; Apa Aku, Andrew Abogede, Suemo Chia, Ameh Ebute and Audu Innocent Ogbeh, Benue State.\textsuperscript{349} The aforementioned names captured were some of the major political players of the second republic who occupied the senate, ministerial appointments and government houses (as governors); who were from the north. The North had ten out of the nineteen States created in 1976 as would be outlined below. Like in the first republic, the north continued to dominate the political space of the federation in terms of numbers of governors, senators, representatives, members of the state assemblies, council

\textsuperscript{349} \url{https://governors_of_second_republic}, Accessed on 02-12-2018
chairmen and ward councillors because of the size of its land and population.

**The Creation of Constituencies of 1979 in Nigeria**

The change from parliamentary to presidential system of government as well as the creation of States and Local Governments Areas in 1976 changed the structures of the constituencies that existed in the first republic. Only Federal House of Representatives and Regional Assemblies had elected officials in the first republic. However, the creation of states and local government areas culminated in the adjustment of constituencies to a higher number with elected officials at the doorstep of the *Talakawa*.

**The Creation of more States in Nigeria**

The creation of more states can be seen here as creation of constituencies. Murtala Muhammad took over power from Gowon for accusing him of corruption and failure to keep his words of returning to civilian democratic rule in Nigeria. After he became the Head of State in 1975, he therefore, quickly set up a panel as follows.
The above Committee looked at the issue of States creation in the country on the following terms:

1. “To examine the question of creation of more states in the Federation and, should the committee find the creation of more States necessary and desirable to (a) advise on the delimitation of such States; (b) advise on the economic viability of the proposed States, (c) advise on the location of the administrative capitals of the proposed States, and (d) examine and advise on the other factors that may appear to the Committee to be relevant, so as to enable the Government to take a decision which will ensure a balanced Federation.

2. To receive and examine written presentations from individuals, groups, organisations, or associations who may have views on the desirability or otherwise of creating States in particular areas”.

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After the committee received both written and oral presentations as well as toured the country; it recommended the creation of additional seven States, bringing the total number of States in the Federation to be nineteen. It should be noted however, the Panel received about 32 demands for creation of new States. By February, 1976 the following were announced:

Table: 3

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Governors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>Group Captain U. Jibrin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>Maiduguri</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Muhammad Buhari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Plateau</td>
<td>Jos</td>
<td>Col. Abdullahi Muhammad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>Ilorin</td>
<td>Col. Ibrahim Taiwo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Ibadan</td>
<td>Navy Capt. Akin Adowu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>Ikeja</td>
<td>Navy Capt. Adekunle Lawan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Bendel</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>Col. George Innih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Anambra</td>
<td>Enugu</td>
<td>Col. Anthony Ochefiu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Imo</td>
<td>Owerri</td>
<td>Lt. Commd. Godwin Kanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>Akure</td>
<td>Major. J. D. Ikpeme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Benue</td>
<td>Makurdi</td>
<td>Lt. Col. A. Shelleng</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Faruk, *The Struggle of the National Association for the Creation of More States*..., p. 22

As J. C. Johari argues, whether the military rule is interim for the sake of executing some specific or long-term plan established after the

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351 Ibid, p.ii
352 Faruk, *The Struggle of the National Association for the Creation of More States*..., op. cit., p. 22
coup d'état of a civilian government has two proportions - direct and indirect. It is direct when there is no civilian administration and the military leaders are the supreme decision makers. Nevertheless, it is indirect when the military leaders have a certain power upon the civilian administration and thereby form its policy according to their will.\(^{353}\) The case of Nigerian military rule was direct, as the military suspended the constitution and formed the SMC which had absolute control of power in the period of its thirteen years rule in the country. The military tried to rationalise its presence on the astute plea of having their grasp for a short-term plan necessarily brought about to implement some long over-due programme anticipated by the people. The military in Nigeria believed that the Nigerians clamoured and needed a democratic government. In fact, Nigerians needed a stable democracy free from any kind of internal aggression. At any rate, the military rule is a clear violation of the doctrines of a democratic system, no matter how the leaders in authority deafeningly pronounce their assurance to the reason of protection and advancement of the legitimate interests of the ruled by saving them from the impending disasters of a crisis.\(^ {354}\) This is not discrediting the military administration despite its remarkable achievements. As up to date, no civilian administration created even a single State in Nigeria. In sum, the military administration took all the credits of States creation.

\(^ {353}\) Johari op. cit., pp. 480-481
\(^ {354}\) Ibid, p. 480
One may ask why the creation of states? Scholars have argued on the reasons for the creation of more states in Nigeria. A. T. Gana argues that the following were the major purposes for States creation in Nigeria: (a) the need to minimise conflicts between States and amongst States; (b) the need for unity in the country; (c) the need for maintenance of worthwhile cultural peculiarities and economic development. One can argue therefore, the military governments had given sense of belonging to many ethnic nationalities through the creation of states, despite the fact that we still have differences as a people and we would continue to have. Nigeria as a country with hundreds of different ethnic groups still faces the agitation for creation of more states, because some minorities still feel being subjugated by the majority. Another factor is the issue of religion, which it plays a vital role in determining who gets what in Nigerian party politics and democracy. The election of 1979 speaks volumes. As the military administration argued that creation of states must be done to avoid domination- can we say the military is right? If yes, don’t we have domination anymore? The idea therefore, would have been to reduce domination, because going by human nature one dominates the other. The elections of the 1979 and 1983 were basically one set of people dominating the other either by using ethnicity, religion, economy, region

or class on the banner of party politics. Finally, the creation of states in
the federation paved ways for creation of both the 95 Senatorial Districts
and 449 Federal Constituencies; and lastly, a total of 1,347 constituencies
for the nineteen states Houses of Assemblies in the country.356

**The Creation of Local Government Areas in Nigeria**

A. Theophilus contends that the politics of local government creation in
Nigeria is as old as the nation itself; and that creation of local government
was conceived as devolution of powers to enable full participation of
individual ethnic configuration to take place. Nigeria as a multi-cultural
and multi-lingual country is pregnant with fears of domination of one
ethnic group by the other.357 J. Fatile maintains that every modern state
has been made by coming together of many local elements. This typifies
that every inhabitant has local allegiance. Since it is almost impossible for
the central administration to control every aspect of the segments after the
formation or creation of states in Nigeria, it became imperative that local
government should be established to attend to the minutiae of local
administration, giving full attention to local preferences and
predispositions on every matter.358 Meanwhile, what is local government?


According to the United Nations Division of Public Administration, “local government is a political division of a nation (or federal system, or state) which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such entity is elected or otherwise locally selected”.  

L. M. Keith defines “local government as a sub-national level of government which has jurisdiction over a limited range of state functions, within a defined geographical area which is part of a larger territory”. In the view of this research, both the above definitions are in consonance with each other. The local government is regarded as the third tier of government in Nigeria following the federal and state governments and the underlying principles for its creation, which according to A. Ranney, are as follows:

1. “It provides the people a platform to conduct their own affairs in line with the local needs, aspirations resources and customs which they alone understand better than any outsider.

2. It provides a framework for mobilising and sustaining popular zeal and initiative in development.

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359 Anifowose & Enenuo (eds.), op. cit., p.317

3. Local government serves as a hedge against over-concentration of power at the centre which often leads to tyranny.

4. Local government functions as a two-way channel of communication between the local population and the central government. It aggregates local interests and transmits these to the centre and also keeps the local population informed about central government policies and programmes.

5. Local government can serve as an invaluable socio-political laboratory for testing new proposals for government organisation and sound economic policies. When such policies fail, the cost would be much less than failure at the national level. If it is successful, it can be replicated across the country with minimum risk”.

Anifowose and Enemuo further argue that popular, grassroots participation in local government either as an official or as an elector is outstanding exercise for casting vote in national polls holding national public workplace. By so doing, local government offers an ever-fresh foundation of good people and frontrunners for the country and also helps to promote the ethos of democracy. Anifowose and Enemuo’s point speaks volumes, as the creation of local government areas in the country

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362 Ibid, pp. 317-321
provided dividends of democracy in a variety of ways; such as provision of water, accessible and affordable educational facilities, accessible and affordable healthcare systems, employments, scholarships, reduction of poverty, public enlightenments and sensitisations and so many other things numerous to mention. This research is not concerned with history of local governments per se; but is however, concerned with how the creation of local government areas culminated in the formation or creation of additional constituencies in the country and how it affected the grassroots in providing dividends of democracy.

Finally, the creation of local government areas in the country paved the ways for local council elections having LGC Chairmen and Ward Councillors. By this, the emergence of two additional constituencies apart from the office of the President, governors and Senate, came into being.

**The Formation of New Political Parties in the Second Republic**

The political parties of the Second Republic are referred to as the *Third Generation* Political Parties, according to A. A. Ujo, the nomenclature already adopted from the beginning of this thesis. After the military government lifted ban on political parties on 21st September 1978, fifty political associations competed to be registered with the Federal Electoral

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363. Ujo, *Understanding Elections in Nigeria- The First 50 Years…*, op. cit., p. 289

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Commission (FEDECO),\textsuperscript{364} under the chairmanship of Chief Michael Ani. FEDECO stipulated some conditions to be fulfilled by any political association that wanted to be registered as a political party in Nigeria. Like the appeal of General Obasanjo to the Constituent Assembly (CA), FEDECO also, in clear terms, stated the following conditions to be fulfilled before registration:

(a) “the names and addresses of its national officers are registered with FEDECO,
(b) its membership is open to every Nigerian citizen irrespective of his place of origin, religion, ethnic group or sex,
(c) its name, emblem or motto has no ethnic or religious connotation, and does not give the appearance that the association’s activities are confined to a part only of the geographical area of Nigeria,
(d) its headquarters is situated in the federal capital”.\textsuperscript{365}

It was obvious that these conditions were given to avoid the likes of regional, ethnic or even religious political parties that existed during the Second Generation Political Parties in the country. FEDECO was therefore, trying to avoid unhealthy party politics in Nigeria, knowing fully well how the country was engulfed in series of political upheavals between 1960 and 1970. Parties like the UMBC, ITP,NPC, BYM and so

\textsuperscript{364} Falola, et’al, \textit{op. cit.}, p.158
\textsuperscript{365} Ibid, p.159
many other political parties that had either ethnic, regional or religious inclinations were therefore, avoided during the second republic party politics. The behaviour of Nigerian politicians during the second generation political parties to form political parties with religious, ethnic or regional connotations were not new in party politics around the globe. J. C. Johari succinctly notes that various factors are the determinants of party structure. They differ from religious and social to economic and political elements. Political parties associated with faith included, but not limited to MRP in France: Christian People’s Party in Norway, Christian Democrats in Italy and Germany; and Catholic Party in Holland; Hindu Maha Sabha and Muslim League in India and Komei-to (political wing of the Soka Gakkai) in Japan. Parties with ethnic or racial inclinations include Tamil Federal Party in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{366} Like Nigerian Civil War, Sri Lanka too experienced civil war as a result of ethnic differences in struggle for political power. M. A. Bello points out that the emergence of Vellupullai Prabhakaran as the leader of the Liberation Tigers of TamilElem (LTTE) better addressed as Tamil Tigers in 1976 engulfed Sri Lanka in civil strife for over two decades. The Tamil are the second largest ethnic groups in Sri Lanka, after the Sinhalese; using the power of

\textsuperscript{366} Johari, op. cit., p. 268 see T. G. Jelen et’al (eds.), Politics and Religion, Volume 1, Number 1, Cambridge University Press, 2008 for more details
number therefore, the latter dominated the former in the country. Other political parties leaning on ethnicity are People’s Progressive Party of the East Indians and People’s National Congress essentially composed of the Negroes in Guyana.

By July 1979, five political parties that fulfilled the requirements and conditions for registration were: National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigeria People’s Party (NPP), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Great Nigeria People’s Party (GNPP) and People’s Redemption Party (PRP). The discussion of the parties below, is however, not based on chronology.

The formation of National Party of Nigeria (NPN)

Let it be said from the onset that the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) is an offshoot or the reincarnation of the Northern People’s Congress (NPC). The evolution and transformation of the party can be traced to a cluster known as “Kaduna Group” that represented the interest of the North at the Constituent Assembly in 1977-1978. The development of this group consistently followed all other members of the Constituent Assembly (CA) at that period. It stretched its length across the Niger to incorporate Anambra and Imo States that joined the developing legendary

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368. Johari, op. cit., p. 268
Northern leaders that required their formation from the NPC and NCNC coalition of the First Republic. NPN was officially declared on 24th September, 1978. It was very clear that the Northerners were the originators of this party, while the Southerners could be said to be the joiners.

In the course of advertising the NPN, its presidential flag-bearer in the 1979 election posit that “we are a party of all social classes and groups, the rich, the poor, professionals, academics, business people, farmers, women and youths of all ethnic background”. Shehu Shagari knew what transpired in the first republic as one time elected member of the House of Representatives in 1954, and later the Minister of Economic Development and Natural Resources in the First Republic. It was very clear that his rhetoric was aimed at canvassing for the support of people across all the classes of life. The objectives of the party which included, but not limited to the following were outlined: (a) “To maintain and protect the unity and sovereignty of Nigeria as an indivisible political entity. (b) To promote unity, solidarity, harmonious co-existence amongst all Nigerians irrespective of their religious, tribal and other differences. (c) To uphold federalism as a form of government for Nigeria. (d) To ensure the practice and maintenance of democracy, rule of law and social

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369 Umar, *op. cit.*, p. 124
justice in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. (e) To promote the principle of equal opportunity and treatment to all Nigerians. The party also stated its Aims as follows: (a) Social justice and social welfare. (b) Equality of opportunity for all citizens. (c) Personal liberty and fundamental rights and freedom of the citizens. (d) Supremacy of the will of the people democratically expressed. (e) Self-respect and self-reliance and; (f) Unity of Nigeria”.

The party declared its officials as follows: National Chairman, Alhaji Aliyu Makaman Bida, Niger; National Vice Chairman, Mr C. C. Onoh, Anambra. Other prominent officials included Alhaji Sule Katagum, Bauchi; Dr. C. G. Okojie, Bendel; J. S. Tarka, Benue; Alhaji Kam Salem, Borno; Dr J. Wayas, Cross River; Professor Iya Abubakar, Gongola; Alhaji Nuhu Bamali, Kaduna; Alhaji Inuwa Wada, Kano; Dr Sola Saraki, Kwara; Dr L. O. Okozie, Imo; Alhaji Yahaya Sabo, Plateau; Prince A. Adeleke Adedoyin, Ogun; Major General (retired) R. A. Adebayo, Ondo; Chief R. Fani Kayode, Oyo; Alhaji Shehu Shagari (who later became the party’s presidential candidate and first elected president), Sokoto; Chief M. O. Okilo, Rivers. The National Secretary of the party was Dr Nwakama Okoro, while Alhaji Umaru Dikko served as Deputy National Secretary. Dr Onugbuje served as the Treasurer; Alhaji Ali Kaloma, National Publicity Secretary; while Chief R. A. Akinjide
served as Legal Adviser. However, there were other officials which have not been mentioned here. The party emerged victorious at the 1979 presidential and other elections in the country. Hence, it had control of the National Assembly. Looking at the above Aims and Objectives of the party, one can contend that had those principles came into being, it would have been difficult for the falling of the Second Republic. In other words, the party failed to achieve its aims and objectives as would be subsequently discussed.

**The Creation of the Nigerian People’s Party (NPP)**

The Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) as one of the five political parties that participated in the 1979 elections in Nigeria was formed in 1978. NPP was formed barely 24 hours after the lift of the ban on party politics. 22nd September, 1978 as the inauguration date was practically feasible, as Waziri Ibrahim only read a written address to reporters announcing the formation of the NPP, as J. O. Ojiako clearly points out.

The party was a fusion of three associations namely - Club 19, the National Council for Understanding and Solidarity (NCUS) and the Progressives of Eastern States and Lagos. The Club 19 is a conglomeration of the *anti-Sharia* group who resisted the introduction of

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370 Ojiako, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-257
372 *Ibid*
373 *Hembe, op. cit.*, p. 330
Sharia in Nigerian constitution. Hembe argues that the NPP originated in Tivland. The NCUS was led by Waziri Ibrahim, who was minister of health during the first republic; and as an exponent in forming the NPP, he emerged as the spokesman on the Inauguration day and later regarded as the founder of the party. On launching the party, Waziri Ibrahim read the following as the Aims and Objectives of the NPP: (a) “To promote and sustain the unity of Nigeria and uphold her territorial integrity. (b) To work for the integration and equality of the people of Nigeria without regard to ethnic affiliation, religion or sex. (c) To work for equal opportunities for all Nigerians in every aspect of national life and to promote political, social and economic equality of all sectors of Nigeria. (d) To work for full employment of Nigeria’s manpower and natural resources with a view to building a self-reliant economy. (e) To promote the just and equitable distribution of fruits of economic development and persons and states of Nigeria. (f) To work towards free and high quality education at all levels. (g) To work for secular state which upholds democracy, the rule of law, and freedom of worship”.

At the end of the launching ceremony, Waziri Ibrahim read forty names who would take charge of the party as follows: Mr Solomon Lar,
Plateau; Mr Mathew Mbu, Cross River; Chief J. Edewor, Beldel; Alhaji Yusuf Dantsoho, Kaduna; Chief Adeniran Ogunsanya, Lagos; Dr Obi Wali, Rivers; Mr Joe Asogwa, Anambra; Alhaji Ado Ibrahim, Kano; Dr Ben Nzeribe, Imo; Alhaji Megida Lawal, Kwara; Chief Theophilus Benson, Lagos; Chief Basil Okwu, Anambra; Dr Omoye Omoruyi, Bendel; Chief Lolawale Balogun, Oyo; Mr Sam Mbakwe, Imo; Chief Samuel Onitiri, Lagos and Alhaji Jafaru Mango, Borno and so on. Waziri Ibrahim stated that ultimate power belongs to the people and respect for the sanctity of human life. He later had to abandon the party and moved to form GNPP as would be discussed below. It is noteworthy that the NPP was the only political party out of the five registered political parties that can be called a fresh one; the remaining political parties were reincarnation of the second generation political parties, which Boumo Ezonbi termed as the old face that refused to disappear. Nevertheless, at the end, the Igbos viewed the NPP as their own party, which was why they invited Nnamdi Azikwe and gave him a presidential ticket, after which the exit of Waziri Ibrahim from the party followed.

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378. Ezonbi, *op. cit.*, p. 539
The Founding of Great Nigerian People’s Party (GNPP)

The GNPP as a political party came into being as a result of Waziri Ibrahim’s inability to win the presidential nomination of the NPP which took place on 17th November, 1978. Waziri formed the GNPP along with some of his political associates that formed the NPP. GNPP was therefore, viewed as a splinter group of the disgruntled members of the NPP. Waziri Ibrahim had formed and was an exponent of different groups of political associations such as National Unity Council (NUC); a political club founded in 1976, which was also an offshoot of an association called Club 400. History has it that the NUC members were drawn from all parts of the country with the aim of reaching the constitutional requirement for the formation of a political party. Waziri as a successful businessman used available resources within his disposal to ensure that the GNPP emerged as a political party fully registered to contest the 1979 presidential and other elections in Nigeria. The party’s evolution didn’t last long, but it was able to canvass and gain the confidence and support of the minority ethnic nationalities and the Kanuris of Borno.  

379. Falola et’al, *op. cit.*, p. 162
The Establishment of People’s Redemption Party (PRP)

The People’s Redemption Party (PRP) was founded by Mallam Aminu Kano. Mallam Aminu initially joined the NPN, as captured by J. S. Tarka when he was trying to justify that the NPN was a completely new political party having nothing today or didn’t share any similarity with the NPC of the first republic. For instance, Tarka said: “would anybody say that Chief Michael, Chief Murphy, Aminu Kano, Sultan Adele and host of others worked together to revive the NPC?” The PRP was the last political party to be registered among the five political parties that contested the 1979 general elections in Nigeria. The PRP was a clear rebirth of the NEPU and the party was formally launched on 21st October, 1978. The PRP had the following programmes: (a) There is a need to create a new social order. The party will strive to build a new Nigeria free from any form of oppression. (b) There is also a need for a new economic order. The PRP is committed to establishing an independent national economy free from undue foreign domination and unfair and unjust indigenous distribution. We shall encourage genuine public and private partnership; ensure the dignity of labour and even socio-economic and educational development of Nigeria. (c) The PRP will inculcate discipline

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380 Hembe, op. cit., p.336, see also Umar, op. cit., pp. 129-130
382 Feinstein, op. cit., p. 298
in both our private and public sectors and incorporate discipline to form part of our daily life and civic responsibility. (d) The party will create a new Nigerian liberated from the existing decadent social order typified by vices like tribalism, sectionalism, bribery, corruption, indiscipline and nepotism. (e) The party will create a new political order in which the well-being of the people shall be the order of the day. (f) The PRP will create a new ethic for public service to make it productive and people oriented. (g) The PRP will accord a special priority to the care, character development and education of children and protect them against delinquency, drug abuse and lack of educational opportunities which render them a liability rather than asset to the nation. (h) The PRP shall give high priority to the development of rural areas. Farmers and working class will be protected through a strict and effective control of inflation, provision of better housing and right to organise trade union activities to fight for better pay and conditions of service. (i) The PRP will stimulate mass consciousness and mass participation in all aspects of our national life. We believe in the principles of collective leadership. We will encourage initiative in the transformation of our society”.

PRP was a leftist political party and arguably comprised the highest number of intellectuals such as the likes of Wole Soyinka, Yusufu Bala Usman, A. D. Yahaya, Chinua Achebe, A. U. Jalingo, Arthur Nwankwo,

383 Uno, op. cit., pp. 19-20
Junaidu Mohammed, Abubakar Rimi and Balarabe Musa and so on. The last two people emerged as governors of Kano and Kaduna States respectively after the 1979 elections.\textsuperscript{384}

\textit{The Birth of Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN)}

Of the five registered political parties that contested the 1979 election in Nigeria, Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) was the first to be formed. Obafemi Awolowo, the founder of Action Group (AG) of the first republic or rather \textit{second generation} political party was the founder of the UPN. The nucleus of the UPN was \textit{Council of Friends}\textsuperscript{385} which was formed by Awolowo during the civil war, precisely in 1968. On 21\textsuperscript{st} September, 1978 when the Head of State, Olusegun Obasanjo broadcast that the ban on political activities was lifted,\textsuperscript{386} that day in the evening Obafemi Awolowo invited the media for a World Press Conference scheduled to take place at his Park Lane, Apapa, residence in Lagos which he intended to announce his political party the following day (22-09-1978). The feasibility of Awolowo’s party to be formed 24 hours after the lift of ban was simply because Awolowo only made a proclamation of the party through press conference. He also emerged the position of party leader of the party, having Bisi Onabanjo, Latif Jakande and son on as his

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{384} Kukah, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 149
\item \textsuperscript{385} Falola et’ al, \textit{op. cit.}, p.160
\item \textsuperscript{386} Kukah, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 146, see also Ojiako, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 254
\end{itemize}
close political associates. The UPN listed the following four cardinal programmes of the party: (a) Free education at all levels for all, with effect from 1\textsuperscript{st} October, 1979. (b) Free healthcare services for all citizens of Nigeria. (c) Integrated rural development which is aimed at boosting food production and feeding 60 million hungry citizens of Nigeria. (d) Full employment. Shortly, Awolowo was adopted as the presidential candidate of the party.\textsuperscript{387}

**The 1979 Elections in Northern Nigeria**

After the creation of States and Local Governments Areas, the constituencies have increased in numbers; and by now, the system of government had changed from the hitherto parliamentary system to presidential system. Hence, for the first time in Nigerian history the electorates were given the opportunity to elect their president and senators, unlike the First Republic when these offices were not elected by what the political scientist called *popular votes* in representative democracy.\textsuperscript{388} Moreover, the creation of States and Local Government had also given the electorates to elect their state governors, LGAs chairmen and councillors. In the past, only Members of House of Representatives and Members of Northern Regional Assembly were elected. With the introduction of presidential system, the electorates were

\textsuperscript{388} https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/poupular_vote_representative_democracy, Accessed on 09-12-2018
given the right to participate in electing presidents, senators, representatives, and governors, members of state assembly, council chairmen and councillors. The parties adopted the following as their symbols and slogans:

Table: 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Slogan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>NPN</td>
<td>House and Maize</td>
<td>One Nation One Destiny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>UPN</td>
<td>Light Bulb</td>
<td>Up Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>PRP</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Nasara (Victory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>GNPP</td>
<td>Cockerel &amp; Palm Tree</td>
<td>Adalchi (Fairness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>A Family</td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ezonbi, *op. cit.,* p. 549*

**Political Party Primaries**

Before delving into the crux of the matter, it is appropriate to tersely look at the political party primaries, which in some views, is a feature of internal democracy. It is not possible to examine the primaries of all political parties in all the constituencies of Northern Nigeria, but an attempt will be made to examine how some of the gubernatorial and presidential candidates emerged as flag-bearers of their respective political parties within the states of Northern Nigeria.

389 Ezonbi, *op. cit.,* 549
Gubernatorial Party Primaries of 1979 in Northern Nigeria

According to the State Chairman of Bauchi State NPN, Alhaji Magaji Muazu, Abubakar Tatari Ali emerged as NPN gubernatorial candidate of the state after a tough primary election with his opponent Abubakar Umar.\(^{390}\) Alhaji Ahmadu Mai Agogo had shown that in Borno State, Muhammad Goni emerged as GNPP candidate during candidates’ replacement by political parties. Initially the party adopted Jiddun Gana as the candidate, but he later failed to fulfil the requirements of FEDECO. Thus, Muhammad Goni’s candidacy as Borno State GNPP gubernatorial candidate came into being.\(^{391}\) Alhaji Iliyasu Hamma Joda opines that in Gongola State, Abubakar Barde emerged as GNPP gubernatorial candidate after scoring highest votes during his contest with Wilberforce Juta and Julde Burunfawo. Wilberforce Juta came second and the party there and then decided Abubakar Barde should pick him as his running mate.\(^ {392}\) In Kano State, Adamu Audu Panda maintains that Salihi Iliyasu was the initial PRP gubernatorial candidate, but was disqualified by FEDECO on grounds of non-payment of tax. Abubakar Rimi, who was then PRP Senatorial Candidate, was asked by the party to replace Salihi. Consequently, the emergence of Abubakar Rimi as Kano State PRP

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\(^{391}\) A. A. Mai Agogo, Interviewed on 16-12-2018, in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

\(^{392}\) A. I. Hamma Joda, Yola, Interviewed on 17-12-2018, in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria
gubernatorial candidate came into being. Alhaji Danlami maintains that in Plateau State, Solomon Lar and Yakubu Datti expressed their interest to vie for the gubernatorial seat. In the end, Solomon Lar was adopted as a consensus candidate. In Benue State, Aper Aku emerged as NPN gubernatorial candidate as a result of purported letter sent to his opponent, thus: “Dear Isaac, I am directed by Chief J. S. Tarka to contact you and implore you to stop your campaign for governorship and give your support to Aper Aku. The deputy governorship is to go to Igala in the person of Isa Odoma. ...please inform Mr Atim Atedze to do the same. We have other plans for him after the elections”.

Presidential Party Primaries in Nigeria

Under the banner of the UPN, D. Babarinsa demonstrates that Obafemi Awolowo was only adopted as the party’s presidential candidate without contending with any other aspirant. The national congress of 2nd October, 1978 which took place at the Mainland Hotel Ebute-Metta, Lagos only formalised Awolowo’s candidacy. However, in Shehu Shagari’s NPN was entirely a different experience. T. Falola maintains that the NPN came up with “zoning” system. The party’s Convention approved that the presidential candidate of the party should be chosen from Northern

393 A. A. Panda, Interviewed on 08-12-2018, in Kano State, Nigeria,
394 A. Danlami Jos, Interviewed on 18-12-2018 , in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria
395 Hembe, op. cit., p. 364
396 Babarinsa, op. cit., p. 39
Nigeria and a presidential candidate must score at least 50 per cent votes before he/she would be declared candidate of the party. In the end, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, J. S. Tarka, Alhaji Adamu Chiroma, Alhaji Maitama Sule, Alhaji Olusola Saraki and Professor Iya Abubakar ran for the party’s ticket. On 9th December, 1978 a number of 2,235 delegates cast their votes in the National Convention which took place in Lagos and none of the aspirants got up to the required number; and therefore, the Chief Returning Officer of the election, Anthony Enahoro, ordered for a fresh election for the first three aspirants which included Shehu Shagari, Maitama Sule and Adamu Chiroma. Finally, the last two aspirants stepped down for Shehu Shagari, who was then proclaimed as the NPN Presidential Flag-Bearer.

In NPP, Nnamdi Azikwe emerged as the party’s presidential candidate on 17th November, 1978 in Lagos, under the chairmanship of Adeniran Ogunsanya. In the GNPP and PRP, Waziri Ibrahim and Mallam Aminu Kano emerged as presidential candidates unopposed.

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397 Falola et’al, op. cit., pp. 160-161
398 Umar, op. cit., pp. 123-125
399 Falola et’al, op. cit., p. 162
400 Mai Agogo, op cit., (Interview)
401 Panda, op cit., (Interview)
The National Assembly Elections of 1979 in Northern Nigeria

The 1979 election was the actualisation of the departure from the first republic in the system of government, which is the most fundamental difference between and the first and the second republics. The National Assembly election was the first in sequence of the 1979 elections which were conducted on 7th July, 1979 (to the Senate) and 14th July, 1979 (to the House of Representatives) and all the five registered political parties participated. For the Federal House of Representatives, the division of the country was based on population and 449 constituencies were created where the North had 240 seats as follows:

Table: 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Number of Seats Allocated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bauchi</td>
<td>2,429,296</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Benue</td>
<td>2,427,017</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>2,997,498</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Gongola</td>
<td>2,605,263</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>4,098,306</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>5,774,840</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>1,714,485</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>1,194,508</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Plateau</td>
<td>2,026,657</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Sokoto</td>
<td>4,538,787</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Senatorial Districts were divided equally with each State having five seats including Lagos, the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. The senatorial election which was conducted on the 7th July, 1979 was a victory to the NPN, the *reincarnated* NPC of the first republic. It was actually an indication that Shehu Shagari, the NPN presidential candidate was heading to the presidency as the first civilian democratically elected president of Nigeria.\textsuperscript{404} The result which showed that the North would continue to hold power was not good news to Obafemi Awolowo, the presidential candidate of the UPN. His dream of becoming president of the country from the first republic was therefore, bleak. In those polls, the Shehu Shagari’s NPN had a comfortable lead of 36 seats, over the Awolowo’s UPN with 28 seats. The NPP of Nnamdi Azikwe won only 16 seats and Warizi Ibrahim’s GNPP won 8 seats. Finally, Mallam Aminu Kano’s PRP won only 7 seats. Below is the breakdown of the results by States and Political Parties in Northern Nigeria:

Table: 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>NPN</th>
<th>UPN</th>
<th>NPP</th>
<th>GNPP</th>
<th>PRP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bauchi</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Benue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Gongola</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{404} Ibid, p. 198
In examining the outcome of the senatorial election in Northern Nigeria, it was clear that each political party scored its votes based on the historical background of the party in question. For example, NPN won Bauchi, Benue, Niger and Sokoto and all the constituencies. As the thesis argued above, the NPN was a rebirth of the NPC; so could it be a surprise to win those states? Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (Prime Minister of the First Republic) and Ahmadu Bello (Premier of Northern Nigeria) were the founders of the NPC and with Shehu Shagari from Sokoto, the home State of Ahmadu Bello as the presidential candidate of NPN, the victory in those states was anticipated. Benue and Niger States are part of the so-called Middle Belt, the strong hold of J. S. Tarka, who was also one of the senatorial candidates of the NPN in 1979 elections. The victories in Kwara and Kaduna States where NPN won 3 senators respectively was also predicable considering the fact that Kwara is part of the Middle Belt, and Kaduna was the administrative capital of the Northern Region where Ahmadu Bello was politically entrenched during his Premiership.

Mallam Aminu Kano had been known for his popularity in Kano State; hence his landslide victory as PRP won all the five senatorial seats.

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PRP’s victory on two senatorial seats in Kaduna State was also predicted given the presence of Balarabe Musa and Yusufu Bala Usman who later emerged as the governor and Secretary to the government of Kaduna State respectively. NPP’s victory in Plateau State was also expected on grounds of the fame of Chief Solomon Lar, John Wash Pam and few others. Ibrahim Waziris’s UPN also won 4 out of 5 seats in Borno State, which was his home base. In sum, the victory of the parties was determined by the political backgrounds and strengths of their members since from the first republic.

In sequence of the 1979 elections, the election to the Federal House of Representatives followed on 14th July, 1979. During this election, 449 members were elected, which 240 seats held from the North. All the political parties participated in this election and the NPN maintained status-quo by winning majority seats in the House of Representatives. In the whole, NPN won 168 seats; UPN won 111; NPP won 78 seats; PRP won 49 seats and GNPP won 43 seats.406 In Bauchi, Benue, Kwara, Niger and Sokoto States of Northern Nigeria, the NPN remained firmly rooted. Below is the breakdown of the election results:

\[^{406} \text{Ibid, p. 289}\]
Table: 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
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<th>UPN</th>
<th>NPP</th>
<th>PRP</th>
<th>GNPP</th>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>31</td>
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It was evidently clear that the trend of 7th July senatorial election of the 1979 was replicated on the 14th July, 1979, during the House of Representatives elections in the States of Northern Nigeria.

**The State Houses of Assembly Elections of 1979 in Northern Nigeria**

On 21st July, 1979 election to the State Houses of Assembly was conducted in the country. As to be expected, the trend of victories to the five political parties relatively remained intact. A total number of 1,347 408 seats were contested, but this research is however concerned with the 720 constituencies of Northern Nigeria. After a vigorous campaign by all the political parties, the 21st July polls ended as follows:

\[ \text{407} \text{. The General Elections of 1979: Report by the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO), also see Dudley, op. cit.} \]

\[ \text{408} \text{. Dudley, An Introduction to Nigerian Government & Politics…., op. cit., p. 205} \]
The State Houses of Assembly elections in Northern Nigeria were not indifferent with the other elections conducted in the region before 21st July, 1979. In other words, the trend and voting pattern remained comparatively the same.

**The Gubernatorial Elections of 1979 in Northern Nigeria**

In sequence of elections of the 1979 in Nigeria, the gubernatorial election was conducted on 28th July, 1979. However, there was a little change of tide in the voting pattern of Northern Nigerian governors. In these elections, Kaduna State where NPN had the majority seats in the state houses of assembly elections with 64 seats out of 99 seats lost to the PRP this time around. The pattern of gubernatorial election was a little bit different in terms of party politics too. Both Obafemi Awolowo and

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Table: 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>NPN</th>
<th>UPN</th>
<th>NPP</th>
<th>PRP</th>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
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<td>35</td>
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</tr>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Sokoto</td>
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<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


409 The General Elections of 1979: *Reports by the Federal Electoral Commission* (FEDECO)

410 Falola et al., *op. cit.*, p. 168, see also Dudley & Ojiako, *op. cit.*
Waziri Ibrahim made attempts to truncate the political fortunes of the NPN in the country, but to no avail. Both of them were flag-bearers for presidential election of their respective political parties; and going by trend of NPN victories in the elections of 7th, 14th and 21st July, it was likely that NPN would still sweep the gubernatorial elections in the country. This therefore, necessitated the move by Awolowo and Ibrahim to change the tide of NPN’s victory on the 28th July, 1979.

To this end, as D. Babarinsa argues, Awolowo in a desperate move to change the trend of election to his favour, announced a unilateral alliance with the other political parties except NPN, asking all the UPN gubernatorial candidates of Ondo, Oyo, Ogun, Lagos, Kwara and Bendel States to step down.411 This was buttressed when in a television interview with Ibrahim Waziri at the eve of the gubernatorial election mentioned that “four political parties were making moves to work together and prevent the NPN from coming to power”.412 The moves by Awolowo and Ibrahim arguably contributed to the victory of Balarabe Musa (PRP) in Kaduna State, where NPN won sixty four out of ninety nine seats during the state assembly election as noted above.413

411 Babarinsa, op. cit., p. 49
412 Ojiako, op. cit., pp. 290-292
413 Ibid, pp. 169-319
Below is the breakdown of the gubernatorial elections where NPN won five states; PRP won two states; NPP won one state and GNPP won two states in the ten States that constitute the Northern Nigeria. Notwithstanding the fact that PRP won Kaduna State, the NPN was in control of the legislature; an impetus that gave the later the opportunity to impeach the governor, as would be discussed subsequently.

Table: 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>NPN</th>
<th>UPN</th>
<th>NPP</th>
<th>PRP</th>
<th>GNPP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bauchi</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Benue</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Borno</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>Kaduna</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Kwara</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Niger</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Plateau</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Sokoto</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Despite the alliances of UPN, PRP and GNPP during the gubernatorial elections in Northern Nigeria, the NPN maintained its political grip in the 1979 elections. Those elected were: Abubakar Tatari Ali, Bauchi State (NPN); Mr Aper Aku, Benue State (NPN); Alhaji Adamu Attah, Kwara State (NPN); Alhaji Awwal Ibrahim, Niger State (NPN); Alhaji Shehu Muhammad Kangiwa, Sokoto State (NPN); Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa, Kaduna State (PRP); Solomon Lar, Plateau

State (NPP); Alhaji Abubakar Barde, Gongola State (GNPP) and Alhaji Muhammad Goni, Borno State (GNPP). Thus, with five governors, the NPN appeared unstoppable and was heading the victory at the presidential election as would be discussed below.

**The Presidential Election of 1979 in Nigeria**

Last but not the least in the 1979 elections sequence was the presidential election which was conducted on 11th August, 1979. The NPN which already won the majority seats in both the National Assembly and at state level had perfected plans to emerge victorious in the polls. M. H. Kukah argues that the success of the NPN was due to a number of mechanisms. At first, the NPN succeeded in supporting Christian candidates particularly within a rural, mostly illiterate Muslim setting. The party also penetrated the *Middle Belt* and other non-Muslim minority States in the country.\(^415\) The victory of NPN in Cross River and Rivers States during the gubernatorial election\(^416\) further buttressed Kukah’s argument as the party had national outlook than any of the other political parties.\(^417\) Kukah also argues that the NPN had the support of the traditional rulers, particularly in the North.\(^418\) It has been noted that the NPC in the first republic had the support of the traditional institutions, such that the Tiv

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\(^{415}\) Kukah, *op. cit.*, p. 150  
\(^{416}\) Ezonbi, *op. cit.*, p. 550  
\(^{418}\) Kukah, *op. cit.*, p. 150
Riots of 1960 and 1964 targeted some traditional rulers sympathetic to the party. Below was the outcome of the 1979 presidential election which was the last in sequence of the elections of 1979.

Table: 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Votes Cast</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>5,688,857</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>UPN</td>
<td>Obafemi Awolowo</td>
<td>4,916,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>Nnamdi Azikwe</td>
<td>2,822,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>PRP</td>
<td>Aminu Kano</td>
<td>1,732,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>GNPP</td>
<td>Waziri Ibrahim</td>
<td>1,686,489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nigerian General (Presidential) Election of 1979: Reports by the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) 419

The outcome of the presidential election was a victory to Shehu Shagari’s NPN. This result was however, challenged by PRP, UNP, NPP and GNPP. Awolowo, the UPN presidential flag-bearer took NPN/ Shehu Shagari to Election Petition Tribunal and the Supreme Court; he however, lost as both judicial pronouncements upheld Shehu Shagari’s election. Finally, on 1st October, 1979 Shehu Shagari was sworn-in as the first democratically elected president of Nigeria under the banner of the NPN. 420


420. Ojiako, op. cit., pp. 306-318
Presiding Officers of the National Assembly (1979-1983)

The Clerk-to-the National Assembly Alhaji Gidado Idris sworn-in the 95 elected Senators and the 449 Members of House of Representatives on 9th October, 1979.421 With the advent of the Second Republic in Nigeria, the National Assembly which was bicameral in nature consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives got engaged in the struggle of who got what. After all the political intrigues, Joseph Wayas422 and Edwin Ume Ezeoke423 emerged as the Senate President and Speaker respectively. The Senate President hailed from Cross River State and was member of the NPN; while the Speaker of House of Representatives was from Anambra State, and a member of the NPP. John Pam Wash, NPP Senator from Plateau State, was elected as the Deputy Senate President; while Alhaji Idris Ibrahim, Niger State emerged as the Deputy Speaker of House of Representatives. Except, the Speaker (Edwin Ume Ezeoke) all the other three presiding officers came from the minority ethnic nationalities of the country. T. Falola argues that the election of the Senate President was the implementation or actualisation of the NPN agreement during its convention in Lagos.424 As J. O. Ojiako put it, “the fear of domination eliminated”. It should be noted however, that the emergence

421 Ibid, p. 330  
422 https://senate_president_of_Second_Republic, Accessed on 15-12-2018  
424 Falola et’al, op. cit., p. 161
of the presiding officers who were NPP members was because of the parliamentary alliance between NPN and NPP. This thesis views the alliance as the rebirth of the NPC/NCNC alliance of 1959 to form government.

**The 1983 General Elections**

Let it be said from the onset that the Nigeria Advance Party (NAP) struggled to be registered in 1979, but failed. Dr Tunji Braithwaite’s NAP succeeded in getting registered and that gave him the stimulus to contest for the presidential during the 1983 election. The outcome of the 1983 election was another victory to the ruling NPN. Shehu Shagari was returned as elected president and his party won sixty one Senatorial Districts; three hundred and seven Federal Constituencies of House of Representatives. The NPN welded its hold on the polity, breaking into the holds of GNPP and PRP in Northern Nigeria, as the below table illustrates NPN controlled States after the 1983 gubernatorial elections:

Table: 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>NPN</th>
<th>UPN</th>
<th>NPP</th>
<th>PRP</th>
<th>GNPP</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Benue</td>
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425 Ojiako, _op. cit._, pp. 326-341
426 Ezonbi, _op. cit._, p. 551
427 [http://contrystudies.us/nigeria/29.htm](http://contrystudies.us/nigeria/29.htm), Accessed on 18-12-2018
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Source: Ezonbi, *op. cit.*, p. 551

**The 1983 Elections Shakeup in Northern Nigeria**

Out of the ten governors that were elected in Northern Nigeria in 1979, only four of them returned to power in 1983, namely: Tatari Ali (NPN), Bauchi State; Aper Aku (NPN), Benue State; Awwal Ibrahim (NPN), Niger State; and Solomon Lar (NPP), Plateau State. In Borno State, Asheik Jarma (NPN) took over power from GNPP; and in Gongola State, Bamanga Tukur (NPN) seized power from GNPP as well. While in Kaduna State, Lawal Kaita (NPN) defeated the PRP; in Sokoto State, Garba Nadama (NPN) who was Deputy Governor of the state in 1979 election, succeeded governor Kangiwa after his death and was also re-elected in 1983. Conversely, NPN faced a defeat in Kwara State, where Cornelius Olatunji of UPN won the gubernatorial election of the 1983. Sabo Bakin Zuwo who was elected as Senator in 1979, won Kano State.
under the banner of the PRP. At any rate, the NPN retained the majority. In presidential election, Shehu Shagari (NPN) scored 12,047,864 votes; Obafemi Awolowo (UPN) polled 7,885,434 votes; Nnamdi Azikwe (NPP) scored 3,534,633 votes; Tunji Braite (NAP) scored 308,842 votes; Waziri Ibrahim (GNPP) polled 640,128 votes and finally, Alhaji Hassan Yusuf (PRP) scored 1,037,481 votes.

Political Violence and Oppression in Northern Nigeria (1979-83)

As M. A. Fika notes, the attempt to suppress the voices of the opposition arises because of the need by the executives to hold on to power; and they do so with brutality, and not with rationality. Thus, there is no gainsaying that political chauvinism on the part of those who hold power would create “totalitarian” democracy. The political repression in the Second Republic was not too distinct with that of the First Republic. The NPN, being the party at the centre oppressed and suppressed the PRP, GNPP, and NPP states in Northern Nigeria. In Kano State, the PRP and its members faced repression by the NPN, being the ruling party at the centre. For instance, on Friday, July 10th, 1981 Dr Bala Muhammad, who was the Political Adviser of Kano State Governor, was assassinated in what Abubakar Rimi (governor of Kano State) termed as an organised,

439 Babarinsa, op. cit., p. 216
440 M. A. Fika, The Role of Opposition in the Attempt to Establish Democracy in Nigeria, Being a Text of Aminu Kano Memorial Lecture Delivered on 17-04-2010, Aminu Kano Centre for Democratic Research & Training, Mambayya House, Bayero University Kano, pp. 16-23

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premeditated violence designed at stumbling the wheel of progress. The security attitude towards this assassination was nonchalant.\textsuperscript{441} M. Othman describes the PRP as a revolutionary political party and concluded that the assassination and political repression of its member was to be expected. He maintains that revolutionary leaders such as Amilcar Cabral in Guinea Bissau, Walter Rodney in Guyana, Dunduzu Kalili Chisaza in Malawi, Ahmed Mahdi in Morocco, Felix Moumi in Cameroon, Abdulrashid Ali Shermake in Somalia, Patrice Lumumba in Congo and so on were cut down precipitately by assassins.\textsuperscript{442}

Another instance is how violence broke out in Plateau State, after the announcement of the return of NPP (Solomon Lar), as winner of the 1983 gubernatorial election in the State. Supporters of the NPN and Mr John Kadiya (NPN gubernatorial candidate) attacked and molested people in Jos metropolis, Bukuru, and villages of Du, Zawan and Gyei. One of the party officials of the NPP, Mallam Adamu Garba was attacked along with his wife and daughter. The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of Bukuru area had to quickly mobilise a unit of anti-rioting policemen to quash the uprising.\textsuperscript{443} It should be noted that the NPN took NPP to court over the victory of Solomon Lar, and won its case which

\textsuperscript{441} A. M. A. Rimi, "The Repressive Tendencies in a Neo-Fascist Regime," in A. Essien-Ibok, (ed.), Political Repression & Assassination- A Tribute to the Late Dr Bala Mohammed, Gaskiya Corporation Limited, Zaria, Nigeria, 1983, pp. 1-14
\textsuperscript{442} M. Othman, op. cit., pp. 25-27
\textsuperscript{443} New Nigerian (Newspaper) 16-08-1983, p.12
was ruled after the military coup of 1983. In Kaduna State, the NPN used the legislative powers of having majority of NPN legislators and impeached Governor Balarabe Musa of PRP.

In Bakalori, Talata Mafara Local Government of Sokoto State, I. Odeyemi accounts for a political repression where anti-riot policemen sealed off the village on 26th April, 1980 and killed many villagers including their small children. This ruthless operation ensued as a result of the farmers’ resistance on claiming their land by the government without proper compensation. Y. B. Usman argues that, in Borno State, the Majority Leader (Shugaba Abdulrahman) of the GNPP in the State House of Assembly was illegally deported by NPN with the plan of eliminating him in Chad. NPN Federal Government claimed that Shugaba’s father was born outside Nigeria. There is a plethora of evidence that NPN government oppressed both the Talakawa and the opposition during its reign in the period 1979-1983.

Moreover, situation report of the 1983 election almost consumed the Broadcasting Corporation of Niger State on Saturday, 15th August, 1983 by some unknown persons who attempted to burn down the

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444 Danlami Jos, op. cit., (Interview)
transmitting station. This followed as a result of a rumour that the corporation was planning to air the result of 1983 gubernatorial election. The power cable of the transmitting station was burnt, as the General Manager of the Corporation, Alhaji Ibrahim Ahmed narrated.\textsuperscript{448}

In Kano State, an intra-party politics resulted to series of political repression after the emergence of Sabo Bakin Zuwo as Kano State governor in 1983. H. Wakili demonstrates how Bakin Zuwo reversed PRP programmes in the State. For instance, after PRP came into power in 1979 governor Abubakar Rimi created three more emirates in the state; these emirates were dissolved by Bakin Zuwo in 1983. Moreover, a number of civil servants who were suspected to be Rimi’s supporters were also dismissed or compulsorily retired from service. In sum, the short-lived tenure of Sabo Bakin Zuwo was characterised by a complete reversal of every conceivable achievement and policy of Rimi. This intra-party politics remained a source of division within the PRP group, such that the National Republican Convention (NRC), which is the \textit{right wing} political party, won gubernatorial election in the Third Republic in Kano State- this study would, however, not go into the details of the election because it is out of its scope.\textsuperscript{449}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Usman, (ed.), \textit{Election Violence in Nigeria- The Terrible Experience 1952-2002…, op cit.}, pp.74-75
  \item Wakili, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 103-104
\end{itemize}

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The 1983 Military Coup and Fall of the Second Republic in Nigeria

After series of protests, petitions, and complaints of economic hardships against the NPN after the 1983 elections continued, one of the consequences that followed was the Military coup. As A. D. Yahaya points out, the Second Republic was evacuated by the Military in the midst of disagreement following the 1983 elections, on accusations of the misconduct of the economy and pervasive corruption in the operation of Shagari’s administration. Shagari inherited the power from the Military in 1979 and lost same to the latter in December, 1983.\textsuperscript{450} Shagari was put under \textit{house arrest} and some of his cabinet members were either jailed or exiled.\textsuperscript{451} This research views the Second Republic as a popular government at the beginning of its \textit{first term}, but unpopular towards the end of the \textit{first term} and beginning of the \textit{second term} and also suffered from what P. Wilmot termed as \textit{the absence of legitimacy}.\textsuperscript{452} These, among other things, culminated in the 31\textsuperscript{st} December, 1983 Military coup in Nigeria.

\textsuperscript{450} Yahaya, \textit{Nigerian Politics, Economy & Society- Twenty Years After Mallam Aminu Kano…}, \textit{op. cit.}, p.13
\textsuperscript{451} https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Nigeria_Republic Accessed on 18-12-2018
Summary

The chapter examined the transition to democracy which began during General Murtala Muhammad’s regime with the formations of the Constituent Assembly (CA); Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC); creation of States and Local Government Areas. Some of the politicians of the First Republic held sway up to the Second Republic in Nigeria which began with the formation of five political parties, namely: NPN, UPN, NPP, GNPP and PRP. Out of the ten States in Northern Nigeria, NPN won 5 States; GNPP won two States; PRP won two States and NPP won one State in the 1979 gubernatorial elections. In National Assembly elections of 1979, the NPN had the majority. The presidential election of 1979 led to the emergence of Shehu Shagari, the NPN candidate as the first elected president of Nigeria; as against the candidatures of Aminu Kano, PRP candidate; Waziri Ibrahim, GNPP candidate; Obafemi Awolowo, UPN candidate and Nnamdi Azikwe, NPP candidate. In 1979, Joseph Wayas and Edwin Ume Ezeoke were elected as Senate President and Speaker respectively. Shehu Shagari was returned as elected president in 1983 with majority of the national assembly NPN members. Shagari’s administration was truncated as a result of military coup on 31st December, 1983 which installed General Muhammad Buhari as the new Head of State in the country.
GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The first chapter of the thesis gives a general background or brief summary of the research. The chapter also outlines the objectives, significance, research methods, statement of the research problem, research questions, and research hypothesis. The second chapter was basically a literature review of related materials. In this chapter, so many errors were discovered in a good number of literature particular regarding dating and motives for the formation of some political parties in Nigeria. Periodisation is very critical in historical reconstruction, as such; the reviews exposed us to important discoveries in existing materials. In Northern Nigeria, the formation of NEPU and NPC and their activities along with other political parties have been investigated and the research gives us a correct insight.

Chapter three looks at the introduction of Islam in Northern Nigeria and the rise of the Sokoto Caliphate. The chapter also looks at the peopling of Nigerian area where it indicates that the country has over 250 ethnic groups with Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba as the three major ethnic groups. Northern Nigeria has more population and nationalities than its Southern counterpart, as the research reveals. Nigeria’s administrative configuration after the conquest of the land by the British began as Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria. Later it was divided into three and then four Regions. Lastly, twelve States were
created and split further into nineteen States by 1967 and 1976 respectively.

The fourth chapter begins with the conceptual clarifications of some important terms such as democracy, party politics, political parties etcetera. And later traverses the course of the evolution, inception and development of party politics and democracy in Nigeria from the establishment of the first political party (NNDP) in 1922 to 1951. There are many problems and challenges in this path. It is not coincidental that the introduction of party politics and democracy in Nigeria emanated as a result of the Nationalists’ movements across the African region. The movements saw Nigerians playing a significant role. One can argue that the constitutional developments in Nigeria can be seen as gate ways and, or underpinning stones of democracy and party politics in the country; beginning with the Clifford’s Constitution in 1922 down to the Macpherson’s Constitution in 1951- the first year (1951) the Northern Nigeria experienced elective principle in the history.

In the 1950s, agitations for independence under the banner of Pan-Africanism and Nationalism opened a new scene in the struggle for the unity of Africans in Africa and in diaspora. Most of the champions of these movements later became driving force in the political movements of their own nations or regions. In Nigeria, the likes of Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Mallam Sa’ad Zungur, and Mallam
Aminu Kano were at the forefront of the nationalists’ movements, creation of political parties, party politics and struggles for independence.

The fifth chapter discusses the foundational years of democracy in Northern Nigeria; contending that the Macpherson’s Constitution of 1951 played a significant role in the history of party politics in Nigeria generally and particularly in the North. That was the first time general elections were conducted in all parts of the country. The year also saw the creation of the House of Assembly, Kaduna, (with elected representatives). Polls into Regional and Federal legislatures were later divided by Lyttleton’s Constitution of 1954 and this distinction continued to exist throughout the First Republic. 1951 to 1966 saw a Parliamentary System of government in Nigeria, having NPC, NEPU, UMBC, ITP, BYM etcetera wrestling for power during the 1951, 1954, 1956 and 1959 elections. Nigerian party politics and democracy are pigeonholed by ethnic, religious and regional differences lingering for years. The likes of Mallam Aminu Kano, Ahmadu Bello, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, J. S. Tarka, Bukar Dipcharima, Kashim Ibrahim, Mahmoud Ribadu and a few others can be seen as Northern Democratic heroes in the period 1951 and 1960; who also played a major role for the realisation of freedom in the country.
The sixth chapter discusses the post-independence era party politics and democratic governance in Northern Nigeria and the country at large. It was an epoch where the political activities sowed the seed of discord brought about by ugly party politics which culminated in ethnicity, regionalism, corruption, and greed and so on. The competition for power, prestige and property became so intense and ate the fabric of nationalism and patriotism. The 1959 Federal elections which paved the way for the NPC/NCNC coalition to form the central government was an indication that predicted the outcome of the 1961, 1964 and other subsequent elections that climaxed in social, economic and political dissatisfactions on the part of the opposition and other minority parties in Nigeria. The system of political repression via the imprisonment, dominance, persecution and imposition of heavy tax, together with the 1962/63 census ignited the Tiv riots of the 1960 and 1964 and other revolts in the Northern Nigeria and the political upheaval in the Western region (*Wild-West*). The January/July 1966 military coups ended in the thirty months Civil War where lives and properties were destroyed, leading to the deaths of prominent Nigerians like Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Samuel Akintola and a host of others. The chapter ends by looking at the series of military coups that took place in many African countries, due to military background, contagion effect, arms transfer, economic and political conditions and so on.
The seventh chapter examines the changeover to democracy which, during General Murtala Muhammad’s administration brought into being the creations of: the Constituent Assembly (CA); the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) and more States and Local Government Areas. Several of the politicians of the First Republic held influence up to the Second Republic in Nigeria. This influenced the creation of five political parties, namely: NPN, UPN, NPP, GNPP and PRP. During the 1979 gubernatorial elections, out of the ten States in Northern Nigeria, NPN won 5 States; GNPP won two States; PRP won two States and NPP won one State. In the National Assembly elections, the NPN had the majority seats. The presidential election of 1979 led to the rise of Shehu Shagari, the NPN candidate as the first democratically elected president of Nigeria; as against the candidatures of Obafemi Awolowo, UPN candidate; Aminu Kano, PRP candidate; Waziri Ibrahim, GNPP candidate; and Nnamdi Azikwe, NPP candidate. The advent of the second republic saw the emergence of Joseph Wayas and Edwin Ume Ezeoke as Senate President and Speaker of the House of Representatives respectively.

Shehu Shagari was re-elected president in 1983 with majority of the national assembly NPN members. Shagari’s government was shortened as a result of military coup on 31st December, 1983 which
installed General Muhammad Buhari as the new Head of State in the country. In Shagari’s administration, with the exception of two government functionaries in persons of Mallam Adamu Chiroma and Bilyaminu Usman, all the other top government functionaries were found wanting by the military government.

FINDINGS:

1. Firstly, the research found out that the major problem of democracy in Northern Nigeria and the country at large was unhealthy party politics and that led to the fall of both the first and second republics in Nigeria. However, ethnicity and regionalism were also found to impede democracy to some extent.

2. Secondly, the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP) and some other smaller political parties stood for the emancipation of the common man and their leadership had principles and ideologies unlike most of the bigger parties during the 1950s and 1960s political activities. And the PRP had the same ideology of championing the course of the common man during the second republic (1979-1983). That led to mass participation.
3. Thirdly, a number of ruling political parties failed to fulfil their campaign promises; and most political party formations were clandestinely or overtly inclined to region, religion, or ethnicity particularly during the 1950s and 1960s. The opposition parties suffered political repression by the ruling parties at State or National levels, in both the first and second republics.

4. Fourthly, Political parties differ in their programmes; while the NEPU, ITP, PRP stood for the emancipation of the Talakawa and their welfare, other political parties were usually founded and funded by the elite who in turn contested for elective positions to entrench themselves at the centre.

5. Fifthly, most political parties of the first, second and third generations lacked clear vision and strategy to achieve their aims and objectives.

Finally, the findings proved the hypothesis of the research.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. For democracy to prosper in Northern Nigeria and the country at large, political parties should be able to develop principles so as to circumvent misguidance by the interest of political elites. Opposition political parties should embrace attitude of grassroots’ mobilisation of members so as to capture
political power without political violence in defeating the ruling party.

2. The ruling parties should stand by the ethics of fair politicking without necessarily using all mechanisms of power to maintain their control of governance.

3. The umpire saddled with responsibility of regulating the affairs of political parties should ensure that laws are made for all parties and no party is above the law.

4. Coercive apparatuses of government (Police, Military, Department of Security Service, etcetera) should be fair and just in discharging their responsibilities and avoid siding with the ruling party at all levels.

5. Electorates should learn to vote leaders based on competence, credibility and capacity, not based on religion, region, money or any other sentiment.

6. The Civil Society organisations and political parties should embark on public enlightenment and awareness with a view to ensuring mass consciousness, mass participation and good democratic governance.
7. Political competitors should struggle to see what they can do for their country or state; not to struggle for power, popularity or property.

9. Nine, the Election Petition Tribunals should pass all judgements within a short period of time.

10. The *Talakawa* should try to form a political party of their own with a view to liberating themselves from the domination of the elites.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The thesis is of the view that researches should be conducted on why Nigeria and indeed, African politics is largely seen as the only, or one of the fastest ways to be rich – most people see politics as self-serving, instead of service to the nation. Studies should investigate why the electorates, to a large extent, failed to hold their political leaders accountable.
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Adamawa Province
1. Mallam Ahmadu
2. Mallam Bello Malabu
3. Mallam Ibrahim Demsa
4. Mallam Muhammad Dan Buram

Bauchi Province
1. Mallam Jauro Gombe
2. Mallam Buba Gombe
3. Mallam Abubakar, Chiroman Bauchi
4. Mallam Yakubu Wanka
5. Mallam Muhammad Kabir
6. Mallam Bawa Bulkachuwa

Benue Province
1. E. G. Gundu
2. T. Ayilla Yogh
3. J. M. Yogh Agera
4. Mallam Cia Aka
5. Mallam Paghar Mue
6. G. W. Gambe
7. Mallam Maikwando Igbon
8. Benjamen Akiga

Bornu Province
1. Mallam Abubakar Imam
2. Abba Kyari Kura
3. Abba Kyari Shuwa
4. Alhaji Shehu Buhari
5. Mallam Abba Habib
6. Mallam Umaru
Ilorin Province
1. Mallam Sa’ad Alanamu
2. Mallam Yahaya Ilorin
3. Mallam Ahmad Pategi

Kabba Province
1. P. S. Achimugu
2. Alhaji Ali Negedu
3. Alhaji Abdulmalik
4. G. U. Ohikere

Kano Province
1. Alhaji Muhammad Sunusi, Chiroman Kano
2. Mallam Maje
3. Mallam Muhammad Bashari, Wali of Kano
4. Mallam Shehu Ahmadu
5. Mallam Bello Dandago
6. Mallam Inuwa Wada
7. Alhaji Inuwa, Galadiman Kano
8. Mallam Muhammad Munir
9. Alhaji Nabegu
10. Mallam Ibrahim Musa Gashash
11. Mallam Yusuf, Galadiman Hadejia
12. Mallam Sambo, Chiroman Hadejia
13. Alhaji Abubakar, Dokaji
14. Mallam Muhammad, Magajin Gari, Kazaure
15. Mallam Usman Gwarzo
16. Mallam Aliyu, Ma’ajin Gumel
17. Mallam Jibir Daura
18. Mallam Muhammad Gauyama

Katsina Province
1. Alhaji Usman Liman, Sarkin Musawa
2. Alhaji Muhammad Sada Nadada, Sarkin Sullubawa
3. Mallam Muhammad Bashar Daura
4. Mallam Abdulmumin, Galadiman Katsina
5. Mallam Isa Kaita
6. Mallam Muhammadu Danmallam
7. Mallam Muhammadu Dodo
8. Mallam A. O. Ladan

**Niger Province**

1. Mallam Audu Anache
2. Mallam Hassan Abuja
3. Mallam Muhammadu Lapai

**Plateau Province**

1. Davit Lot
2. Mallam Michael Audu Buba
3. Moses Nyang Rwang
4. Patrick Fom
5. Mallam Aua Ninzam

**Sokoto Province**

1. Mallam Junaidu, Wazirin Sokoto
2. Mallam Abubakar, Madawakin Sokoto
3. Mallam Muhammadu Sani Dingyadi
4. Mallam Haruna, Sarkin Gobir Kango
5. Mallam Muhammadu Bida
6. Mallam Muhammadu Maccido
7. Mallam Suleman, Sarkin Kudun Gusau
8. Mallam Muhammadu Tureta
9. Mallam Aliyu, Magajin Garin Sokoto
10. Mallam Muhammadu Bello, Magajin Rafin Gwandu
11. Mallam Bawa Yelwa
12. Mallam Ibrahim, Ma’ajin Argungu

**Zaria Province**

1. Mallam Sambo, Sarkin Fada
2. Mallam Muhammadu Maigamo
3. Mallam Sunusi, Ma’ajin Zaria
4. Mallam Abubakar Imam

**Source:** *Northern Regional Legislature - House of Assembly Debate 1952*
List of 1983 Gubernatorial Candidates in Northern Nigeria and their Political Parties

### Bauchi State
1. Alhaji Tatari Ali - NPN
2. Alhaji Muhammad B. Doma - NPP
3. Alhaji Maijama’a Umar - PRP
4. Alhaji Bappa Ahmed - UPN

### Benue State
1. Dr Ityoutsa Adum - GNPP
2. Mr Emmanuel O. Ugba - NAP
3. Mr Aper Aku - NPN
4. Mr Paul Unongo - NPP
5. Dr Agan Aondohemba - PRP
6. Chief Chia Surma - UPN

### Borno State
1. Alhaji Muhammad Gana - GNPP
2. Mallam Shettima Ibrahim - NAP
3. Alhaji Asheik Jarma - NPN
4. Alhaji A. Usman - NPP
5. Alhaji Abdulrazaq Sabo - PRP
6. Alhaji Muhammad Goni - UPN

### Gongola State
1. Mr Festus Bagula - GNPP
2. Mr Chahira Elkanah - NAP
3. Alhaji Bamanga Tukur - NPN
4. Alhaji Abubakar Barde - NPP  
5. Alhaji Salisu Abubakar - PRP  
6. Rev. W. R. Sabiya - UPN  

**Kaduna State**  
1. Alhaji Sabiu Nuhu - GNPP  
2. Major Baba Sukai (Rtd) - NAP  
3. Alhaji Lawal Kaita - NPN  
4. Alhaji Yunusa Yusuf - NPP  
5. Alhaji Musa Musawa - PRP  
6. Alhaji Muhammad Jumare - UPN  

**Kano State**  
1. Alhaji Musa Kazaure - GNPP  
2. Alhaji Ubali A. Tijjani - NAP  
3. Alhaji Bashir Wali - NPN  
4. Alhaji Abubakar Rimi - NPP  
5. Senator Sabo Bakin Zuwo - PRP  
6. Alhaji Shehu Shanono - UPN  

**Kwara State**  
1. Alhaji Sikiru Otun - GNPP  
2. Alhaji Musa Abdulsalam - NAP  
3. Alhaji Adamu Atta - NPN  
5. Alhaji Abdulrashid Saleh - PRP  
6. Senator C. O. Adebayo - UPN
**Niger State**

1. Alhaji Abdulaziz Dauda - GNPP  
2. Alhaji Awwal Ibrahim - NPN  
3. Alhaji Hassan B. K. Bida - NPP  
4. Alhaji Abdul Sheshe - PRP  
5. Alhaji Aliyu Ibrahim - UPN

**Plateau State**

1. G. P. D. Dafom - GNPP  
2. Mr Reuben Dapel Kutok - NAP  
3. Mr John J. Kadiya - NPN  
4. Mr Solomon Lar - NPP  
5. Alhaji Muhammad K. Ishak - PRP  
6. Mr Clement Gomwalk - UPN

**Sokoto State**

1. Alhaji Muazu - GNPP  
2. Alhaji Garba Nadama - NPN  
3. Alhaji Abubakar Dakingari - NPP  
4. Alhaji S. A. Bayero - UPN

MAP OF AFRICA
MAP OF NIGERIA

Source: Africa shape file
(Adapted and modified) 2019

Legend
- NORTHERN NIGERIA 1983
- SOUTHERN NIGERIA 1983

Kilometers
MAP OF NORTHERN NIGERIA

Source: Africa shape file (Adapted and modified) 2019