Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS), Vol.4 No.3 September, 2021; p.g. 133 – 144; ISSN: 2695-2319 (Print); ISSN: 2695-2327 (Online)

MACHIAVELLIANISM AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

EDOGIAWERIE, MORRIS K.O. (PhD)
Department of Political Science and Public Administration
College of Arts and Social Sciences
Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State, Nigeria
morrisedos@yahoo.com
+2348023755027

&

EKUASE, INNOCENT O.
Department of Geography and Regional Planning,
College of Arts and Sciences,
Igbinedion University Okada Edo State, Nigeria.
Innocenti2907@gmail.com
+2348034522221

&

IYARE, AUGUSTINE E.
Department of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma Edo State, Nigeria
auforsee@gmail.com
+2348037127443

ABSTRACT

It is practically impossible to conceive of any nation that would want to be left behind in the doldrums of the past. Nations do everything possible to keep pace with the dynamism and advancement that characterizes all progressive states around the world. One of characteristics for measuring countries that have evolved and developed is those that have made major breakthroughs in science and technology. Another feature is that of socio-political and economic stability. Intellectuals and thinkers have variously concluded that the best means to attaining development in whatever manner is when a government that will provide a level playing field for everyone to contribute. Some have suggested liberalism, conservatism, monarchy, etc. to be the best while others have suggested democracy as the most ideal kind of government that can foster development and advancement. Thinkers like Rousseau, Locke, Mill and others have advocated that there is no government as progressive and dynamic as democracy and every society that desire to advance meaningfully should aspire to enthrone democracy and go all out to make it work, that is, to consolidate it by every reasonable means. Another school of thought such as Hobbes and Machiavelli maintain that for a progressive society, is one with a powerful ruler would be able to make everyone conform is what the state requires. This position they promote for reasons they advanced in their arguments. It

is against this backdrop that this paper sets out to examine Niccolo Machiavelli's postulations on the successful Prince in his principalities. Machiavelli's recommendations will be probed with a view of attainting an advanced state as against the crave for the enthronement of democracy. This work will attempt to X-ray Machiavelli's position on the prince and his relationship to political power, and how the Nigerian nation will fare if these principles were to be adopted in governance in these contemporary times especially as she aspires to attain development like many nations of the world. Put differently, could Machiavelli's recommendations be the way for Nigeria particularly in her trying times?

KEYWORDS: Machiavellianism, Consolidation, Democracy, Contemporary Nigeria, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Men decided to abandon the state of nature and create the civil society because according to Hobbes the state-of-nature was nasty, solitary, brutish, poor and short (Appadorai, ibid), hence, men decided to do away with it and enter a contract (the tacit consent) to create a civil society (a civilized society). Men lived barbaric lives in the state-of-nature. It was decided, as one of the terms of the agreement, that a sovereign authority be appointed or chosen to take charge of the responsibility of administering the sundry interests of all the contractors. This authority will be bestowed with the powers and authority to administer the state and ensure that all the contractors honor the terms of the agreement. The authority to be so appointed will possess supreme powers so much so that he can uphold all the terms of the consent, preventing anyone who intends to breach the contract from doing so. The contractors will be made to surrender some of their power, liberty and freedom to the custody of this authority who will enforce the desires of all the contractors. (Popkin and Stroll, 1982) This authority will be the law; he would be over and above the law. Hobbes and Machiavelli recommend that a very powerful and determined Rex/Prince who would be willing to go to extra miles to ensure that he keeps the state together no matter. The duo makes this suggestion because they believe that the behavior and attitude of men require a Rex who would be prepared to do the needful to keep the state together. This Rex should be able to make everyone, without exception, obey the law, and anyone who fails to do so will be forced to obey. Rousseau contends that forcing anyone to obey the state (law) translates to forcing such an individual to obey himself. (Popkin and Stroll, 1986)

Machiavelli spell out certain principles that a Prince (Rex) who is determined to succeed must adhere strictly to in his bid to grab hold on to power and successfully consolidate it for as long as possible. It is the focus of this paper to isolate the main principles recommended by Machiavelli for a successful Prince (Rex) against the backdrop that the Nigerian nation aspire to democratize. Hence, it would expedient to pick out the core features of democracy and juxtapose them with the Machiavellian recommendations. Put differently, can the suggestions of Machiavelli work side by side the tenets of democracy? What sort of state would Nigeria be if Machiavellianism were to be fused with contemporary democracy? This study will also pay attention to examining the socio-political environment prevalent in the country and how well Machiavelli's description of men pictures the Nigerian society and the lessons to be learnt from Machiavelli for the sustainability of socio-political and economic stability. On this work,

the Prince, Rex and Ruler would be used interchangeably to represent the king or sovereign authority in the state.

The Prince

Niccolo Machiavelli, (1469-1527) (Cottingham, 2000) was an Italian socio-political scientist and prolific writer who views and refers to the state as principalities. Machiavelli considers man as a being with a very complex nature. Man's nature as far as Machiavelli is concerned is highly erratic and intractable, very difficult to predict. (Bull, 1999). His political ideology concludes that if men were not handled properly then they are capable of causing anarchy in the society, thus, taking everyone back to square one, the beginning-the state-of-nature. Machiavelli's political ideology was largely influenced by the events and occurrences that transpired in the Italian state at his time. He observed that so much chaos and anarchy prevailed in the state-in Italy. For him, that category of imbalance and shortcomings only results in stagnancy and backwardness. Since men are erratic, intractable and unpredictable then a ruler (Prince/Rex) who is prepared to, be ruthless if the need be, maintain decorum and keep everybody in line should be the one to hold political power. This nature of man caused all the inequalities inherent in the state-of-nature which men ab initio decided to abandon. Machiavelli advocates that a ruler with a powerful will to do the needful to keep the principalities together whether by being honest or dishonest is one who would turn out successful and be recorded in history as a powerful and good ruler.

Machiavelli contends that many principalities fell apart because they had weak Princes (Rex) who could not consolidate political power, thus, they were incapable of holding the state together. His postulations were largely based on his personal experiences in the public sector as he was an actor at certain times (1503) (Bull, 1999). Sequel, he advocates despotism or absolute monarchy as the most ideal political system. He points out that the weakness of these Princes (Rex) stem from the fact that they want to show to the people that they were moral and upright rulers. He argues that a Prince who is determined to be successful must be one that is ready to adopt double standards in his reign, that is, such Prince must be prepared to show the people that he is moral and upright if that is what will make him succeed, he should also be ready to be dishonest and corrupt if that is what it will take to keep the principalities (state) together and succeed as a powerful ruler. His priority must be that he is willing to do whatever it takes to grab hold on to political power and consolidate it for as long as possible. Put differently, the (Rex) must be ready to be a moral leader when the occasion demands it and must not hesitate to be immoral or act immorally if that is what it would take or cost him to consolidate his hold onto power. Machiavelli holds that

> A prince, therefore, who desires to maintain himself must learn no to be always good, but to be so or not as necessary may require…. It is well that when the act accuses him, the result should excuse him. And when the result is good… it will always absolved him from blame…. Nor need he care about incurring censure for such vices without which the preservation of his state maybe difficult (Machiavelli Discourses)

Machiavelli accuses the church for the numerous immoralities, imbalances and shortcomings in the state. He posits that in an attempt for the Rex to prove that he is always moral and upright, he fails to do the right thing (taking the right and decisive decisions) to save and

preserve his rule. This leads to the failure of the Prince joining the group of successful rulers in history to have held and consolidated principalities for as long as possible. The Christian principles of the papal-church, turns out to be stumbling block to the Prince's sound judgment. Machiavelli strongly recommends that the Prince's actions, decisions, etc. must not be tailored in any particular direction. The Prince should be like the wind that can flow in any direction it sees fit, and in this case it should be towards the direction that will enable him consolidate his hold on political power and ultimately join as one of the greatest rulers in history. The summary is that the Rex should be unpredictable.

> We Italians, say Machiavelli, owe to the church of Rome and her priest our having become irreligious and bad; but we owe her a still greater debt, and one that will be the church has kept and still keeps our country divided (Omoregbe, 1997).

Virtue, for Machiavelli, might lead to disaster, thus, the Prince who wants to go down in history as a successful ruler should not pay any serious attention to the means he intends to adopt to achieve any particular goal(s), rather his focus should be on the achievement of the set goal(s). All that matters for the Rex is the attainment or achievement of the goal(s).

> For all things considered, it will be found that some things that seem like virtues will lead you to ruin if you follow them. While others that apparently are vices, will if followed result in your safety and well-being (Bull, 1999).

All that matters for Machiavelli/Prince is the preservation of himself in power for as long as possible and the medium through which this utmost desire would be attained does not matter. The protection and preservation of himself and the principality is all that counts. Hence, it is the end that justifies the means.

Machiavelli acknowledges two types of principalities; the hereditary principalities and newly established principalities. For him, newly established principalities are much more difficult to maintain (consolidate) and he advices the prince to be ruthless if he has to be and be cunny if that is what it would take to get the people to fall in line. Unlike new principalities, the Prince has less work to do in hereditary principalities because the people are already familiar with the existing government (which has been in place) before another Prince took over. Hereditary Principalities are those that fathers hand over to their children or close family members. Cuba is a good example where Fidel Castro handed over to his son. This is also common in many African countries where their sons take over power when their fathers die or are unable to continue. These hereditary principalities have come to be recognized over a long period of time and there is the likelihood that the people have come to terms with the system in place.

> I say then, that in hereditary states accustomed to their Prince's family, there are far fewer difficulties in maintaining one's rule than in new principalities; because it is enough merely not to neglect the institutions founded by one's ancestors and then to adopt policy to events. In this way, if the price is reasonably assiduous, he will always maintain his rule, unless some extraordinary and inordinate forces deprive him of it; and if so deprived, whenever the usurper suffers a setback he will reconquer (Bull, 1982).

It is obvious that Machiavelli recommends absolute despotism, that situation where the Rex perpetrates themselves in power for as long as possible and pass it unto their children or family members when they are too old to continue or when they die. Machiavelli is proud of these kinds of principalities as they would go down in history as the family that held the state (principalities) together and successfully kept it (political power) for as long as possible.

Machiavelli recommends ways and principles that the Prince should adopt and strictly adhere to them to achieve success. These recommendations, political scientists, have come to regard as the Machiavellian principles or simply "Machiavellianism". Machiavellianism contends that "***the end justifies the means" and "any means fair or foul"***

> For where the very safety of the country depends upon the resolution to be taken, no consolidations of justice or injustice, humanity or cruelty, nor of glory or of shame, should be allowed to prevail. But putting all other considerations aside, the question should be, what will save the life and liberty of the country (Bull, 1999).

The implication is that a successful Prince is one who is able to ensure the safety, stability, unity and security of the state, and at the same time maintaining himself in power. It is one thing to secure the state and it is another thing to consolidate himself in office. Sequel, if he fails in one and succeeds in the other then he has failed completely, and will not go down in history as a successful and powerful ruler. The successful Prince must be able to grab hold onto political power and at the same time consolidate it for as long as possible. Machiavelli points out that the tasks of perpetuity, safety and security of the state are onerous enough to occupy the Prince rather than focus on the means through which he intends to accomplish his aims.

On the principle of ***"any means fair of foul"*** Machiavelli makes no mistakes about it when he says the Rex should be a ruler or leader with double standards. Machiavelli contends that there is nothing wrong with the Prince talking from both sides of his mouth. It does not matter if the Prince has double face, saying one thing and doing a completely different thing. (Bull, 1999). For him, the situation or circumstances determine which personality and character the Prince must display. Hence, if the occasion demands that he should be honest, upright and moral then the Prince should not shillyshally to show himself as a man with high moral rectitude; while he must not also fail to be a cruel, dishonest and immoral ruler when the occasion demands it. (Russell, 1997).The Prince must be as cunny as a fox and as brave asa lion.

Themachiavellian Prince and Good Governance in Nigeria

Iroegbu, (2000) echoes that "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely". It is against this background that Rousseau, Locke, Mill, (Popkin and Stroll) and others forbid a situation where political power will be put in the hands of one man. This trio contends that power is bound to take over the individual and make him go demented and do the unthinkable. Rulers like Adolf Hitler of Germany, Idi Amin of Uganda, Benito Mussolini of Italy, etc. (Stumpf, 1994) have been good analogies of rulers who have abused power and plunged the state into chaos. Besides, Idi Amin, there have been other African leaders who

have abused power and thus caused a lot of sufferings and pain on the people. Mobutu Seseseko of Zaire and Late Gen. Sani Abacha of Nigeria are other cases in perspective.
Democrats such as Abiola,M.K.O., Oladipo, Olusegun, Fela, Anipulakpokuti and others concur that the worse democracy is better and more preferable than the best dictatorship (military Rule). They advocate democracy in lieu of absolute monarchy, despotism, dictatorship, autocracy as suggested by Hobbes and Machiavelli, noting that if political power were to be bestowed in the custody of one ultimate ruler then Nigerians would be in serious peril. Robert Mugabe spent over thirty years in office as the president of Togo and the people didn't have any good story to tell about their experiences. After the death of Mugabe his son took over the reins of leadership steering the country according to his desires and not necessarily tailored towards the directions of development and advancement. The dictatorship of late general Sani Abacha left a bitter and sour taste in the mouths of millions of Nigerians so much so that when Abacha suddenly died on June 8th 1998 in office there was wild jubilation and rejoicing all across the nation. It is popularly said that once bitten, twice shy. Thus, Nigerians are highly skeptical of another situation where the Abacha scenario will play out again. To this end, majority of Nigerians would agree that dictatorship will not take the country anywhere near development and advancement. The salient question is can there be a conscientious absolute ruler who would not be tempted or swayed (power drunk) by the numerous authority and command at his disposal? Can democracy be possible with one man at the helm of affairs especially as far as Nigeria is concerned; to what extent can democracy and good governance such that would eventually translate to remarkable development and advancement in many ramifications be possible? The question is how realistic can Machiavellianism be blended with democracy in Nigeria and yet achieve good governance? (Anamgba, 2011)

Machiavellianism supports tyranny and at the same time promotes democracy while loathing Aristocracy on the grounds that the rich Aristos are idle people who benefit from the labor and sufferings of others by the mere virtue of the fact that they own lands and estates. (Raphael, 1996) Machiavelli can and has been classified as a democrat based on the above position but the question some have asked is how can democracy and despotism function side by side in any state as they both have varying principles and tenets? (Mackie, 1977)

Meanwhile, the Nigerian nation has experienced two major types of governments since independence in 1960: Dictatorship and democracy. Until, May 1999 dictatorship has been the most prevent of these two. Nigerians groaned under the pains of military dictatorship and prayed that one day they would become democratic like many other countries of the world. These prayers were apparently answered on May 29th, 1999 when the nation witnessed a transition from military rule to democratic rule. As the time of this study this civilian dispensation has lasted for twenty-one (21) years and Nigerians still clamor for good and qualitative governance. So, one important question is what is good governance, that is, what does good and qualitative governance entail? Owolabi and Ekanola (2013) suggests that good governance involves the ruler's/leaders' sensitivity towards the interest of those whose interest they represent in public office and it falls within the ambits of these leaders to ensure that they deliver good and qualitative governance during their watch.

Plato, on the other hand, insists that it is only the Philosopher King who is perfectly equipped to deliver good and qualitative governance to the people because it is only state matters that

he exist to worry about as he has been well trained to handle the business of governance without any kind of distractions whatever as all of his attention, focus, interest, energy, etc. are set towards a perfect administration of the state (Stumpf, S.E. 1994). The idea of the Philosopher King indirectly suggests despotism (dictatorship) but Plato tries to explain that the intense training given to the Philosopher King obliterates the possibility of him-the Philosopher King, being power drunk and doing the unthinkable. Plato argues that the kind of training given to the Philosopher king does not provide room for any form of distractions whatsoever. Plato suggests that the disturbances that make and ideal state unachievable as required of public officers are often domestic such as the worries over the welfare of the family material possessions, etc. (Omoregbe, 1997). According to Plato, knowing the enormous nature of the business of governance the Philosopher king is trained like reverend fathers who do not have families or any kind of intimate attachments to any material item or possession imaginable. In fact the Philosopher King is trained not to own one single material possession whatsoever. The only possession he owns is the state. His personal, psychological, emotional, etc. needs are taken care of by the state and so he has nothing to worry about but the affairs and welfare of the state. Although Plato does not advocate democracy he suggests an ideal situation where a perfect society where justice and equality will reign.

Nigeria, like other Africa nations have been categorized as the giant of Africa (Osaghae E.E, 200) and underdeveloped owing to the lack of the fundamental requirements of life. Nkrumah posits that what Africa requires for development is the consciousness that all back African are one family. This he discusses in his text titled conscientism. A situation where a consciousness is the foremost priority in the minds of every African and not that condition where everyone tries to ripe off everyone else when he gets the slightest opportunity or where each person sees the other as an adversary. Nkrumah via his conscientism recommends that all black people should see themselves as brothers fighting to achieve the same goal and needs to work together for the achievement of that goal. (Njoku, 2002) Nnamdi Azikiwe's welfarism is another ideology that promotes the African personality and dignity. If Nigerian leaders were to make the welfare of their people their basic concern and priority then the pursuit of good governance would not be a difficult goal to achieve. (Njoku, 2002).

If the truth must be told then we it would agree that democracy is not traditional to the African (Nigerian) community. Monarchy has the government traditional Africa (Nigeria), and in many cases it was absolute monarchy that was practiced in many African societies yet the people enjoyed peace, progress and furtherance. Now that the new advocacy is for democracy which is supposed to be better than monarchy or any other system of government why don't Nigerians be determined to enthrone it? The answer to this question is very simple and, that is, that our values have lost and our priorities have been completely misplaced. The moral standards which people use to respect the African continent for have not been lowered but have been totally shattered. The quest for the amassment of material wealth has taken top priority in the entire society. The only people who are recognized and respected in contemporary Nigeria are those who have made money and can easily display unaccountable wealth. If one were to attend a family or community meeting it is common place to hear that even when one is making sense he is often short down if he lacks the material wherewithal to back up his position. It is common place for a well-known fool or idiot to be hailed and promoted by virtue of the fact that he has cash to throw around. Such people are the only ones that are worshiped, protected and heard in present day Nigeria. No one actually cares how

people make their money these days the only thing that matters is that they have made money. Gone are those days when the saying goes that "good name is far better than a million riches" There is corruption in low and high places in the society. Everybody is interested in "what is in it for me" when the opportunity of service presents itself. Gone are the days of selflessness, dedication, relentlessness, patriotism, etc. Politicians aspire to public offices with the primary aim of wanting to chart away a large chunk of their share of the national cake, as if the national cake were for sharing among public officers. As far as the average Nigerian is concerned there is always a price tag for everything, hence, we hear of killings of brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, friends and allies for money making ritual purposes without any second thoughts on the implications and challenges of these actions. What applies today in Nigeria is the new morality (situation ethics) and not the old universal moral standard of good, justice, kindness, honesty, etc. Justice, honesty, etc. now solely depends on the situation and circumstances. (Fletcher, 1982)

The people blame the leaders while the leaders blame the people but the bottom line is that the rot and decay has gone deep into every facet of the society, the church inclusive. Before now, if were to introduce himself as a man of God or a member of the Clergy a sort of sense of awe and reverence is employed in dealing or interacting with that individual but the case is not the same in these contemporary times as the sacred tabernacle has been badly desecrated. (Nairaland News, 2020) Those who are offered seats in the front rolls of many churches are those who can contribute handsomely (financially) to the pastor/church and it seldom taken into account of how the person made the money. Such otherwise the age and devotion of the member does not count.

Although Nigeria is one of the countries in the world blessed with enough diverse natural and human resources she is one that cannot show or account for the benefits of these resources on her nation and her people. Those who have been charged variously with the responsibility of allocating these resources have over the years had personal, inordinate and selfish intentions and have frequently diverted these resources to their private accounts and possession. The resultant effects have been the decay of largely all the infrastructural facilities in the country and poverty has reached the level where it is choking its citizens. Plato maintains that these selfish and inordinate leaders do what they do to the nation out of ignorance (Russell, 1997).The question is if they do what they do in ignorance why would they go to the extent of stashing their loots in very far away countries in Europe and America, if it were act of ignorance they wouldn't go to the extent of looking for a safe haven to hide their loots?

Utilitarianism (Stumpf, 1994) supports the greatest happiness of the greatest number. For them the virtuous conduct is that which would produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. The implication is that conducts that ends up producing the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people turns out ultimately to be the very virtuous and desirable deeds. So any act that will only result in the happiness of a few is the vicious action. Thus as far as utilitarians are concerned those charged with the duties of administering the state that fail to ensure the greatest number of citizens end up being happy are leaders and rulers who have failed the state, their actions amounts to callous and wicked actions.

Bentham and Mill are great advocates of the Summon Bomum (the greatest happiness of the greatest number) and humanists whose main interest lie in the provision of the largest amount of happiness for the largest amount of people while at the same time believing that the solutions to the problems of men can only be solved when men look within themselves for these solutions and not looking or waiting for any supernatural being to bring an to provide an Eldorado to the multitude of their problems . (Graham, and Hoffman, 2009)

If the Rex were a utilitarian and humanist then it wouldn't matter whether or not the state were/is under democratic rule or under despotic leadership as advocated by Machiavelli. All that is required for good and qualitative governance is/are leader(s) as far as a utilitarian and humanist is concerned is the general interest of the people. Utilitarianism does not actually concentrate on the means and manner through which the greatest number of happiness is attained but more on the quantity of people that this happiness affects (the greatest number of people). Once a large amount of the people in the state or community are happy and contented with the results of the actions of the Prince/Rex then the rest is secondary. Good and qualitative governance for the humanists and utilitarians amounts to the happiness and comfort of the people. (Herrick, 2003)

Another question that arises from the above is whether or not the utilitarian and humanist principles will end up in the much needed development and advancement which Nigeria and Nigerians crave for, or that kind that any other civilized human society yarns for? This question is salient because whether we like it or not the universal principles of ethics (morality) remain what they are and have been, and will ever remain so no matter the prevailing situation and circumstances inherent at any time. These universal ethical principles are timeless truths that can never be subverted or tinted by anyone without time proving them right, good examples are justice, good, evil, love, kindness, etc.hence, "the new age morality or situation ethics" is not applicable as far as these universal ethical principles are concerned. This takes us back to what Aristotle the great said thousands of years ago when he concluded that good conducts produces happiness while bad and immoral actions bring pain and sorrow. (Fletcher, Ibid)

Critique

There is no gainsaying the fact that many progressive states aspire to enthrone democracy which they agree is the best form of government for development and advancement in many ramifications but as far as Nigeria is concerned there are peculiarities owing to the many events and occurrences that have played out in the country. It has been pointed out by some analysts that for democracy to thrive the moral rectitude of the people, especially the leaders, must meet up with world best practices (socially, political, economic and otherwise). An individual(s) with low or no moral rectitude translates to a chaotic and directionless person or society. If Machiavelli insists that the only individual qualified to take charge of the affairs of the state is the willful Prince then he should, as a matter of urgency, consider the moral uprightness of that Rex (individual) because the consideration of his moral uprightness is what will make or mar the state. When leaders (rulers) have inordinate and selfish ambitions one can imagine how the situation of that state or society would be like. If, for example, I ask a friend to advance me a loan with a solemn promise to pay him back at a given time meanwhile I don't intend ever to pay him back his money yet I make that promise to convince this friend to part with his money believing he will get his money back soon then that sort of

state is headed straight on for inherent calamity if each one of us were to have one sort of dubious mind or the other. Disaster will be the exact situation of that state that has a Prince(s) who only nurse selfish interest and ambition whether it is despotism or democracy. What counts ultimately is the morality of the individual(s) (Rachels, 1993)

The Machiavellian dictum would have been excellent if it had focused on the moral character of the Rex. No one can agree less with Plato on his conviction that the business of ruler ship is not an easy one but one which requires absolute devotion, selflessness and egalitarianism, concentration, etc. Plato foresaw that any kind of distraction will undermine the attainment of justice, progress, advancement, development, unity and national integration. The ultimate goal of the state is to uphold and promote the General or Collective Will (the welfare of the people) and when this is successfully achieved then the dire desire for development and advancement will not be a pipe dream otherwise the state is not better than the state of nature. What presently hinders Nigeria from attaining integration and national development is the acceptance and glorification of double standards by Nigerians and her leaders. Ethical principles are acknowledged by those in authority but are not taken seriously when it matters most and this is definitely not the way forward. Let it be noted that all the Machiavellian Prince is concerned about is his consolidation of the political power he has grabbed. Events that have transpired politically in Nigeria have shown that Nigerian leaders are fundamentally interested in the consolidation of political power for their own selfish gains rather than investing on developmental projects that will stand the test of time. Gone are those days in Nigeria when our leaders embarked on projects that will benefit the people in many years to come. The socio-political and economic events that have occurred so far in Nigeria leaves so much more to be desired about the quality of leaders who have occupied public offices in the country so far and this is very sad and worrisome.

Let it not be forgotten that it has been argued that the universe is fashioned in a way that have repair or restore mechanisms in place to heal itself and restore balance whenever any of its principles are upset. Remember the laws of karma or nemesis? (Omoregbe, 1998). In other words, there are laws guiding and regulating the world we live in and when these laws are upset at any time then nature itself resort or revert to those self-designed healing mechanisms for healing and restoration of balance and order. It is, therefore, imperative that people should not act in such manners that would upset the balance and order in the world as such actions only end up in producing unpleasant outcomes for everyone. It is akin to the boomerang effect, what you throw at nature is what nature throws back at you. It would appear that the universe maintains a very strong and sensitive stance to these universal ethical principles (Good, Justice, Love, Kindness, etc.) and will not hesitate to do everything to preserve them as long as the world exist. This also appears to be the problem because Nigerians, in this case, have failed to realize that the world was designed in a particular manner and to function in a unique fashion too. When Nigerian leaders come to a proper understanding of these facts then they would be able find a way around all the complex problems confronting them in their society. The question is do Nigerians and their leaders care about the fact that certain seemingly insurmountable problems confront them, and if they do, what efforts are they making to overcome these problems? This question is important because it determines a great deal of their behaviour and responses to the world and existence. These responses from Nigerians (leaders and the led) must be sincere otherwise the world will allow them continue

to run in endless circles which the Indian orientation consider to be endless sufferings. This indeed would be a pity for the nation and its people.

Conclusion

It is clear from the above that the injustice and imbalances exist in Nigeria and that Nigerians, especially their leaders, are responsible for the cause of these problems. It, therefore, follows that a lot of the events that have transpired since the country attained sovereignty are predicaments that the people have caused by themselves and until and unless they retrace themselves the shortcomings and imbalances will continue to be and even increase.

If the nation and its people desire true integration and advancement then the trendy orientation that material acquisition is the best answer or end must change. Everyone must not be busy looking for avenues through which they can get a large share of the "national cake". They should, in fact, accept that there I no national cake and therefore stop the scrabbling to have a share, a largess. Famous nations around the globe that are known to have attained development and advancement have made painful sacrifices for the country to develop. A careful study of the history of such nations will reveal how the people and their leaders lead moderate lives, considering the interests of others as they conduct themselves.

When Nigerians learn to own one house, one car, a small bank account and having limited satiable needs then things will begin to fall into place. Some prominent Nigerians are known to have numerous houses in choice locations across the country and also own houses in Britain, U.S.A, Canada, Bahamas, Australia, Dubai, etc. To decorate these houses are exotic and luxurious cars, flying first class any time they travel overseas. Such leaders would not know the hardship the people experience every day regarding housing, transportation, roads, electricity, education, feeding etc. If they feel any slight headache they are on the next flight out of the country to see their doctors-the best in the world. They don't use the roads as they are always in the air and in the best accommodations that can be imagined. The intelligent question which actually do not require but beg for answers is where would one person get the means to the kind of money that would enable him own at least 5 (five) houses in the most expensive parts (choice areas) of the country, have every version of the latest luxurious cars, always fly first class and own houses in London, America, South Africa, Canada, etc. What sort of business would such an individual be involved in to fetch him such money that can buy and do all that is listed above and more will be left to maintain that kind of life style?

Finally, until Nigerians learn to accept the fact that no one can hurt or upset nature for nature will fight back then the better it will be for everyone who is a stake holder in the nation. The basic universal principles recommend some standards of living if life must be meaningful and worth living. Complications arise if these principles are subverted and the implications are always far reaching for the culprits and everyone around them. If Nigerians accepts the truth and make a sincere U-turn then things will being to brighten up for everyone. Like has been repeatedly stated, no one can continue to do something to things in the same manner all the time and expect a different result all the time. You cannot heat water to boil and not expect it to boil egg or throw an egg against a rock and expect the rock the crack. So in morally upright societies the Machiavellian principle might be the ideal but not in contemporary Nigeria as we currently have it.

References

Anamgba, A.O. (2011). *The Substance of Government.* Aba: Alpha Publishers.

Appadorai, A.A (2004). *The Substance of Politics.* Madras: Oxford University Press. University of Calabar Press.

Asiegbu, M.F. and Agbakoba, J.C (eds.) (2008).*Four Decades of African Philosophy: Issues and Perspectives. Ibadan*: Hope Publications.

Bull, G. (ed.). (1982). *The Prince.* New York: Penguin

Cottingham, J. (ed.) (2000).*Western Philosophy: An Anthology.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Fletcher, J. (1979). *Situation Ethics: The New Morality.* Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

Graham, P. and Hoffman, J. (2009).*Introduction to Political Theory*. 2nd edition London: Pearson and Longman.

Herrick, J. (2003). *Humanism: An Introduction.* Ibadan: Gadfly Publishers.

Iroegbu, P.O. (2000).*Kpim of Personality. A Treatise on Wisdom, Politics, Personhood.* Owerri: Eustel.

Mackie, J.L. (1977).*Ethics: Inventing Rights and Wrong.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Njoku, F.O.C. (2002). *Essays in African Philosophy, Thought and Theology.* Owerri: Claretian Institute of Philosophy Nekede.

Olu-Owolabi, K.A. and Ekanola, A.B. (2013). *A Holistic Approach to Human Existence and Development.* Ibadan: Hope Publishers.

Omoregbe, J.I. (1993).*Ethics: A Systematic and Historical Study.* Lagos: Joja Educational Researchers and Publishers.

---------- (1997). *Knowing Philosophy.* Lagos: Joja Educational Researchersand publishers.

---------- (1999).*Comparative Philosophy: East and West.* Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Osaghae, E.E (2000).*The Crippled Giant*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Popkin, R.H. and Stroll, A. (1993). *Philosophy.* Oxford: Made Simple Books.

Rachels, J. (1993). *The Elements of Moral Philosophy.* 2nd edition. New York: McGraw-Hill., Inc.

Raphael, D.D (1976).*Problems of Political Philosophy.*revised edition. Hampshire: Macmillan Educational Books.

Russell, B. (1997). *History of Western Philosophy.* New York and London: Routledge.

Stumpf, S.E. (1994).*Philosophy: History and Problems.* New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.

Warburton, N. (ed.) (2005). *Philosophy: Basic Readings*. 2nd Edition. London and New York:

Nairaland News, May 2020. Social media source.