

Objective African Military Control*

A New Paradigm in Civil-Military Relations

AGOLA AUMA-OSOLO
University of Maryland

Contemporary studies of African Civil-Military Relations have shown that more than 50 % of the African states have undergone one or more successful or abortive military coups. A number of theories have been proposed to explain Civil-Military Relations. The purpose of this paper is to test Huntington's theory of Objective Civilian Control with respect to Civilian-Military Relations in modern Africa. Following a brief overview of African Civil-Military Relations and focus on the question of who controls whom, the paper poses the same question relative to non-African Civil-Military Relations. In a more extensive, in-depth case study of Nigeria, the paper seeks to examine the level and source of military professionalism, whether or not Nigeria has ever been free of military intervention in its political process because of its high level of professionalism, and whether Huntington's argument has any validity. In addition, the role of the African military in Nigeria as a paradigm in African Civilian-Military Relations is examined by discussing when and why Nigeria achieved her nationhood, the causes and consequences of military intervention and the level of Nigerian military professionalism, the role of the military and the Civil War, and why professionalism is not a reliable deterrent to military intervention in politics. This discussion illustrates the fallacy of most assumptions in the Civil-Military Relations literature today.

The paper concludes that Huntington's assumption that non-military intervention is a function of civilian encouragement of military professionalism and professionalization is spurious. Based on the Nigerian case study and cross-national observations, the data show that a high degree of professionalism and professionalization is not a reliable deterrent against African military activism and intervention in civilian affairs. The data support the findings that professionalization of the military alone would not deter the military from intervening unless it is accompanied by the military's complete satisfaction with civilian control. Without this satisfaction, the military establishment is likely to challenge and possibly remove the civilian control whenever the military is disenchanted with or envious of civilian rule. Drawing from studies on political anthropology, it is sound to say that African military intervention is normal and one of the fundamental aspects of African traditional Warriorism. In the final analysis, Objective Military Control is not unique to Africa. It is a universal political phenomenon in Civil-Military Relations today.

1. Introduction

Objective Military Control has always been overlooked by some students of Civil-Military Relations. Most of their emphasis has been on 'Objective Civilian Control'.¹ While these students also recognize the recurrent military *coup d'état* among other recent forms of military intervention in politics, particularly in Africa, South America, Asia, and Southern Europe,² a careful examina-

tion of their assumptions shows that both classical theorists such as Karl von Clausewitz (1831) and *most* contemporary ones³ converge on one central inference. They all agree that in a democracy only the civilians should possess the inherent right to run and control the affairs of the state. The military, on the other hand, is regarded as simply the civilians' tool and watchdog. Like all other subordinate groups in a democracy, the military sphere is expected to be responsive and subservient to civilian supremacy. Even Claude Welch and others who now recognize the *homo politicus* aspect of the military in

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Africa today,⁴ still perceive the military as *essentially* 'apolitical', although important in the process of nation-building.⁵ In his provocative thesis, *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington argues that, in the real world of Civil-Military Relations, one is likely to find either a 'Subjective Civilian Control', an 'Objective Civilian Control', or an 'Equilibrium' (a combination of the first two phenomena). To him, Subjective Civilian Control means exclusive civilian control of all political processes in the absence of a strong, well-organized, and professional military establishment. The military and recruitment for it are solely personal affairs of the civilian elite. Objective Civilian Control means the twentieth century Civil-Military Relations phenomenon characterized by a highly organized and professional military establishment under Civilian rule. According to Huntington, unlike the old-time 'primitive' military establishment, the contemporary military is 'civilized', not only because of its corporate hierarchical structure, its *esprit de corps* (a high degree of internal morale and cohesion), and social responsibilities,⁶ but also because of its apolitical role. To maintain its supremacy over the military, the Objective Civilian Control achieves its ends by militarizing the military and by making the latter a tool of the state through formal professional military training based on a Western democratic model.⁷

In reality, to what extent does this model hold true in the present Civil-Military Relations in the developing countries? If the best formula for keeping the military in its barracks is to militarize them, as Huntington contends, then how successful has this formula been in Africa today, and, since various studies on African Civil-Military Relations today show that more than 50 % of the African states have undergone one or more successful or abortive military coup(s) d'état, why cannot such military takeovers be stopped? Does it mean that such coups took place because of the negligence or ignorance on the part of African civilian rulers who

failed to implement Huntington's formula? Could it mean that such coups were inevitable because of the war-like nature of African societies, as Adda B. Bozeman provocatively argues in her *Conflict in Africa*?

In view of these questions regarding certain theories in Civil-Military Relations today, this paper seeks to test Huntington's theory of Objective Civilian Control with respect to Civil-Military Relations in modern Africa. To do so, the paper first gives a brief overview of African Civil-Military Relations as regards to who controls whom. For a comparative purpose, the same question is also re-examined vis-à-vis non-African Civil-Military Relations. Thereafter, our findings are further re-tested with an in-depth case study of Nigeria, the only African country which already had the highest level of modern military training prior to its independence in 1960, in order to support or refute the reliability of our cross-national findings. In the Nigerian case study, we seek to understand the Nigerian level of military professionalism, the source of that professionalism, whether or not Nigeria has ever been free from military intervention in the Nigerian political process because of its high level of professionalism, and whether or not Huntington's argument has any validity. Also, we need to examine the validity of those arguments by Bozeman and other Africanists who support Huntington's argument, and who, on the other hand also argue that African military development is unlikely to follow the 'civilized' Western military behavioral model because of African war-mongerism and 'primitivity'.

2. Observations and findings

2.1. A cross-national overview

A re-examination of the assumptions by Huntington et. al. above is now in order, and without limiting ourselves to African Civil-Military Relations, a cross-national overview of the nature of Civil-Military Relations today shows that, between 1900

Table I. A cross-national overview of both successful and abortive military coups d'état between 1900 and 1975.

Time	African World States and Year (19—)	TC <hr/> TS	Outside World States and Year (19—)	TC <hr/> TS
1900-1910	—		—	
1911-1920	—	0	USSR (17)	$\frac{1}{1}$
1921-1930	—	0	—	0
1931-1940	—	0	—	0
1941-1950	—	0	People's Republic of China (49)	$\frac{1}{1}$
1951-1954	Egypt (52, 54)	$\frac{1}{2}$	—	0
1955-1958	Sudan (58)	$\frac{1}{1}$	Burma (58), France (58), Iraq (58), Pakistan (58), Thailand (58)	$\frac{5}{5}$
1959-1962	Sudan (59), Zaire (60), Ethiopia (60), Algeria (62)	$\frac{4}{4}$	Cuba (59), Cambodia (59), Iraq (59), Turkey (60, 62) El Salvador (60, 61), Lebanon (62), Portugal (62), Argentina (62), S. Korea (61), Brazil (61)	$\frac{13}{16}$
1963-1966	Algeria (63, 63, 64, 65) (63, 65, 66) Burundi (65, 66), Central African Republic (66), Dahomey (63, 65), Gabon (64), Togo (63), Zaire (63, 65, 66)	$\frac{11}{18}$	—	0
1967-1970	Dahomey (67), Ghana (68), Libya (69), Mali (68, 69), Nigeria (67, 69), Sierra Leone (67, 67, 68), Somalia (69), Sudan (69), Togo (67, 70), Zaire (68, 69)	$\frac{10}{16}$	Greece (69)	$\frac{1}{1}$
1971-1974	Ethiopia (74), Ghana (72), Ivory Coast (73), Kenya (71), Malagasy Republic (72), Mali (71), Morocco (71, 72), Rwanda (73), Sierra Leone (71), Uganda (71, 74, 74, 74)	$\frac{10}{14}$	Cyprus (74), Portugal (74), Chile (74)	$\frac{3}{3}$
1975-	Ethiopia (75), Uganda (75, 75, 75, 75), Chad (75)	$\frac{3}{6}$	Honduras (75)	$\frac{1}{1}$

Source: Some of these data were extracted from: Finer (1962), pp. 1-4; First (1970); Welch (1970); *Almanacs; Africa Report*; among other sources.

TS = Total States with Coups.

TC = Total Coups.

and 1977, abortive and successful military coups have been part and parcel of African politics. The data in Table I clearly indicate that when most African countries became independent in the 1960's those countries gradually became hostage to the military's propensity to participate in the political process. It is not only African nation-states which have experienced this problem. Between 1900 and 1977, 22 non-African nation-states experienced the same problem; a fact which, therefore, raises serious doubts and questions about Huntington's objective civilian control model.

Without being too abrupt in our conclusion, let us also see if our findings still hold true in Nigeria. Thus, in order to understand further the fallacy of most assumptions in the Civil-Military Relations literature today, let us also examine the role of the African military in Nigeria as a paradigm in African Civil-Military Relations. Let us see when and why Nigeria achieved her nationhood; the consequences of military intervention and the level of Nigerian military professionalism; the role of the Military and the Civil War; and above all, why Huntington's professionalism is not a reliable deterrent to military intervention in politics.

2.2 *An in-depth case study (Nigeria, 1960-1977):*

(a) *Independence:* On October 1, 1960 Nigeria gained its independence from the British.

Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, O.B.E., K.B.E., LL.D., were the nation's first President and Prime Minister respectively. Azikiwe was a Christian from the Igbo ethnic in the East and Balewa was a Moslem from the Hausa ethnic in the North.

(b) *The Military and the Civil War:* The civil war between the Eastern Nigerians (chiefly the Igbos) and the other Nigerians had been predicted by Balewa more than a decade prior to independence. On his return to his Northern region after his LL.D. studies

at the University of London in 1947, Balewa warned his *Emirs* (ethnic headman) about the likelihood of a future political clash between his Northern region and the Southern or Eastern regions. He told them that as long as his Northern region was not as highly educated as either of the other two, it would be under the domination of the others if British rule were to be removed.

Balewa's prediction was supported by the Sarduana of Sokoto, the most distinguished ruler and politician in the North, Sir Ahamdu Bello. Because the latter could neither live nor work with anyone from the South or East (he called them 'barbarians'), Balewa was encouraged to enter politics so that he could deal with them on the Sarduana's behalf. Thus, Balewa would go to Lagos and fight for Northern sovereignty before the British. On reaching Lagos, Balewa was appointed Minister of Works in 1954, when a pre-independence constitution was introduced.

In Lagos, Balewa continued to oppose the unification of Nigeria. However, it was not until 1955, when he visited the spectacular utility of the Mississippi River in the United States, that Balewa began to alter his attitude against unification. Balewa believed that, since it had been a similar unification of the United States in America which had transformed the Mississippi River, so would a similar unification in Nigeria enable the three Nigerian nations to exploit jointly the possible benefits offered by the Niger River. Consequently, the Federation of Nigeria was implemented on October 1, 1960. However, four years later, late in the summer of 1964, the Nigerian Federation began to experience unbearable political turmoils, such as the *2nd Degree Abortive Civilian Coup, 1964 (Labour Committee vis à vis Azikiwe-Balewa's Regime)*.⁹ In the summer of 1964, the Labour Joint Action Committee called a fourteen-day strike against the government. The strike affected private firms, the docks, and all forms of transportation, paralyzing almost the entire country. However, the goal was not to take over the government.

Another such crisis was the *1st Degree Abortive Civilian Coup, 1964 (Insurgents vis à vis Azikiwe-Balewa's Regime)*.¹⁰ Around the same time, a plot to overthrow Azikiwe-Balewa's regime was uncovered. Prior to this plotted coup, two prominent and very religiously and tribally antagonistic political parties had emerged: the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA), comprising the Northerners (the Hausa and Fulani) who are by and large Moslems, and the Southern Moslems; and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA), comprising the Easterners, Mid-westerners, and Westerners (the Igbo and Yoruba) who are by and large Christian.

In the course of continuous tensions between the NNA and the UPGA, the Yoruba chief, Obafemi Awolowo, was arrested again.¹¹ Consequently, the terrorists responded furiously, demanding Chief Awolowo's release and in the course of this duel, two Yoruba politicians were assassinated.

An election (December 30, 1964) was called to rectify this situation. Azikiwe's UPGA party objected to the date and demanded a postponement of elections on the grounds that the UPGA's candidates had been discriminated against. At the same time, Azikiwe expressed his concern that his Igbos would secede from the Federation should the NNA majority party win any more seats from the Moslem Western region. The Northerners responded that they would also secede should the UPGA win some seats in the Northern and Western regions.

This *mutual ultimatum* caused intense political tension in the pre-election period. When it was revealed that the NNA was winning more seats than expected, Azikiwe's UPGA called for a boycott of the polls, withdrew its candidates, and commissioned organized mobs to destroy all the polling booths throughout the Western, Eastern, and Midwestern regions and in Lagos. While President Azikiwe expressed his unwillingness to participate in a government with such results, the Sardauna of Sokoto made it clear to Azikiwe and the latter's UPGA party that, if the Igbo were to secede, they

were welcome to do so peacefully. However, the leaders of the two political parties met and reconciled their differences privately in order to preserve the Federation. Another election was called in lieu of the first; this time the Northerners refused and demanded that elections be held only in those regions where the elections had been disrupted, but not in the Northern regions.

When the by-election was held in early 1965, the NNA again turned out more powerful than Azikiwe's UPGA party; the NNA managed to place Chief S. L. Akintola of the Western Region as premier of the Region.¹² Consequently, the non-Moslems in both the Western and Eastern regions were upset; the Moslems dominated the Federal Assembly and the army's key positions. This bitter attitude fostered a strong anti-federation faction among the Igbos which eventually triggered the *Successful Military Coup on January 15, 1966 (Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi vis à vis Balewa's Regime)*.

On January 15, 1966, Azikiwe's Igbo nation* launched a successful military coup led by Major Nzeogwu. Thereafter, Nzeogwu surrendered power to Major-General Johnson T. Y. Aguiyi-Ironsi (also Igbo) to form a new military government. Apart from the Eastern region, all other regions were struck by the coup simultaneously. In this national and religious-centred coup, all but the Igbo prominent political leaders were summarily eliminated (see Table II).

In addition to the above victims, many other non-Igbo Moslem politicians and army officers were slain. Consequently, when General Aguiyi-Ironsi attempted to form a unitary government headed by his Igbo nation, the non-Igbo Moslems sought revenge, as is evinced by the two consecutive coups d'état against the Ironsi regime between May and July of 1966. Nevertheless, the Igbo went ahead and formed the following military government (Table III).

Between May and June 1966, Nigeria was hit by a *2nd Degree Abortive Civilian Coup, May-June, 1966* — massive demonstrations by the Moslem Hausas against the Christian

Table II. Casualties as a result of military coup d' etat of January, 1966, in Nigeria.

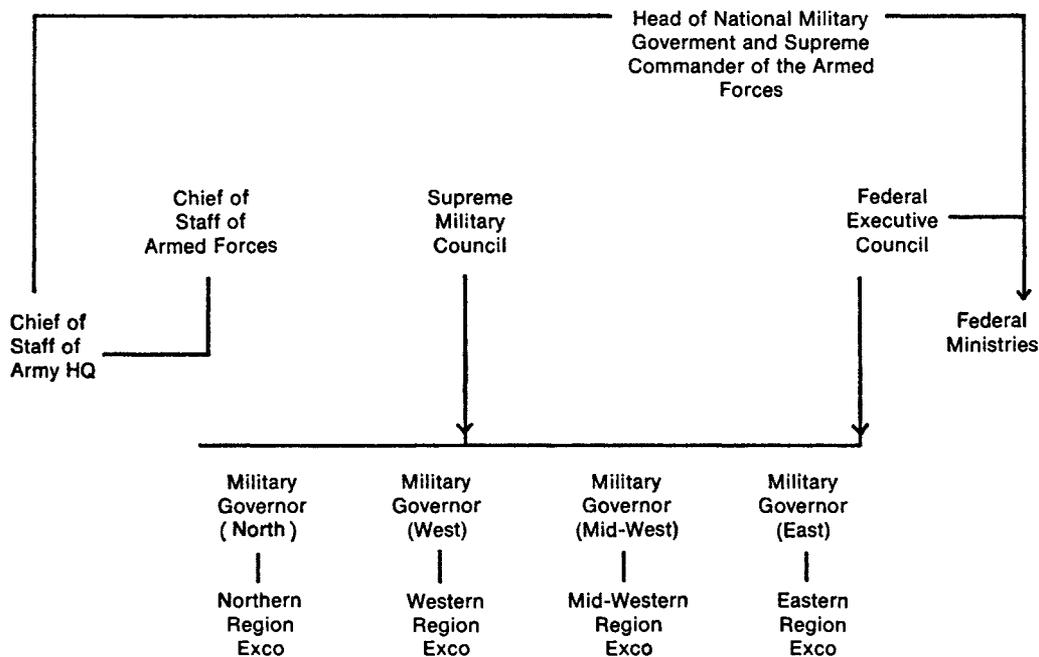
Name	Political position	Nation*	Region	Religion	Killed	
					Yes	No
Dr. Azikiwe	Federation President	Igbo	East	Christian		x
Sir A. A. T. Balewa	Federation Prime Minister	Hausa	North	Moslem	x	
Sir A. Bello	Northern Region Premier	Hausa	North	Moslem	x	
S. L. Akintola	Western Region Premier	Yoruba	West	Christian	x	

* Used here, in lieu of 'tribe' or 'ethnic', meaning a people sharing common culture in spite of their geographical differences.

Igbos in the Northern Region of Nigeria. Unspecified numbers of Igbos were dragged from their homes and killed, especially in Kano, where some Igbos had isolated them-

selves from the rest. Thousands of Igbos were killed as they fled to the bus and railway stations to evacuate the North. In response, the Igbos retaliated by killing as many

Table III. Organization chart of the National Military Government by Major-General Johnson T. Y. Aguiyi-Ironsi, March 31, 1966:



Notes: After March 31, 1966, when the Regional Military Governors were first included in the Federal Executive Council, this had virtually the same composition as the Supreme Military Council. The latter consisted of (a) the Head of the National Military Government and Supreme Commander, (b) the head of the Navy, (c) the Chief of staff, Armed Forces, (d) the Chief of Staff, Army, (e) the four Military governors, (f) the Attorney General. In addition to these, the Federal Executive Council included the Inspector General of Police and his Deputy.

Source: Robin Luckham, *The Nigerian Military, A Sociological Analysis of Authority* (1960-67) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 255.

Hausa as they could get hold of in the Eastern Region and Lagos.

Following the massive counter-killings of Igbos and Hausas in early July of 1966, the Northern Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO's) staged a *successful military coup* against General-President Aguiyi-Ironsi's regime, killing not only the Igbo leader

(Aguiyi-Ironsi) but also a thousand or so prominent Igbo political and army leaders.¹³

Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon, Aguiyi-Ironsi's successor, had a reputation of impartiality. He was the son of a Christian priest and from a small tribe in Central Nigeria. He was finally called upon to form a new government.

Table IV. Second Military Government in Nigeria as a result of Military Counter Coup d'Etat of July 28-29, 1966, against the January 1966 Military Government.

Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon	Head of Federal Military Government and Supreme Commander
Colonel Robert Adebayo	Military Governor, West
Lt.-Colonel Odumekwu Ojukwu	Military Governor, East
Lt.-Colonel David Ejoor	Military Governor, Mid-West
Lt.-Colonel Hassan Katsina	Military Governor, North
Commodore J. E. Wey	Head, Nigerian Navy
Major Mabolaji Johnson	Military Administrator, Lagos
Alhaji Kam Salem	Inspector-General of Police
Mr. T. Omo-Vare	Deputy Inspector-General of Police

Source: *Communiqué, Declaration on Use of Force, and Statement on the Supreme Military Council*, all extracted from Meeting of the Nigerian military leaders held at Peduase Lodge, Aburi, Ghana, January 4th and 4th, 1966, pp. 67-69. Also see Luckham, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

In his resentment against the Hausa military coup against his nation-controlled military government, Lt.-Colonel Odumekwu Ojukwu staged a 1st Degree Abortive Military Coup¹⁴ by declaring on May 30, 1967 that his Igbo Eastern Region was a separate independent state, Biafra. To stop Biafran secession, the Nigerian Federal Government (possessing 50,000 federal troops) declared war against Biafra, which possessed a force of only 30,000. The 'Biafrans' fought for independence from May 30, 1967 to September of 1969. All the while, the federal troops fought to maintain the *union*. On May 1, 1968, the Federal and the 'Biafran' officials began their preliminary talks in London. Then in August of 1968, more talks were held at the Organization of African Unity headquarters in Addis Ababa. In September of 1969, 'Biafran' military capability began to dwindle significantly as a result of President Charles de Gaulle's loss of a vote of

confidence in his government referendum on June 2, 1969. De Gaulle had been the prime supplier of war material to the secessionist 'Biafra' and his fall was a decisive blow to the 'Biafran' military power. Finally, by January of 1970, 'Biafra' was paralyzed and ready to return to the union according to General-President Gowon's dictates.

(c) *Case study findings: (i) Civilian-military roles in Nigerian coups.* Were all the Nigerian coups essentially civilian? If not, of the civilian and military spheres, which sphere staged more coups? Thus, which one was more active in politics and why? The data in Table V show that 100 % of *successful* coups in Nigeria were *military coups*, and that 57 % of the total coups were staged by the military establishment. Data as to what extent the military intervened in politics, and at what time we begin to notice the Nigerian military taking an active role in politics, are presented in Table VI.

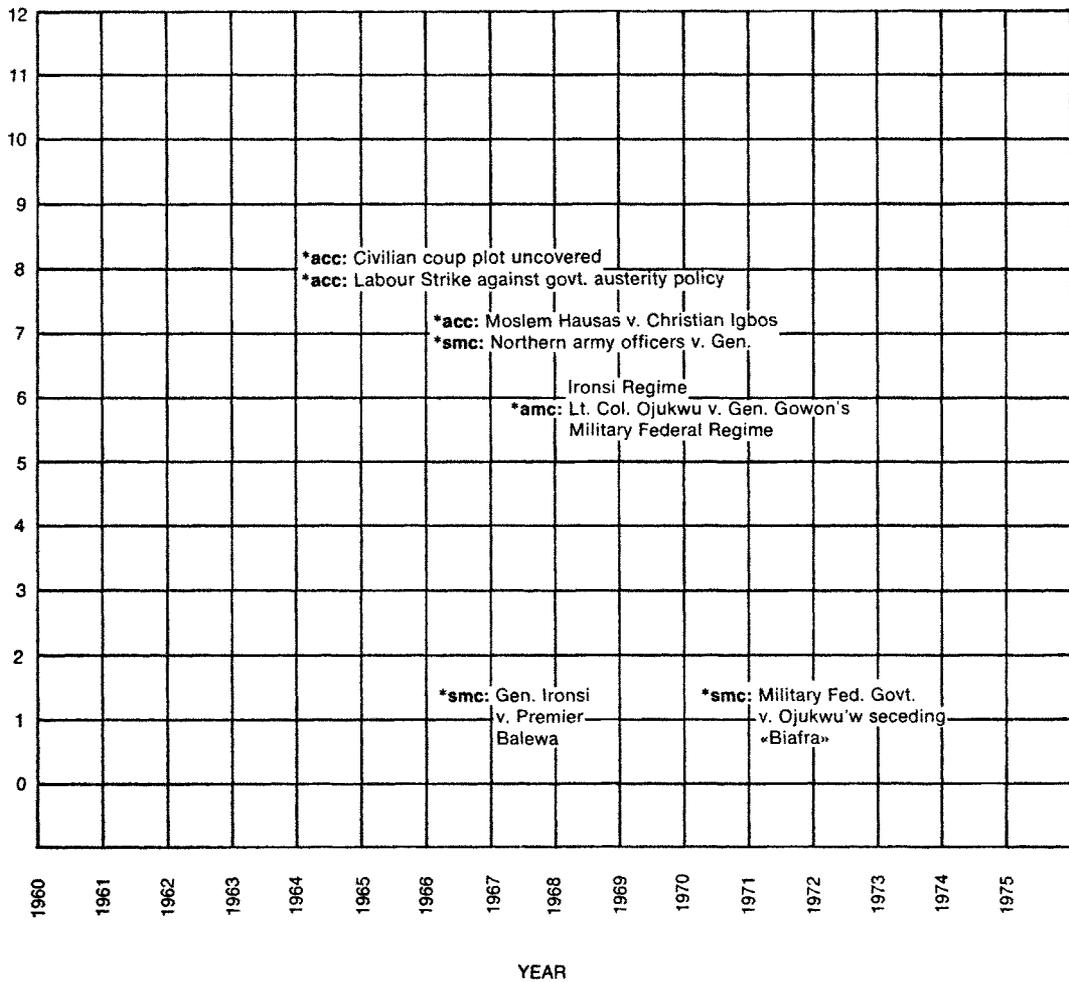
Table V: A comparative view of the military and civilian coups d'etat in Nigeria from October 1, 1960 to 1975.

Participants	Successful	Coups	
		Abortive	Total
Military	3	1	4
Civilian	0	3	3
Total	3	4	7

Fishers Exact p = 0.1143.

The data in Table VI show us that it was not until July of 1966 (approximately five years after Nigerian independence) that the military began intervening in politics. Furthermore, we note that it was not until after two abortive coups had been staged by the civilians themselves that the military began to step into politics. But what might have been the contributing factors to military

Table VI: A proliferation of civilian-military interference in Nigerian civil rule, 1960-1975:



Where: *acc*: = Abortive civilian coup d'etat
smc: = Successful military coup d'etat
amc: = Abortive military coup d'etat

intervention? Was it due to the civilians' low level of professionalization which, according to Huntington's theory of 'Objective Civilian Control', is likely to contribute to military interventions? Or was the Nigerian military intervention caused by customary African warmongerism, as argued by Bozeman?

To answer these and other questions regarding the Nigerian military's deviation from Huntington's theory, let us first examine the professional level of the Nigerian African military officers and that of the active participants in the military coups.

(ii) *Level of Nigerian military professionalism.* The Nigerian military establishment was inherited from the British colonial regime in 1960. Table VII shows the subsequent developments. In Table VII we note that it was not until after February of 1965 that African military officers began taking over *key* positions from British military officers as a result of the Africanization programme in Nigeria. Table VIII shows that, by 1966, almost all of them had undergone intensive military training in Britain, India, Australia, Canada, the U.S.A., and so on.¹⁵

Table VII. Africanization of ex-British colonial military establishment in Nigeria, 1960-1965.

Rank and Date	British	Nigerian	Details
			Not Known
General Officer Commanding			
up to February 1965	1	0	—
After February 1965	0	1	—
Brigade Commanders ^a			
January 1962	3	0	—
January 1963	2	1	—
January 1964	1	2	—
January 1965	0	2	—
Key Staff Posts ^b			
January 1962	7	0	—
January 1963	6	1	—
January 1964	2	5	—
January 1965	0	8	—
Battalion Commanders			
January 1960	5	0	—
January 1961	4	1	—
January 1962	2	1	2
January 1963	2	1	2
January 1964	0	3	2
January 1965	0	5	—

^a A third Brigade HG operated in the Congo during the UN operation from 1960 to 1964 only. This brigade was commanded by an Englishman until Brigadier Ogundipe took over in January of 1963.

^b Chief of Staff, Commandant of the Nigerian Military Training College/Deputy Commandant of the Defense Academy, GSO (I), Adjutant General, QHG and staff/technical posts at similar seniority levels (DEME, DST, CNOS). No Chief of Staff appointed until 1964.

Source: Luckham (1971), p. 239.

Table VIII. Professionalization of Nigerian African military officers before January 1966.

Nation	S'hist	SS	Military Officers		Total	%
			Grad.	NCO		
Ibo (Igbo)	23	10	2	18	53	43
Yoruba	7	5	3	12	27	21
Non-Igbo Mid-Westerners	2	1	0	2	5	4
Northerners (Hausa, Fulani, etc.)	15	10	0	3	28	23
Non-Igbo Easterners	4	2	0	4	10	9
Total	51	28	5	39	123	100

$X^2 = 16.038$; N = 123; Significance Level = 0.191

Where: S'hist = Sandhurst; SS = Direct entry with short-service training;

Grad. = Graduates; NCO = Non-Commissioned Officers

Source: Data computed from Robin Luckham (1971), *The Nigerian Military, A Sociological Analysis of Authority, 1960-1967*, pp. 343-346.

Table VIII reveals the fact that, before the Nigerian military *coup* (January 15, 1966) against Balewa's civilian regime, the Nigerian military sphere had indeed achieved a significant level of military professionalism. The data also reveal the fact that the Igbo nation, which initiated a military coup against civilian rule, was, in fact, the same Igbo nation which had more professionally trained military officers in the Nigerian Federal Army than any other Nigerian nation. The Igbo nation had 43 % of all Nigerian professional military officers, whereas the Yoruba nation could account for only 21 % of these officers and other nations even smaller percentages, such as Non-Igbo Mid-Westerners (4 %), Northerners, i. e., Hausa and Fulani (23 % combined), and Non-Igbo Easterners (9 %).

Similarly, when we examine the professional level of those military officers who directly participated in the first military coup in Nigeria (January, 1966), we still note that an overwhelming number of them had had a high standard of professional military training (see Table IX). By the end of 1965, 41 % of the total African military professionals in the Nigerian army were Sandhurst alumni; 32 % were non-commissioned officers; 23 % entered directly with short-service training. Only 5 % came directly from grammar schools. The professional training received by Africans was also very diversified; the men attended academies in

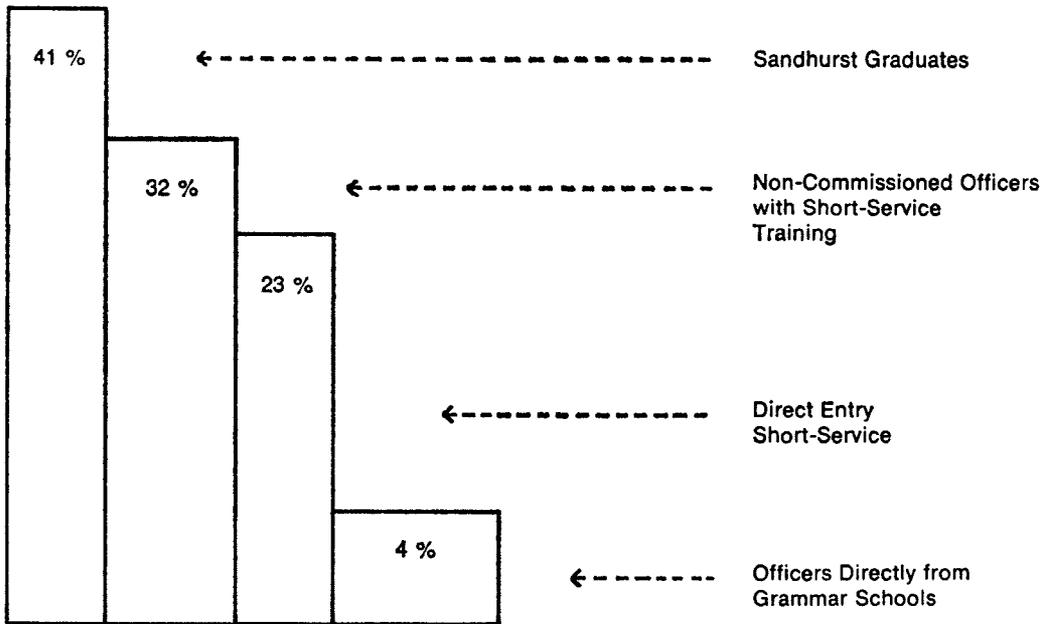
Australia, Canada, India, the United Kingdom, and the U.S.A.¹⁶ and therefore the armies gained an eclectic representation of world-wide military training.

3. *A comparative analysis*

The findings of both observations do not support Huntington's theory of Objective Civilian Control. However, they do support the findings by Finer, Mazrui and others which also recognize that professionalization of the military alone would not deter the military from intervening unless it is accompanied by the military's complete satisfaction with civilian control. Our findings also explicitly show that, without this satisfaction, the military establishment is likely to challenge and possibly remove civilian control whenever the military is disenchanted with (or envious of) civilian rule. In view of these facts, neither military professionalization nor military professionalism is an absolute guarantee of either military inertia, or the military's abstention from politics. The case of Nigeria is a significant example of this conclusion.

When there was a schism between the Igbos and the Northern nations (Hausas and Fulanis), the Nigerian high level of military professionalism throughout black Africa was unable to deter the Nigerian military from taking an active role in the January coup of 1966. In fact, consecutive military coups in Nigeria were also a decisive blow to the

Table IX. Professionalization of Nigerian African military before January, 1966.



Source: Data computed from Luckham, *op. cit.*, pp. 240-241.

theory of *esprit de corps* as well, which implies that due to *esprit de corps*, modern corporate feeling, and social responsibility, a professional military would *adhere* and fight together. The data in Table X confirm that in spite of its high level of professionalism, the Nigerian military split into extreme factions and attempted to destroy each other. Also, Table VIII further shows that while it was the Igbos who were the most highly trained in the military profession, it was the same Igbo military officers who killed many other officers, and who consequently repudiated both Huntington's Objective Civilian Control theory and the theory of *esprit de corps* through intra-military schisms and *coups d'etat* against the Nigerian civilian rule.

In Table X it is apparent that intra-military annihilation occurred within the Nigerian military in January of 1966. The data also show that the men occupying 27 % of the total key positions (22) in the military were killed during the first military coup;

heavy casualties were sustained in the non-Igbo Northern Region. But was this due to their inadequate training?

On the contrary, the findings in Table XI show that the same military sphere had already had thorough military training before the 1966 *coup d'etat*. Consequently, one must conclude that in all political systems (democratic or totalitarian) *neither military professionalization nor esprit de corps alone can apply a reliable restraint on military intervention*. The military today will challenge civilian supremacy *unless* the civilian rulers recognize and respect the military's profession and professionalization and the military's right to equal participation in the political process, and especially in the making of foreign policy (see Figure 1 below). As Abrams also notes, if the military is alienated from either societal values or the political process, the military is likely to become disenchanted and to become more politically active against the civilian monopoly.

Table X. Intra-military annihilation during the military coup d'etat in Nigeria, January 1966, as a direct challenge to the theory of esprit de corps.

Ethnicity Nation	Casualty		Out of Total
	Killed	Survivors	
Igbo	1	8	9
Non-Igbo			
Northerners	4	2	6
Non-Igbo			
Westerners	1	2	3
Non-Igbo			
Easterners	0	3	3
Non-Igbo Mid-Westerners	0	1	1
Total	6	16	22

$p = 0.1241$ $N = 22$
 (Exact Probability of Contingency Table)

Source: Data computed from Luckham, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

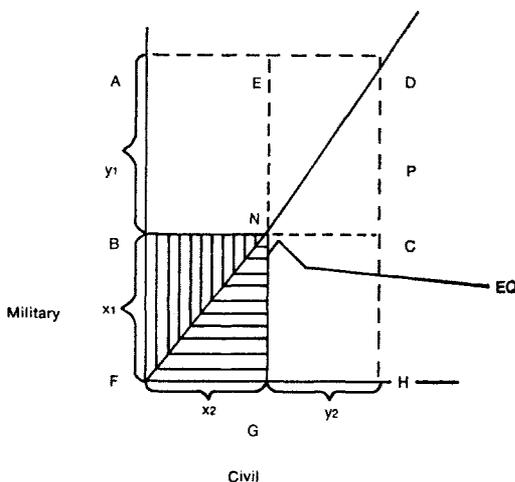
The purpose of Figure 1 is to show that, like all other political systems, African and other political systems are living organisms whose normal functions are the results of the normal coordination and functioning of its sub-systems. Cybernetically, any given machine or system depends on the normal coordination and functioning of its parts and sub-systems (its wheels, cogs, lubrication, electronics, etc.) in order to operate normally. If wheel x attempted to interfere or ignore the importance of wheel y or vice versa, then z is likely to occur, which will, in turn, have a detrimental effect on the total system. Likewise, in any given political system, a normal political process is a function of both civilian participation and military participation. Today, if a balance between these two is not maintained, there are

Table XI. National distribution in Nigerian military profession by January 1966.

Origins of Military Profession	NATIONS IN NIGERIA MILITARY				
	Igbo	Yoruba	Non-Igbo Mid-Westerners	Northerners Hausas, Fulani	Non-Igbo Easterners
Sandhurst	23	7	2	15	4
Direct Entry with Short-Service Training	10	5	1	10	2
Non-Military School Graduates	2	3	0	0	0
Non-Commissioned Officers	18	12	2	3	4
Total	53	27	5	28	10

$X^2 = 16.038$; $df = 12$ $N = 123$
 Significance Level = 0.191

Fig. 1. Objective civilian control re-examined (ahomeostasis between civilian-military relations in today's politics:



Where:
 $x_1 = x_2$ = Civilian-Military power over National Security Matters.
 $y_1 = y_2$ = i) Civilian political supremacy (y_2) recognized by Military Establishment.
 = ii) Military professional autonomy (y_1) recognized by Civilian Control.
 EQ = An equilibrium established as a result of mutual relationship between Civilian Control and Military Professional Autonomy.
 AFQ = A civilian monopoly against the military in the political process.
 BFN, FGN = An equal participatory share between the civilian and the military spheres in the political process.

likely to be psychological dissatisfactions and frustrations. When the military suffers such problems, it is likely to resort to what Mazrui calls inevitable 'political hygiene' against the self-styled 'civilian control' in order to clean out the civilian pollution from politics.

As noted in Figure 1 above, while Subjective Civilian Control (BFHC) seeks *total* control over the political process ($4x^2$), Objective Civilian Control (NGHC) seeks a *partial* control ($2x^2$). Thus, Objective Civilian Control is based on a *reciprocal* relationship between the Civilian's recognition of military professionalism and equal participation rights on the one hand, and the military's conscious satisfaction and affirmation of Civilian Leadership in political processes on the other. It is only through this reciprocity that a Civil-Military equilibrium (EQ) can be established and maintained in contemporary political life. Without this *positive* correlation between Objective Civilian *theory* and real *practice*, Civilian Supremacy is doomed to failure as evinced by the number of military *coups* in both Africa and the world at large (Table I).

The data in Table I demonstrate the fact that military intervention against civilian rule is not unique in Africa. Military intervention is a universal phenomenon in politics. For instance, 'of 150 governments in the world today, forty-three (43) have a military officer at the helm.'¹⁷ Its contagious nature is manifested in three ways: horizontal, vertical, and indiscriminatory. *Horizontally*, it re-occurs from one political system to another (as evidenced in Table I above); *vertically*, it re-occurs in the same political system from time to time, as in the case of Nigeria; *indiscriminatorily*, it re-occurs at random, *either* moving from one political system to another *or* remaining stationary in one system as in the cases of Algeria and Uganda (Table I). The Ethiopian military coup (1974) is another example of this indiscriminatory nature of military *coups d'etat*. When the Ethiopian military found that the feudalistic elite could not satisfy the

socio-economic needs of the military and of the Ethiopian citizenry, the military could no longer tolerate the 'civilian supremacy' of Haile Selassie, in spite of the latter's world renowned reputation. Without this law involving military consent and psycho-social and economic satisfaction, military intervention vis à vis the Civilian Control is likely to occur at any time in any political system. Of course, it may also occur as a result of *one* or a *compound* of the following eight factors: (1) declining legitimacy of political parties; (2) schism among prominent politicians; (3) limited likelihood of external intervention; (4) contagion; (5) unstable social situations; (6) widespread corruption; (7) economic stagnation; (8) military awareness of its power.¹⁸

This model is definitely superficial. It lacks a powerful level-of-analysis such as political anthropology with which to drive deep into the anthropological and socio-psychological strata of African political cultures and traditions in order to expose and carefully examine those significant factors fundamentally related to the African military interest in politics. Its failure to use this level-of-analysis in order to bring into account the warrior characteristics inherent in the African traditions is definitely a decisive blow to it. Ali A. Mazrui's attempt to evoke this methodology in order to identify and analyze the real roots of the contemporary African military interest in the political process also explicitly shows that the African military's propensity to intervene in African politics is not restricted to one or a compound of those eight factors.¹⁹

However, what Mazrui failed to include in his findings and analysis are: (i) traditionally, every African is highly *empathetic* and very defensive to his society. Because of his physical advantage over the African female, the traditional African male is both a military man and a civilian. This dualism remains part and parcel of African manhood. To qualify in his traditional social setting as an adult, an African boy had to undergo certain traditional rituals. These practices

differed from nation to nation, but in all of them, military training or exercise figured prominently. This still holds true today, specially among those African nations which retain their traditional political structures and practices, such as the Nandi and the Kipsigis (in Kenya), the Mbuti and the Twa (in Central Africa region), and the Kung (in Namibia).

A further examination of these African traditional nations in terms of their political structures and behavioral patterns also shows a high level of intra-societal empathy and manifest destiny of each male to defend his nation at all costs and times. It was due to this intra-societal empathy that African warriorism became a *sine qua non* and pre-requisite ritual achievement for every male before he could qualify for citizenship. For instance, in the old traditional Masai politics, a male did not only have to successfully complete his warrior exercises before he could achieve his adult status. He also had to produce a combat thesis, even before he was allowed to marry. His thesis was manifested in his ability and bravery as a warrior. Empirically, he had to go into the forest and kill a leopard or lion by himself and bring it before the general public as proof of his physical and mental capabilities. Any male who could not do this automatically failed his thesis defence.

Although such behaviour is now diminishing in African societies due to contradictions brought about by Western cultural values (monogamy, recurrent abrupt family breakdown, etc.), the warrior tradition is still an important element in African politics. Its potentiality and instrumentality are not only manifested in the African military coups d'état but also in dancing habits. Again, among the Masai, Nandi, Lango, Acholi, and other non-Nilotic Africans, the habit of walking or dancing with a club, spear or any other instrument of combat is a universal phenomenon throughout traditional African life. One is apt to see glittering spears in the Masai dancing festivals; the spears are both dancing partners and ornament. The spear is

also a Masai habitual walking partner. Why does the Masai always carry his spear? Why do the Nandi, the Gikuyu, and other nations in Africa still carry either a spear, a big knife, a hatchet, a club or a walking stick whenever they go outside their homes? Why is this habit restricted to African males only? Is it because they derive pleasure from such objects? Or is it because they are naturally warmongers, as Bozeman argues? How can their behaviour be systematically explained in the context of the prevailing high rate of military intervention in Africa today?

The African males' habit of carrying an object such as a spear while dancing or in other activities does not necessarily mean that the object elicits pleasure which encourages the traditional African to carry the object. Rather, it is the African concept of objective readiness that causes it. The African is ready to initiate a combat against an aggressor (thief, robber, etc.) at any time without wasting any time or trying to wait for or relying solely on the security establishment. In African cities today, anyone who attempts to rob tourists (most especially old white women's purses) cannot escape before he is caught by other Africans nearby. Unless a policeman is nearby, that thief is likely to be stoned to death by his captors. This warrior mentality is more visible in rural areas where it encourages the traditional African male to carry his weapon wherever he goes. It is this active warrior mentality and empathy which cause the African military to enter into politics whenever it realizes that its counterpart (the civilian elite) is too administratively incompetent, corrupted, and less helpful to the general public needs. Of course, the ruled civilians would also like to intervene. However, the military has the exclusive defensive weapon with which to attack and get rid of incompetent civilian rule. Such means are alien to the civilian general public, who (because of their warriorism) might also like to intervene against an incompetent civilian ruling elite. However, the civilians cannot do so because they lack the physical means of coercion.

These three reasons (*empathy, African traditional Warriorism* and *African traditional Readiness* to intervene at any time against any wrong-doer) are the most significant causes of African military intervention and the subsequent military coups. All other factors are essentially secondary.

(ii) This warriorism is not unique to Africans. It holds true in every nation or society. My study of the Arabs in Egypt, Vietnamese, Dutch, Asians, Chinese and small town Americans also shows similar mentality, though their rites of passage rituals differ from one culture to another, as is also the case in African cultures. Fundamentally, each society showed a high level of empathy and propensity to defend its objective and subjective elements at all costs and time, though this sentiment tends to be disrupted in Euro-America, most especially in the big metropolitan social settings,²⁰ by *Lexophobia* and *Systemophobia* (a strong fear of what the modern legal system might do to x if x ever got involved in y's problems unless x is a police officer). In such settings, both civilian neighbors and non-neighbors may deliberately shy away from x's trouble no matter how serious x's problem may be, simply because they do not want to be held liable for damages, injuries, or the death of x by either the court, relatives, or beneficiary of x in case x is either injured or loses his life at the time y is trying to help x before the police officer arrives at the scene. In spite of these threats, most Euro-Americans are equally empathetic and defend their own kind against the aggressor or danger.²¹ This mentality is also reflected in their propensity to fight against any diseases, e. g., cancer, the Legionnaire diseases, and other problems at the local level; and in their readiness to engage into military alliance formation, e. g. NATO, at the international level against those whom they perceive to be their adversary. These are some examples of the solid empirical evidence of their high level of empathy and defensiveness, similar to those of African and other societies. Both NATO and the Warsaw Pact are definitely bona

fide manifestations of the warriorism of the involved members. Or else, it is very highly doubtful that such defence military organizations would have been formed by their respective members short of such sentiments.

It is empirically true that ever since the United States of America attained its nationhood in 1776, the U.S. has never experienced any civilian or military coup. Leadership change has been by the ballot only. However, such system of elite circulation has managed to prevail simply because of the absence of a high level of leadership incompetence, corruption and inability to satisfy the majority of the U.S. citizenry. Otherwise, the U.S. could not have escaped the military empathy for the neglected suffering citizenry. To bring about this remedy to the frustrated citizenry, the military would definitely have intervened severely to clean up the civilian pollution as the African military have always done in Africa.

4. Conclusions

Huntington's assumption that non-military intervention is a function of civilian encouragement of military professionalism and professionalization is spurious. Our two observations above (one based on a cross-national level and the other on a Nigerian case study) show that a high degree of professionalism and professionalization is not a reliable contraceptive against African military activism and intervention in civilian affairs. Margiotta's contention that huge socio-economic incentives offered to the military by civilian rulers would satisfy the military's psychological needs and then contain the military's lust for power against civilian control, is also spurious. All their models lack systematic explanations as to why the African military is not apolitical.

From the political anthropological perspective, African military intervention is normal. It is one of the fundamental aspects of African traditional Warriorism. Failure of the African military to intervene would be inconsistent with the traditional African warrior spirit, and a costly and painful ex-

perience for a traditional, warrior-minded African. This is exactly why even non-ruling African civilians are also highly interested in running down and beating up any robber or thief as well as in coup d'état in Africa. The data in my ongoing research project on the *Determinants of African Coup d'Etat* and our data on the Nigerian case study (above) all show that it is not only the African military which has staged coups in Africa but also the civilians. Thus, African traditional warriorism is not limited to the African military sphere. In fact, it is universal to both African and non-African Societies. The military coups are prevalent in Africa today because the military always monopolizes all means of coercion. It is partially because civilians lack these instruments that most civilian coups have failed to succeed or to last long after a civilian take-over. The military's intervention is always successful and lasts long because the military controls an exclusive monopoly over the means of coercion.

It would be unscientific to equate African military coups with barbarism as Bozeman has attempted to do in her *Conflict in Africa*. Bozeman's assumptions and conclusions collectively and independently show that she does not understand either the difference between the two concepts per se or African tradition in depth. Her findings are not far off from those of the four blind men about the elephant. On seeing a Masai or Nandi with a spear, she erroneously assumes that the Masai is a barbarian without even asking herself why that Masai is carrying a spear. It is the same abruptness which enslaves both her and other Africanists in their bare-footed inferences under lengthy footnote-pretence.

Consequently, we all need to understand comparative African Customary Laws, most especially the Theft Laws, to explain satisfactorily how and why an African traditional male conceptualizes his role and behaves in society as he does. For instance, every African male is both a civilian and a law enforcement officer in his own right. He has a total and legitimate obligation and right

to be alert and assist at all times in restoring peace and security whenever and wherever there is any disturbance or potential threat to that peace. Whenever a thief or robber is spotted, everyone automatically begins to pursue that suspect and to punish him in proportion to the nature and degree of his crime. Whenever there is any physical or verbal fight in society, everyone is expected to be ready to bring the conflicting parties to a settlement (informally or formally). In Nairobi and other cities in Africa, every tourist is safe, not necessarily because of the presence of active police and other formal security agents, but due to a clear awareness by both professional and laymen on the street that any attempt by any thief or robber to lay hands on the property of the tourist becomes the doer's suicide. In most cases, it is the laymen on the street who will catch and beat the hell out of that robber even before the police come to the scene. Failure for the police officer to arrive at the scene in time has always meant that that suspect will be beaten to death.

All these patterns of behaviour in African urban settings are not ends in themselves. Rather, they are explicit manifestations of *empathy*, and of the African *traditional warriorism and readiness for combat against any threat* to one's society. Also, they support our assumption that African traditional warriorism and readiness for combat does not only hold among the traditional African in the countryside, but also in all African urban areas, in the military establishment, and in the civilian ruling elite. The only reason why the military is superior to all other spheres (civilian ruling elite and civilian followers) is that the military has an exclusive monopoly over all means of coercion.

To sum up, all three spheres (the civilian ruling elite, the civilian followers, and the military) are legitimate 'Lord Protectors' of their virtuous society. It is their inherent duty to clean up every political pollution at all times and all costs. This is precisely why the African military is most ready to intervene in the political process in Africa when-

ever it detects significant symptoms of pollution constituting a potential danger to its society. Recent delay by African military regimes in Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, and other African military regime countries in handing over leadership to civilians on the grounds that the latter were corrupt, inconsiderate to the rest of the citizenry and, therefore, still too incompetent to rule, is definitely a *significant* empirical evidence of the African military's perception of its own empathy and manifest destiny — its objective national responsibilities. These facts definitely paralyze those lame assumptions by Huntington, Welch, Bozeman and other 'Africanists' of that school. And, the fact that more than 50 % of Latin American and Asian nation-states today either are under military rule or have experienced one or more military government takeover(s) demonstrates that Objective Military Control is not unique to Africa. It is a universal political phenomenon in Civil-Military Relations today.

NOTES

1. The concept of Objective Civilian Control was first introduced to the Civil-Military Relations literature in 1957 by Samuel Paul Huntington. See Huntington (1964: chapter 4). Ali A. Mazrui is one of the few who have attempted to refute the immortality of this concept in modern civil-military relations. See, for example, Mazrui (1979: 113-125).

2. See for example, Welch (1970) and Welch & Smith (1974).

3. See, for instance, Murray (1974), von Clausewitz (1831), Snyder & Sapin (1954), Huntington (1964), Finer (1962), Janowitz & von Doorn (1960), Welch (1970), and Abrahamsson (1972). However, Ali A. Mazrui and the like do not fall into this category. See, for instance, Mazrui (1970: 113-115), where the author recognizes the inevitability of Objective Military Control whenever the Civil Control is questioned by the military sphere.

4. Welch (1975: 247).

5. See Huntington (1964: chapter 4), Welch (1971), First (1970: 22), Decalo (1973: 117), Austin (1966: 66), Janowitz (1967: 83-106), and Nordinger (1970: 1131-1148). Note that not all have maintained this argument. Some of them,

e. g. Welch, have contradicted themselves without even specifying or clarifying such contradictions. See, for instance, Welch (1975) and Welch (1971), where he argues that the military is 'not apolitical' (Welch (1975)) without any acknowledgement of such changes where they occur.

6. Welch & Smith (1974).

7. Huntington (1964: chapter 4).

8. Bozeman (1976).

9. Small-scale rebellion, basically socio-economically oriented, e. g. the Tiv uprising.

10. Basically politically oriented, though with a lower intensity of conflict. Unlike 2nd degree.

11. Awolowo had had some earlier detentions for political reasons, e. g. in 1963.

12. A Christian but also pro-Moslem. The data in Table II show that he was the only Christian with a high-level, political role to be killed along with the Moslems. His death raises serious questions of why he was the only Christian to be killed with the Moslems. Was it because he was a Yoruba or because he was pro-Moslem in spite of his Christianity? The data are totally silent.

13. While no exact statistics were given out by the Nigerian authorities, the number of Igbos killed may have been between 1,000 and 2,000.

14. A political rebellion by the military with specific political motives: to take over the government with the prevailing incumbent.

15. Luckham (1971: 239).

16. Luckham (1971: 74).

17. Margiotta (1974: 1).

18. Welch (1970).

19. Mazrui (1975: 67-84).

20. Aronson (1976: 36-37).

21. Aronson (1976: 39).

22. Bozeman (1976).

23. Also see Uzoigwe (1975) who, in his article, is also concerned about recurrent sweeping conclusions in African studies about Africa without any logical justifications and evidence.

24. Also see Mazrui (1970: 113-115), where the author discusses this phenomenon in greater detail.

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