

MISERY, THE ALIENATED CLASS AND THE NIGERIAN MONIED DEMOCRACY

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Abstract

The masses can be controlled if they are made to cry, laugh, be angry or depressed". The social instrumentation of the elite to guile the masses for power control has been interpreted by several hundred elitist theorists. Whilst most have looked at the masses as an independent variable that conditions the power elite strategies, the paper argues that the masses is essentially a dependent variable that falls prey of elite construction and constriction. This is made possible as the masses is constructed as an identity that is crushed and ripped, alienated from basic socio-political access, put in its place to be spoon-fed by the supposed democratic leaders who are demagogues. The paradigmatic shift in voters' patronage in Nigeria politics after the introduction of the Smart Card Reader in 2015 that made ballot snatching almost totally non useful, heralded material inducement such as outright vote buying to secure popularity in elections. Using Marx alienation theory as a theoretical tool, the paper then argues that power elite would rather prefer to keep the masses in abject poverty, storing up their common wealth for a fragment of it to be sprinkled during elections, since that is the only way popular legitimacy can be secured. So the paper concludes that the masses are not destined to be impoverished ab initio, the elite tactically raped their collective consciousness to free citizenship and as such became an identity. The misery class is constructed, not born.

Keywords: Alienation, Elite, Identity, Masses, Monied democracy, Mystery

Introduction

At the peak of the 2019 general elections campaign, a certain candidate running for a Federal House of Representative seat was in a neighbourhood to campaign. Two local women were on their way to the rally ground, and one was asking the other, what would they (the candidate and his team) share? She vehemently maintained she would not vote for anyone who would not share something. Her opinion sufficiently ex-rayed the views of majority masses on voters' behaviour as long as economic inducement is concerned. Nigeria progressively wins as the poverty capital of the world, meaning, the social gap

between the masses and elite is getting wider by the minute and also that, more people are getting poorer than those getting richer. While we can trace this to the resource-curse syndrome of the economy that is solely sponsored by oil rent, the reality has more grievous implication to political participation. It is posited that dependence on natural resources (particularly oil) not only undermines growth and development in a state but also negatively affects its democratic processes (Onapajo, 2013).

The social structure strand of the debate suggests that rentierism limits the possibility of the emergence of a social class that could possess the capacity to oppose the status quo in an election. This is against the backdrop that the lower class created in oil-dependent states lacks financial muscle to compete with moneybags, thus a wide gulf is created between the haves and the have-nots thereby facilitating continuous social alienation.

However, Jenson and Wantchekon (2002) on this narrative, were particularly pointed whilst submitting that oil wealth has the possibility of negatively affecting democratic consolidation and furthermore promote social alienation in a society. This especially occurs in a democracy like Nigeria where the state is weak, allowing for incumbent politicians to control and distribute oil rents, and encouraging the promotion of patron-client networks, while the incumbent serves as the patron. The voters represent the client in this analysis. In fact, voting and turnout during election may be viewed as the return paid back for their participation in the whole scam. In this situation, elite competition for state power is a decided game which is played to satisfy the requirements of a working democracy to outsiders – maintaining a stability that fertilises ground for comprador bourgeoisie. The international economic politics of this reality is obviously beyond the scope of this paper, but its local implications to voters' behaviour and political participation to the masses definitely lies within the fulcrum of what the paper would engage. The paper would importantly argue out the systematic creation of political class, who are identified not on the note of tribe or religious, but on its economic objective condition that is crushed. The class is role taker, and politically powerless, unless instigated through its nominal representation. The paper finally submits that although the masses are expected to produce democracy, they cannot afford to functionally participate in a system they purportedly produced, because they are effectively alienated.

Alienation

To make any sense on how the Nigeria's common class has not been the real determinant of the democratic process, it is important to situate the argument on alienation as a theoretical guide. Marx espoused the notion of social alienation as a capitalist means

through which man is being denied of common societal dividends which can be directed for the common good. This type of alienation differs from other market-based alienation which the capitalist system has produced. The concept of social alienation, a variant of alienation is as apt to the Nigeria situation from time immemorial down to the resurgence of her democratic process in the 21st century.

Unequal distribution of societal wealth which have perpetually created a class of haves and have-nots is a continuous phenomenon in the social strata of Nigeria as some set of few cabals have monopolised the wealth to be enjoyed by the masses while backing this injustice with the instruments of force derived from government institutions, Marx in 'Das Kapitals' has earlier obfuscated the role of the state in this systematic injustice when he posited that *"the state is but a committee for the managing the affairs of whole bourgeoisie, the form in which the individuals of a ruling class asserts their common interest"* (Engels, 1919). States according to him, are biased umpires which interest is to protect the properties and uphold the opinions of the bourgeois class over that of the masses. This is different from what the masses are fed with about the neutrality of government. On this note, an imaginary 'Chinese wall' has therefore been erected between these two classes in the Nigeria economic, political and social strata such that inter-class mobility is a herculean task. The position was confirmed by elite theorists Dye and Zeigler (2001) who are of the opinion that *"The movement of non-elites to elite positions will be slow and continuous to maintain stability and avoid revolution. Only non-elites who have accepted the basic elite consensus can be admitted to the governing circles"*

Finifter (1970), amplified Seeman (1959) on the general concept of alienation when he argued that in politics, two forms of alienation stand out: political powerlessness and perceived political normlessness. The first refers to the sense among citizens that they cannot influence political outcomes because they lack the capacity to do so. The second refers to the notion that the political system is full of wrong doers; politics is being run at the behest of those who do not observe the common sense norms of how politics should be conducted. Citizens know what is right but their political masters appear either not to know how to behave or, as is more likely, are always knowingly flouting the rules, and in most of the time, with high sense of impunity. From the foregoing, the initial categorisation; political powerlessness, appears to suit our discourse, in understanding the relative position and political relevance of the masses in the Nigerian context, as we are about to see.

Arguing from the same perspective Gerry Stoke & Mark Evans (2014) posited that, the political system operates to rules and practices that appear to be unfathomable and so offers choices where the individual has no basis for making a decision because all parties and politicians appear to be the same and policy debates to upturn the impoverish state of

the masses appear unachievable because it is against the interest of the bourgeois class. The political alienation unfortunately works within, is encouraged by and schematised within a skewed democracy where election takes place every four years, the functions of election within a democratic enterprise as an instrument of transition from one government to another is now being sabotaged due to political starvation of the masses, elections therefore in this part of the world are just conducted to fulfil the 'righteousness' of a working democracy because the political starvation manifest in the event that three or two 'bad-eggs' are presented to the masses as political aspirant who are from the bourgeois class during electioneering campaign, this opens the doorway of choiceless democracy to the ever-endangered poor masses.

Social alienation as extracted from Marx theory of alienation, describes the isolating, dehumanizing, and disenchanting effects of working within a capitalist system of production. Alienation is a broadly used idea by sociologists to describe the experience of individuals or groups that feel disconnected from the values, norms, practices, and social relations of their community or society for a variety of social structural reasons. Those experiencing social alienation do not share the common, mainstream values of society, are not well integrated into society, either through material deprivation of groups and institutions or process of distributing societal resources, and are socially isolated from the mainstream.

The English sociologist Melvin Seeman provided a robust summary of social alienation in a paper published in 1959, titled "On the Meaning of Alienation" by forwarding five features of social alienation which hold true today: (i) Powerlessness: When individuals are socially alienated they believe that what happens in their lives is outside of their control and that what they do ultimately does not matter. They believe they are powerless to shape their life course, which is in the meaning of powerful and rich people in the society. (ii) Meaninglessness: When an individual does not derive meaning from the things in which he or she is engaged, or at least not the same common or normative meaning that others derive from it. (iii) Social Isolation: When a person feels that they are not meaningfully connected to their community through shared values, beliefs, and practices, and/or when they do not have meaningful social relationships with other people because they lack basic material existence to mingle with others in this society. (iv) Self-Estrangement: When a person experiences social alienation they may deny their own personal interests and desires in order to satisfy demands placed by others and/or by social norms.

Marx warned that wherever there is objectification of labour, there alienation exists. He however pointed that it gets to its peak in a capitalist state. It did not just happen. It is a product of the history of man's material conditions formed through a constant

contradictory relationship between classes. It is most valuable at this point to reiterate that while Marx social alienation provides a soft landing, the essay operates within the conceptual confines of political alienation as a situation where the collective political consciousness of a group is stranded. This is very inimical to nation building and political development. Having provided both the theoretical and conceptual insight of alienation, attention would shift to current tool of the Nigerian power elite in deepening this quagmire.

Voting-Buying and Democracy in Nigeria

The attendant social vulnerability of the teeming masses who cannot live within their means force them to vote for this bourgeois class because they are often offered money to cater for their spontaneous needs during electioneering campaign, this they cannot reject. As more evidences would later reveal, the menace of vote-buying is currently on rampage during elections in Nigeria is bizarre, moneybags now determine who get 'what' 'when' and 'how' on election days, the masses now prioritise the financial buoyancy of the elite class as a criteria for selling their votes, testimonials from the Ondo State (2016), Ekiti (July, 14th 2018) and Osun State (2019) gubernatorial election are overbearing. The 2019 election has also displayed that as it is well documented in the primaries of the PDP where delegates were offered dollars to buy their votes (Oprah 2018).

Vote-buying, like every other concept in social sciences suffers definitional upheavals. The concept is relatively new in depicting the use of money to buy electorate votes. While some scholars used money-induced voting, other subscribed to micro-level rigging, but all this varieties of terms suggest the practical ways of vote-buying. In the position of Sha (2006) vote-buying can be defined as a corrupt act which usually takes the form of "a gift or gratuity bestowed for the purpose of influencing the action or conduct of the receiver; especially money or any valuable consideration given or promised for the betrayal of a trust or the corrupt performance of an allotted duty, as to a fiduciary agent, a judge, legislator or other public officer, a witness, a voter. He further defined vote-buying as any form of persuasion in which financial gain is suggested by one person to another with the intention of influencing a person's vote. Danjibo (2007) and Ovwasa (2013) look at it from the angle of contract or perhaps an auction in which voters sell their votes to the highest bidder, which may be parties and candidates who buy vote by offering particularistic material benefits to voters. Bello-Imam (2007) sees it as a form of 'bribery consisting of money or other rewards for voting as directed by the party broker. The common denominator in all is votes market commodities which the merchant is ready to dispose of for gain. There exist various types of vote-buying as identified in literature. The clientelist vote-buying as proposed by Kitschelt & Wilkinson (2007) involves a process in politician's

delivery of a benefit is contingent upon the actions of specific members of the electorate as such in order to ensure that citizens actually comply with vote-buying agreements. Analysts frequently contend that machineries, party agents engage in monitoring and enforcement once they distribute selective benefits. Another form of vote-buying is the non-excludable which entails the allocation of local public goods, such as hospitals and roads, across political districts, this politicians distribute local public goods as a political investment, with the aim of generating future electoral support from citizens who vote in targeted districts (Est'avez, Magaloni & Diaz-Cayeros, 2002).

Vote-buying as a phenomenon does not begin with the fourth republic Nigeria, it dates back to the colonial periods. To be succinct, electioneering is not African indigenous mode of political recruitment. It is as such one of the practices which colonialism introduced that is completely alien to indigenous African politics. In pre-colonial Africa, public office holders were recruited through heredity, gerontocracy or selection. This method however, varies from one society to the other, but definitely not through balloting as modern democratic settings dictate (Ojo, 2006). Therefore, there is no evidence of vote-buying during this period because there were no elections. Although the king-makers could be given gifts, but never to short-change the right candidate, as the society had a way by tradition of calling for redress. It was even a taboo to do that in Africa (Fortes &Evens-Pritchard 1950)

The 1922 Clifford constitution for the first time made provision for elective principles that were limited to only two coastal cities of Lagos and Calabar. It is imperative to also state that politics during this colonial period was not a do or die affairs. Ojo(2006) provides some good reasons that can be adduced to this. First, there were small and few political parties. Competition was not as keen as it is now. Also, political parties and politicians were operating under the eagle eye of colonial masters superintending over elections. Thirdly, colonial economy was highly agrarian to the extent that the degree of monetised economy as we have it today was practically non-existent therefore during this time political campaigning was issued based - candidate "A" should be preferred to "B", not money.

At the colonial period generally, politicians only dole out T-shirts, with party emblems, foodstuffs and other sundry things. Even, the population size of the country cum the value of money then greatly discouraged money politics. Moreover the founding fathers preferred to campaign based on ethnicity than using money to buy off the electorates (Dudley, 1982), thus appeals to ethnic and religious sentiments were the most important weapons the political leaders and tribal heroes deployed to ensure electoral victories. This was possible because the strength and popularity of the major political parties and their

allies were essentially enhanced by the primordial ties they had with the people in their regions (Ovwasa 2013).

Money politics and vote-buying escalated to greater dimensions during the second republic which started in 1979. It was perhaps, encouraged by some wealthy Nigerians who made their money during the Nigerian civil war between 1967 – 1970, by probably supplying arms and ammunitions to both parties to the war and those who were government contractors, reconstructing projects, after the destructive civil war. And as soon as the military signalled the commencement of competitive politics, these people ventured into politics or sponsored candidates for elective office (Ojo 2006)

In the same vein, money politics and vote-buying reached their pinnacles in the transition election of 1999 and the civilian-civilian transition elections of 2003, 2007 and 2011, and 2015. As Suberu (2003) contends, “if the use of money in the 1999 elections was open and shameless that of 2003 was outrageously indecent. This seemed to have ironically pricked the conscience of former President Obasanjo, who was a beneficiary of the sordid act in the two elections to admit though, belatedly that:

With so much resources being deployed to capture elective offices, it is not difficult to see the correlation between politics and the potential for high level corruption. The greatest losers are the ordinary people, those voters whose faith and investment in the system are hijacked and subverted because money, not their will, is made the determining factor in elections. Can we not move from politics of money materialism to politics of ideas, issues and development (Obasanjo, 2005: 3).

From 1999 till date vote-buying in Nigeria has assumed different dimension, from buying the votes of judges in tribunal judgments to buying the votes of the common electorates on election days. Vote-buying also takes place in different level and different institutions of government. Nevertheless, it is quite difficult to account for how much exactly is disbursed because of the secretive way it is usually done. Vote-buying can take place in the legislative house, between candidates and electorate, party delegates and candidates. For example, on vote-buying in the Nigeria National Assembly Dung (2006) has this to say;

The media has informed Nigerians of the phenomenon of vote buying in the legislature. Some of the celebrated cases include (a) bribing of legislators to approve education budget for the Federal Ministry of Education in 2005 (b) bribing of legislators to approve (MTN) contracts in 2003 (c) bribing of legislators

to vote for tenure elongation in 2005/6 (d) bribing of legislators to vote against tenure elongation2005/6"

Vote-buying has also been recently used by parties in power at the federal level to intimidate and dislodge executives from opposition parties in state level in recent times, these elections were highly monetized. Federal security apparatus were being used to fostered the distribution of cash on election days. Gubernatorial elections in Ondo State in 2016, and Osun and Ekiti states in 2018 were examples of this stupidity.

Social Alienation, Voting-Buying and Choiceless Democracy in Nigeria.

In a capitalist society, the output of labour power is usually commoditised for market exchange. These commodities could be in form of anything, as in, anything money can buy. Prostitutes are exhibited on tray for sales and child-labour are constantly exploited as cheap labour, who are essentially physically mobilized from agrarian locations to high-demand production centres. Commodity production is guided by market forces, not by morality. While theorising the capitalisation of surplus value, Claude Ake (1981) forwarded that the wretchedness of the workers must be sustained for the bourgeoisie to accrue surplus value that are subsequently reinvested. Since the labour power is the *variable* capital of production, it becomes more convenient for the capitalists to exploit this aspect than it is to enhance other factors of production in increasing profit. All of this is possible because of the nature of social relation of production. In a liberal democracy like Nigeria that is neatly tied to the market, the market dynamics that breeds exploitation appears to also play out in the political recruitment process. The velocity, methods and ruthlessness differs from state to state. While advanced democracies market ideologies to prospective buyers (electorates), the Nigerian democracy market votes on highest bidder ground. In order to keep this running, the electorates are expected to be wretched, so their power is limited to the nominal strength of the votes they can sell. Just like the workers in a capitalist society, who have only labour power to negotiate with, the voters in Nigerian democracy have only their votes to negotiate with.

In Nigeria, the state is a key factor in the political economy which encourages the alienation process. It determines the direction of production, distribution and allocation of resources. The fragile production base and the resultant social forces of production have not been able to support any socio-political transformation that would engineer collective mass goods but for the interest of the dominant few. The state has been a factor that not only helping in preserving the private bourgeois structures by this act but perhaps also help in modifying them (Vajda,1981). This indicates that the social contract between the populace and the Nigerian state has failed because, it works and entrench the interest of elite class. As Marx pointed out, "the executive of the modern capitalist state is a committee

for the management of the common affairs of the bourgeoisie". As state institutions are parts of the super-structure determined by the interests of the dominant class, the state then becomes an instrument of the ruling class as defined in terms of control over the means of production. In Nigeria, according to John Campbell, a former American Ambassador to Nigeria (1998-2000), those that holds power do not want it to change they wants to hold on to it to impoverish the people so as to determine and define the waves and directions of politics, since they do not have jobs, factory or industry, it is only through the rents distributed on electioneering periods that the masses can make a living, thus they cannot reject the repressive rule of the elite class.

This vicious circle of social alienation continues to expand because the masses who are to upturn this status quo lack the material fire power to withstand this bourgeois class in an electoral contest. This means that alienating the masses serve both to initially estrange them from participating and to prevent them in the future to regroup. Since the state runs on liberal market tradition the distribution of societal wealth becomes unfair, and purportedly defended by the prevailing legal framework - a handwork of the power elites. Since the country lacks the basic tenets of production the entrepreneur- industrial base becomes lopsided, by estimation, only 3% of the Nigerian population drives the economy. The control of the means of production is the base of its power, and patronage to it means struggling for a share among contending classes but not for productive purpose (Omoyibo, 2018)

However, the majority of the masses are left out in this scramble and incapacitated in contributing to the economic production of the country; the only opportunity for them is the informal sector of the economy where black market thrives. The nature of the Nigerian state holding power for the dominant class is decisive in categorizing a particular mechanism of production in respect of the federal structure it is operating which is defective, but however, the dominance of unitary system (ideology) is glaring in the nature of the attendant social relations. This institutional frame work that saw the federating state relying on the centre (Abuja) for monthly subvention acquired from oil rents to run their governments and sustain development has contributed to the alarming height of a rentier state and clientelist structure that determines and define the waves and direction of politics and power and state distribution network. As Joseph Garba (1995) has succinctly analysed:

in a country like Nigeria where the prizes are so few, and the stakes so high, the fight for booty or 'national cake' is fierce and often vicious. It has at times led to a debilitating corruption in the arena of public policy making and implementation. 'Who gains, who loses in these federal, state and local policy arenas is rarely an accident more often than not, the distributional consequences of public policies are

the intended result of the private interests which have been instrumental in their design, passage, and implementation'. For the entire country, the manipulation of public policy for private purposes comprises yet another disjunction in our fractured history. Not every public policy fails, and not every public programme or project is redundant. But when once in a while a policy succeeds, it is often not because of government per se, but in spite of it.

The availability of rents proceeds provides financial succour for the elite class to buy off the masses who have been alienated from the financial base of the country while people of integrity and those who genuinely want to serve the people but have no money to buy votes lose out in the electoral contest, while bad candidates with abundant financial resources or those with corrupt tendencies may get elected (Milbrat, 1965) When this happens, the immoral and condemnable use of money to buy votes is then celebrated to high heavens, as a good and effective weapon, in electoral battles by successful contestants.

The current electoral contest held in recent time and the forthcoming general elections in Nigeria are testimonials to this analysis, there is no gainsaying this elections are outcome of a choiceless democracy between two contesting candidates, take for example 2015 presidential election in Nigeria, a corrupt incumbent and an old former military dictator is being presented to Nigerians by the major political parties, Nigerian are now forced to choose between the devil and the deep blue sea, the question that will prick the minds of outsiders is; are this two bad eggs the most valuable and resourceful leaders the political system can present to the electorate at that point in time? the answer remains rhetorical, the social dimension of alienation also manifested in apathy demonstrated by the masses in believing the 'change mantra' instead of testing new hands that are round peg in a round hole (Adamu, 2015).

What is generally perceived as voice of the people does not always speak from the people. The 'o to ge' (enough is enough) people's revolution that rented the air in Kwara State during the 2019 general election to dethrone The Saraki's Dynasty that has lasted for two decades in the state was an epic example. The movement used the masses as the tool to work against the incumbent elite in the state. As much as it sounded to have originated from the people, the real proved otherwise. The brain behind the movement was a certain All Progressives' Congress chieftain called Lazeez Ayinla Kolawole (LAK). Instructively, LAK was two-time gubernatorial aspirant in Kwara State, at each of the time running against the Saraki's power. Before 'o to ge' revolution, he had even coined an earlier slogan 'It is time for change' when he first ran against Bukola Saraki in 2003 (Kolawole, 2019). He was a retired permanent secretary, and by all means a member of elite. The slogan was chanted, the power is shifted, and another elite are recruited to pilot Kwara affair. The

brouhaha is basically elite tussle, with the masses acting scripted roles. What the elite needs is not the masses validation, but their mere nominal presence at polls to cast votes, which can be motivated by inciting them to get angry or out rightly paying to cast votes, similar to what happened in Oyo 2019 gubernatorial when the Ajimobi gang are to be dethroned. This has been the trend. After the Anambra Gubernatorial election 2017, Chief Osita Chidoka, the United Progressive Party (UPP) candidate, lamented that he lost the election because he could not contend with the financial firepower of the incumbent governor who was returned (Chidoka, 2017). So it means even the elite publicly concede to buying votes.

At this juncture, it is important to state that the contribution of the wretched masses in the present democratic process in Nigeria is not infinitesimal. Irrespective of the nominal status of the masses contribution, they are still relevant in that they must play their roles before that democratic process will be constitutionally completed. The elite recognise this role, importantly now that the Smart Card Readers has limited the usefulness of ballot snatching. So it means the actual votes must be cast in the polling. In getting this done, the electorates' votes must be practically secured. In the bit of securing more votes, the power elite are compelled to capture electorates at dense constituencies to buy in bulk. This determinant to a large extent conditions power configurations and elite consensus. The above amounts to mean that though the masses are Marjory dependent variable in democratic political calculation, their factor affect the eventual results of electioneering processes.

In performing its role to complete the democratic process, the masses are readily identified as a political class in itself, with a role to legitimize aspirants for political recruitment. Like every other class in a society, it is easily singled out with distinct features. Irrespective of the social context, these attribute do not really change while recognising them. In The Nigerian political scene, the masses are oppressed, confused, wretched, demand for money to vote, and are politically estranged. Their capability to participate is structurally sickled and limited. They legitimize the process but they cannot afford the cost of the government they make with their own hands. President Buhari signed the Not-Too-Young-To-Run passed bill into law on May 29, 2018 to atone the agitated young Nigerians, by lowering the age to run presidential seat for example to 35 from 40 (Tukur, 2018). While this has been viewed as bold populist mind view, it is another to say that nothing has changed considering the Nigerian youth as the most wretched section of the population.

This challenge won, the youth faced another problem to contest; the cost of obtaining nomination forms for express on of interests with major political parties, say APC or PDP. The All Progressives Congress hiked its presidential nomination form to 27.5 Million Naira while the People Democratic Party maintained it's at 12 Million Naira (Mumbere, 2018). In a nation of 19% youth unemployment, this is strategic deprivation; the youth are not rich

enough to run after all. The status quo continues. Keeping the masses in the class they are, with all the identified traits, it is easy for the elite to get back at them every four years with no spatial restriction to market their franchise. For instance, there are some remote electoral constituencies with little or no government active presence; no good access road, electricity, borne water etc. while they suffer these deprivations, the political class could find their ways there every election season and still buy votes, not forcefully, but willingly because the electorates are willing to sell.

Conclusion

In the foregoing thesis, the 'vote count', 'protect your vote' mantras are contested. Votes count only when the electorate are allowed to vote fairly without being induced. In the Nigeria situation however, voters are induced and votes marketization has in itself becomes part of our political culture. The paper has espoused how rentierism could limit the possibility of a class to compete with the prevailing dominant class in a supposed democratic state. The paper leans on the social alienation as theoretical tool to understand the character of Nigerian democratic from the purview of oligarchy that has been sustained over time, and in turn, ensures the wretchedness of the masses. The history of money induced voting is traced to the birth of the fourth republic, emphasising an upsurge since the introduction of the Smart Card Readers (SCRs) in 2015 general elections. The paper has also reiterated the brazen money tussle among major political parties in the gubernatorial elections in Ondo (2016), Anambra (2017), Osun and Ekiti (2018), crowned by the 2019 general elections. All of this cumulates to mean that the masses have little or no say in deciding the eventuality of elections in Nigeria. Even when their roles are recognised, they are dictated by the power elite. The continued appropriation of common wealth by the power elite, has rendered the masses helpless in the hands of the elite, and as such they live in misery.

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