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A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL CARTOONS: A CASE STUDY OF NIGERIA

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

OLAYEMI AKANDE

Norman, Oklahoma

2002

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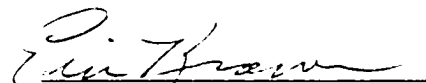
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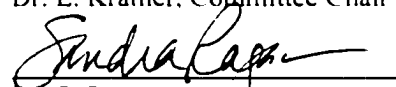
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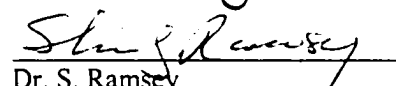
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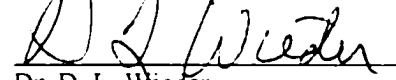
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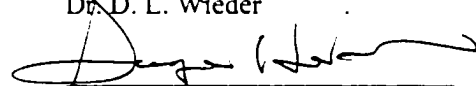

Dr. E. Kramer, Committee Chair


Dr. S. Ragan


Dr. S. Ramsey

Dr. C. Rodriguez


Dr. D. L. Wieder


Dr. G. Henderson

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Abstract

Using two methodological approaches, a purely structural semiotic analysis with hermeneutics, this study analyzes how meaning is produced in Nigerian political cartoons published in three magazines during 1993-1996. This was a time when Nigeria was characterized as a model of democracy for third world countries even though censorship of the press was at its peak. This era also reflected the most volatile period of Nigeria's political activity. This study contributes to our understanding of political cartoons as a political communicative tool and specifically how cartoons are used as political statements in assessing political developments in Nigeria. Furthermore, the contribution of this dissertation to communication literature is that it addresses the question of how political cartoons work to establish dominant political themes. This study uses Nigerian political cartoons as a case study in order to increase our understanding of the structures and important features of political cartoons.

Chapter 1

Introduction

At the beginning of the 1980s and in the 1990s, a number of African countries initiated democratic reforms. These changes were brought about by several external factors, including the end of the East-West conflict and the subsequent process of democratization in Eastern Europe. A number of internal factors were also operating; e.g., the loss of legitimacy of the African authoritarian states and the economic crisis were a breeding ground for the democratic movement on the African continent.

One of the most apparent effects of democratization in Africa was the explosive growth of the press. Where previously only newspapers and few magazines were published, many newsmagazines began to appear in the mid-1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Although these magazines were considered part of a new and free press, with minimal government intervention, this was not always the case. The governments of many African countries began to tighten what was already a stronghold on the press with devastating consequences that inhibited the growth of the notion of a free press. No issue has been more important and prevalent in recent years than lack of freedom of the press in Africa. Of all African nations, Nigeria has been cited the most for limiting freedom of the press (Fritz, 1994).

The annulled presidential elections of 1993 (when former military leader General Ibrahim Babangida annulled the results of the election, denying the presidency to the presumed winner, publishing tycoon Chief Moshood Abiola) and the installment of General Sani Abacha as the military head of state resulted in Nigeria receiving international notoriety for, among other actions, imprisoning 7,000 people without charge, including many journalists (Fritz, 1994). The media in Nigeria had severely criticized General Babangida's

action. These criticisms prompted the military junta to impose draconian measures against the offending press. This included proscription of most private and some government-owned newspapers and magazines (Fritz, 1994). Even before the annulled elections of 1993, the press had already endured major confrontations with the ruling junta. The military government's actions against the media following the annulled elections of June 12, 1993, are said to be the harshest in the history of post-independence Nigeria (Fritz, 1994).

Amidst this political climate where political commentary and debate were subject to varying degrees of censorship, Nigerian journalists began to curb their editorials to avoid jail sentences or murder attempts on their lives. Within this environment, political cartoons began to thrive, as they became a safe way to comment on the political issues of the day.

Humor in Nigerian political cartoons thrived and the annulment of the move toward democratic rule marked the beginning of the most active era of political cartooning in Nigeria. Political cartoonists began to provide important evaluation and assessment of the government, without fear of retribution. As Murray Davis (1993) commented, "humor has a tendency to expose the truth about a society" (p. 2). Moreover, the use of humor served as a means of commenting on social and political injustice, while indirectly challenging the political system. Sociologist Joyce Hertzler (1965) observes that humor can also serve "as a kind of socio-cultural index of the culture or society, the groups and the population segments, the communities or localities, and the eras in which it occurs. . . . What a people laugh at, at any given time can reveal what they perceive socially, with what they are interested in, concerned about, amused by, disgusted with, or preoccupied with" (p. 58-59). In essence, "humor provides an inconspicuous back entrance to a person's, group's or society's innermost chamber, which continually knocking on their front door may never disclose" (Davis, 1993, p.2). Nigeria's editorial cartoonists used their graphic depictions as

an indirect way or a back-door entrance to challenge Nigeria's political system under military rule.

Purpose and Significance

The objective of this dissertation is to analyze how meaning is produced in Nigerian political cartoons. The goal is to review and analyze political cartoons published in three Nigerian magazines from June 1993 through December 1996. Nigeria was characterized as a model of democracy for third-world countries, even though censorship of the press was at its peak. This era also reflected the most volatile period of Nigeria's political history.

For the most part, the importance of political cartoons in recent Nigerian history has, escaped the notice of social scientists. Nevertheless, this body of work exists and there is a legitimate need to ascertain in precise ways how meaning is produced in these political cartoons. The fact that this study may be of interest to political scientists and observers of Nigeria is clearly important. What is significant is how cartoons help set agendas and manifest a mode of argumentation and critique—public criticism. This study contributes to our understanding of political cartoons as a political communicative tool—specifically, how cartoons are used as political statements in assessing and commenting on political developments in Nigeria. Furthermore, the contribution of this dissertation to communication literature is that it addresses the question of how political cartoons work to establish dominant political themes. This study uses Nigerian political cartoons as a case study in order to increase the understanding of the structures and important features of political cartoons.

This study of Nigerian political cartoons combines two methodological approaches, a purely structural semiotic analysis and hermeneutics, where the meaning of political

cartoons (how they mean and what they mean) is assessed. It is my contention that structural semiotics and hermeneutics offer methodological tools that ascertain the mechanisms by which political cartoons appear to work. This methodology owes much to the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva, and Jean Gebser. It is not the intent of this study to determine the effects of political cartoons on the populace; rather, it proposes to extend previous body of research in this area by applying new tools in assessing political cartoons. Furthermore, it purports to provide an original contribution to the understanding of political cartoons and to provide a source of information on the semiotic and hermeneutic parameters of Nigerian political cartoons.

Political Cartoon Analysis

In recent years, researchers have devoted considerable attention to the general question of what political cartoons do, or what their functions are (Skocpol, 1996; Medhurst & DeSousa, 1981). Researchers have also studied the significance of political cartoons in various contexts. Christian Delporte (1995), for example, examined the proliferation of the satirical political cartoons published in French newspapers and journals, caricaturing the Dreyfus affair, 1894-1906. Delporte focused on the cartoons strikingly violent base and polemical nature. Ofer Feldman (1995) analyzed the contents of editorial cartoons in Japan. His unit of analysis was six recent Japanese prime ministers. His study primarily focused on the symbolic themes inherent in cartoon depictions of the prime ministers.

In another study, Haimo Handl (1990-91) investigated the patterns of stereotyping in Austrian political cartoons that appeared in four newspapers published from 1955-1985. Handl's emphasis was on the attention given to caricatures of the following: the

typical Austrian citizen, the members of the Conservative Peoples Party (OVP), and the members of the Socialist Party.

Yet in other studies, content analysis is used in assessing numerically dominant tendencies in political cartoons (Bivins, 1984; Bormann, Koester & Bennett, 1978). Although this is useful, it is however a limited form of analysis. The problem with its limitations is addressed by Olivier Burgelin (1972) who argues, “there is no reason to assume that the item which recurs most frequently is the most important or the most significant, for a text is clearly, a structured whole, and the place occupied by the different elements is more important than the number of times they recur” (p. 319). Additionally, quantitative content analysis emphasizes content at the expense of the underlying structuring principles and connotations. This is ingrained in behaviorist assumptions about the containment of meaning in explicit messages (Hackett, 1984; Wollacott, 1982). As a method of analysis, quantitative content analysis is generally unable to apprehend meanings in a text that are unspoken. It assumes that whatever has the greatest numerical presence in any text also has the greatest audience impact. The determination of significance in such analysis is reduced to the analysis of frequencies. Furthermore, quantitative content analysis, as a sole method of analysis, works against an understanding of many important features of political cartoons, because they require that one de-contextualize to quantify.

But quantitative analysis does have its usefulness as a tool—it allows the emergence and identification of consistent pattern of issues that may differ from one political cartoon to the other.

Researchers have recently begun to identify different approaches to analyzing meaning in political cartoons. These have included semiotics and rhetorical and narrative analysis. Semiotics seeks to analyze media texts as structured wholes. Although semiotic

analysis would take into account the repetitive use of signs, it does not a priori assume what repetition means, how it functions within the sign system, or its perceived effect on the readers. Semiotic analysis “focuses on the system of rules governing the implied discourse, involved in media texts and stresses the role of hermeneutic context in shaping meaning” (Woollacott, 1982, p. 93-4). Researchers such as Ray Morris (1993) have incorporated the usage of such literary tools as metaphors, oppositions, and carnivalization to delineate the creation of meaning in cartoons. Morris incorporated visual rhetoric into sociological studies of how groups are defined and presented in cartoons. Morris suggested using a structuralist approach in the analysis of metaphor to describe how political cartoons portray groups. He focused on the use of individuals to stand for complex, competing powers. He proposed using the following rhetorical devices in the structural analysis of visual rhetoric: (a) condensation—compression of a complex phenomenon into a single image; (b) combination—blending of elements and ideas from different domains into a new composite; (c) domestication—conversion of abstract ideas and the unfamiliar into the familiar; (d) opposition—oppositions central to the cartoon; (e) carnivalization—stylized representations of behavior, analogous to ceremonies; and (f) hyper-carnivalization—stylized display of spontaneous behavior within a commercial setting, such as an editorial page.

In another study, Morris (1991) used the semiotic approaches of Greimas and Angenot to analyze Len Norris’ cartoons on bilingualism. Morris analyzed Norris’ message about the symbolic replacement of both French and English by federal bilingualese. Greimas’ approach is largely schematic and involved the inductive identification of the major actants, their traits, and the associations and interrelations among them. Actants are not simply the human characters in the narratives; they include anything that becomes the

subject, object, or predicate of a verb. Angenot's framework offered a methodology for uncovering viewpoints by associating or contrasting elements within the cartoons. Previous tools, such as metaphors and Greimas' and Angenot's approaches for assessing production of meaning in political cartoons are useful; nevertheless, they are not adequate in providing answers. For instance, Greimas and Angenot's approaches are too broad in explaining the structure of political cartoons.

Other studies have also explored narrative qualities (Edward, 1993) and tropal characteristics of political cartoons (Bostdorff, 1987). However, overall, little research has explored the precise ways in which meanings are generated and structured in political cartoons.

Semiotic theories and narrative qualities such as these have provided only partial approaches to explaining semiosis—the process of meaning and communicating. One reason for this might be the fact that communication is defined, by these scholars, as being primarily language based. While language is a powerful model for understanding communication, it has its limitations as an explanatory schema because it ignores forms of communication, like political cartoons. Semiotic analysis focuses on the structural properties of messages and how the manipulation of techniques creates meanings (Fiske, 1982). Usage varies within the field of semiotics, depending on whether one follows the linguistic tradition (Ferdinand De Saussure) or the philosophical tradition (Charles Sanders Peirce). Here I am adopting Saussure's, Roland Barthes', and Julia Kristeva's semiologically based approach. Some critics have noted that as an essentially structuralist perspective, semiology has lacked a sensitivity to production as a historical process, downplaying important issues of readership, and lacked an adequate theory of human agency and subjectivity (Kramer, 1988; Corner, 1983; Morley, 1980). Nevertheless, I believe that it is

possible to take selected elements from semiology that are positive and helpful for the analysis of political cartoons without necessarily limiting the analysis.

The semiotic typologies of Saussure, Barthes, and Kristeva and the hermeneutics of Gebser combined allow for the description of the underlying structures, including the denotative and connotative aspects of constructing meaning in political cartoons. They also provide us with a useful tool for the interpretation and understanding of the political cartoons. This is crucial because political cartoons serve as an approach to understanding human consciousness. The approach here presents insight into the ways that the structural properties of cultural forms may affect the structure of conveying meaning in political cartoons, insights that are not apparent in traditional methods.

Research Questions

To this end, the intent of this dissertation is to contribute to ongoing discourse on the features of political cartoons as a form of political communication. Thus, this study seeks to address the following questions:

RQ 1: What are the recurring themes in the period 1993-1996 in Nigerian political cartoons?

RQ 2: How are these issues exposed and depicted?

RQ 3: How is June 12, 1993, depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?

1. How is democracy depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?
2. How is the military depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?

3. How are the citizens of Nigeria depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?

Chapter Organization

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter One is an introduction and presentation of the dissertation objectives. It addresses the functions of political cartoons and the role of cartoons within society. It also examines humor and satire as part of the structure of political cartoons. This chapter offers a treatment of humor, drawing on treatments of humor in the humanities and social sciences. It explores the function of incongruity and ambiguity in humor. Political cartoons as satire is discussed as a potent means of social commentary. It is argued that an appreciation of political cartoons depends on seeing the cartoon as a humorous text, grounded in satire yet speaking the truth.

Chapter Two examines political cartoons as a form of narrative. It is argued that although political cartoons share some narrative qualities, however, unlike most narratives, political cartoons are non-linear.

Chapter Three addresses the collection of data and methodology. The chapter establishes the major principles of semiotic investigation, along with a discussion of the defining characteristics of semiotics. This chapter also includes a discussion of hermeneutics as a theory of understanding.

Chapter Four provides a review of the historical background on political cartoons in general and then discusses the history and characteristics of political cartoons in Nigeria.

Chapter Five presents a discussion of the historical, political, and economic background of Nigeria. The media (newspaper and magazines) history of Nigeria is discussed as it informs the study of Nigerian political cartoons and the social and political elements that shape both the past and present. This chapter includes a look at the history of

magazines that are included in the study. Such background is essential to the understanding of political cartoons analyzed in this dissertation. This chapter provides the context within which to situate and understand the cartoons.

In Chapter Six, the semiotic analysis of Nigerian political cartoons is presented. This chapter also offers an application of Jean Gebser's notions of structures of consciousness to understanding political cartoons.

Chapter Seven provides a summary of findings and suggests an agenda for future research based on the findings herein.

• •

Political Cartoons

Political cartoons have long been a method by which newspapers and magazines poked fun at political figures and governments. In fact, they are a unique combination of pictorial editorial and creative commentary, which allows cartoonists to make social commentary beyond the written word. Koetzle and Brunell (1996) assert that political cartoons provide an important perspective from which to examine political events because they are not bound by the same norms of conventional media. Elsewhere Colin-Seymour-Ure (1986) notes, “that the comments and insults conveyed by the graphic imagery of a cartoon have a crudity and offensiveness that might well be unacceptable if printed in an editorial” (p.170). Relying on symbolism and caricature, experimenting in fresh imagery, political cartoons help people think about politics in perhaps a manner not previously considered. Cartoons are, by some, considered to “invoke not only truth but a higher artistic truth, above the ethical parameters of the printed word” (Fischer, 1990, p. 16), even if the facts are not consistent with their graphical representation of the situation.

Political cartoons have “the ethical imperative which lifts transitory journalism into transcending art” (Fischer, 1990, p. 3). Indeed what cartoonists portray, “... may be an imaginary situation in allegory or a figure greatly distorted by caricature, but to the artists this is the essence of what is actually happening” (Press, 1981, p. 63). The fact remains that political cartoons provide a distinct and somewhat different perspective from which to view a country’s politics.

Political cartoons have unique universal characteristics. First, unlike other forms of the media, political cartoons are constructed using humor in its attempt to make a political statement. Second, political cartoons provide a running commentary and critique of political events; they offer daily or weekly evaluations of important events, people, and issues. The

thematic logic and the narrative logic in political cartoons enhance the social criticism. The political cartoonist conveys this in a clear, concise, and visually reinforcing manner. Third, political cartoons function as a form of diversion. They slip under the radar of critical reflection. They are cryptic, using as little written information as possible. Information, as a physically measurable phenomenon à la Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, is not the same as a message. The quantity of ink does not correlate to the power of the message. Even no information, as in silence or a blank page, can be a powerful message as it masquerades truth. During peace-keeping efforts in Somalia, General Anthony Zinni met regularly with political cartoonists in hopes of influencing their portrayal of United States activities in Somalia (Zinni, 1995). He had discovered that Ethiopian political cartoonists had an inordinate influence on the largely illiterate local populace. An occurrence such as this helps crystallize the notion that political cartoons are graphic devices used to perform a communication chore (Medhurst & DeSousa, 1981).

A fourth distinguishing characteristic of political cartoons is that they are sometimes amusing, but can simultaneously be emotionally devastating. Depending on the reader's perspective, cartoons can generate anger and outrage as well as laughter or explicit retribution. Expressing and causing such responses is the basic goal of an editorial cartoon. All devices employed by the cartoonist are directed to that end. Although political cartoons are often perceived as a form of amusement, they are also a powerful medium of political discourse (Bivins, 1984; Bostdorff, 1987; Edwards, 1993; Fischer, 1990; Medhurst & DeSousa, 1981; Press, 1981; Riffe, Sneed, & Van Ommeren, 1985). Because they act as a means of establishing and simultaneously assessing political situations, political cartoons can help establish a political agenda while also presenting value judgments about politics that may affect readers' beliefs and attitudes (Bormann et al., 1978; Medhurst & DeSousa, 1981;

Riffe, Sneed, & Van Ommeren, 1985). While researchers are uncertain about the potential effects of political cartoons on the masses, Medhurst and DeSousa (1981) contend that they serve as important tools in identifying and, perhaps more importantly, establishing major themes and values in society. Political cartoons help make an important contribution to setting the public's and politician's agendas. To this end, they are capable of establishing and maintaining issues on the public docket.

A fifth characteristic of political cartoons is that they are communication forces that often connect the masses with political leaders (Press, 1981). The fact that political cartoons can express complex issues in a single graphic metaphor and are available to a variety of audiences, both literate and illiterate, suggests that they constitute a compelling political force (Bivins, 1984).

Weiss (1990) contends that political cartoons, like editorials, often express brazen personal opinions, exaggerations, biases, and an irreverent questioning of motives that are often fiercely partisan. The cartoonist invites the readers to read beyond what is drawn or portrayed. This invitation makes readers feel "cartoon literate" and offers a grand opportunity to 'get it.' Indeed, the pleasure is they make the readers feel superior to the subjects of the cartoons. However, as pictures, cartoons are more 'fun.' They say everything an editorial does, but in a completely different way. Moreover, semiotic analysis offers an attempt to describe and understand the formal system of signification operating in political cartoons.

Cartoons by the legendary Thomas Nast, considered the grandfather of American political cartoons, were largely credited with bringing down the corrupt Tammany Hall political machine of the late 1800s and destroying its leader, Boss Tweed (Press, 1981). In this century, political cartoonists have continued to exercise considerable influence and have

had much to do with molding public opinion on such issues as democracy, economics, social conscience, poverty, health, education, ethnic relations, and more (Morrison, 1969; Nelson, 1975; Kirkwood, 1992). Even in the communications clutter of the Twenty-first century, the editorial cartoon, with its concise, shorthand message of what is going on, flourishes.

Humor and Political Cartoons

Humor is a universal human and social phenomenon, present in both tribal and industrialized societies (Apte, 1985). Humor has its place in all arts, but in editorial cartoons, it appears to have found a home. There are varying degrees of humor in editorial cartoons, from the quick wit that elicits a smile by its cleverness without being inherently funny, to the absurd that sets people laughing. To comprehend the truth inherent in Nigerian political cartoons, it will be necessary to understand the framework in which it is embedded: the framework of humor.

“Humor,” as Jerry Robinson so aptly proclaims, “in times of insanity is what keeps us sane. It is also, what keeps us free. There is nothing that tyrants and rascals fear more than satire and ridicule and the graphic form has always proved to be uniquely painful” (Robinson, 1981, p. 65). It is only a joke, most would say; but humor is more than that. As a tool in political cartoons, it is effective in relaying its message. It can also serve as a device for defining a reality. Political cartoons can be described as offering part fact or part fiction in its portrayal of individuals, or government institutions and their officials.

Lewis (1989) contends that humor is complex and a matter of texts and contexts. Therefore, the best way to approach an analysis of it is a simple way through a hermeneutically non-Cartesian, no text/context split. As texts, formal jokes and spontaneous witticisms follow grammatical rules, exploit semantic associations, convey affect, thought,

and disposition. It already assumes context, because there cannot be a one-person language or rule. In context, it is a shared experience. Humor assumes and reveals social and psychological relations, cognitive processes, cultural norms, and value judgments. At its best, humor can be described as a form of play and a release from the intensities of stressed life (Lewis, 1989). This is what political cartoons attempt to release in the reader.

Philosophical speculations on the nature and functions of humor date back at least to the time of Plato. Overall, the theories of humor that have been proposed essentially reflect two major perspectives: (1) a humanistic perspective that scrutinizes the test of the joke in an effort to identify its underlying structure and formal techniques; and (2) a social-scientific perspective that emphasizes the social and psychological variables of the perception and production of humor (Palmer, 1994). The humanistic perspective is primarily represented by what have been called “incongruity” or “configurational” theories. The social-scientific perspective is generally associated with an assortment of psychosocial theories and models of human behavior, but it is clearly represented by psychoanalytic interpretation and its extension in drive-reduction theory.

The core of the incongruity theory of humor is simple. Humor is not a genre. It may be easily demonstrated that the property, which we identify as humor, is perceived in a variety of oral, literary, graphic, and behavioral forms. We not only find some narratives humorous, but also riddles, proverbs, songs, cartoons, and routines. Therefore, to characterize the nature of humor, one must transcend the content and structure of specific forms and analyze a structure of ideas. Humor involves the linking of disparate cognitive categories and their associated attitudes in an appropriate manner. The political cartoon, as humor, is based on incongruity. In this approach, the essence of humor resides in the bringing together of two normally disparate ideas, concepts, or situations in a surprising or

unexpected manner, which is what most political cartoons do. Incongruity theories are usually traced to the writings of Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer. As described in Kant's celebrated phrase, "laughter is an affection arising from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing" (quoted by Piddington, 1963, p.168). In other words, that originally perceived in one (often serious) sense is suddenly viewed from a very different (usually implausible or ludicrous) perspective, and the original expectation bursts like a bubble, resulting in a pleasurable experience sometimes accompanied by laughter. The manner in which any particular incongruity is made appropriate is a function of the techniques of humor.

In their descriptive capacities, political cartoons can serve as culminating points that draw a variety of perspectives together, thereby creating a different awareness for the reader—a perspective of incongruity. This revelation or enlightenment may be brief, or it may be awareness that endures. Perception of the incongruity and/or its appropriateness is sudden, rather than the result of a process of long deliberation. When long deliberation is necessary to perceive appropriate incongruities, one finds oneself confronting puzzles and their solutions rather than jokes and their punch lines (Schiller, 1938). Perception occurs at an implicit level, not as a fully conscious awareness of the reader. In this case, the reader of the political cartoon draws upon previously stored knowledge or information (which is both a combination of historical and socio-cultural) at an implicit level. That is why when a reader chuckles at a certain political cartoon, the reaction is immediate and it is often difficult to explain why it is funny. Even when one deliberately sets out to explicate the structure of appropriate incongruity in a joke, it is often a difficult task.

Arthur Koestler (1964) uses the term "bisociation" to refer to the perception of an event or idea in two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference, which is

fundamentally incongruity theory. For the most part, incongruity theory has not been refuted on logical or empirical grounds, but most social scientists have relegated it to a position of secondary importance in their conceptualizations of humor. For them the theory only provides a partial explanation of the phenomenon of humor. It may explain the source of some of the pleasures experienced by an individual upon hearing a joke, or reading a cartoon, but it does not adequately explain why an individual may fail to appreciate two jokes or cartoons using similar techniques as equally amusing. But as a theory appropriate incongruity is useful in explaining how humor functions in cartoons.

Anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, and folklorists generally have focused on questions of meaning and function rather than questions of form. Consequently, they have tended to elevate the importance of the content of humor at the expense of its structure. The greatest part of the contemporary social-scientific perspective on humor derives from Sigmund Freud's (1960) psycho-functional theory of jokes in which he asserts, "there are only two purposes that a joke may serve.... It is either a hostile joke—serving the purpose of aggressiveness, satire, or defense; or an obscene joke serving the purpose of exposure"(p. 97). The techniques of jokes, to which Freud (1960) devoted considerable study, are merely regarded as the masks for hostile and obscene thoughts—a superficial structure overlaying more basic levels of expression. Through the techniques of humor, taboo thoughts can be expressed and allies for these thoughts recruited (Freud, 1960).

Contemporary students of humor have been profoundly influenced by Freud's insights, and they have repeatedly attempted to demonstrate the sexual/aggressive nature of various humorous repertoires and to suggest their psychological and sociological functions. This perspective emerges prominently in the analysis of contemporary ethnic humor. Ethnic jokes often serve the emotions by safely expressing aggressive impulses against those who

are perceived by the tellers as constituting some sort of threat. These aggressions are directed against real groups and individuals in the social world.

One of the most frequently cited theories of humorous interaction is superiority theory (LaFave, 1972; LaFave et al., 1973). The use of humor here turns on the content of the humor itself. The essence of the theory is that an individual will use and appreciate humor when the objects of the humor are in categories to which the individual does not belong. Zillman and Cantor (1976) further develop this theory to suggest that people enjoy humor targeting members of groups with whom they do not empathize. Humor typically has a target or butt, and jokes tend to be funnier when the good guys win and the bad guys lose (LaFave 1972). This is another parsimonious way in which humor functions in readers of political cartoons.

Political cartoons arose in a particular time, in a particular place, but now they are practically everywhere. In modernity, they exist in democratic institutes or even in places with the pretense of being a democratic culture. The analysis of political cartoons here is forced to address the social and cultural contexts in which they are being used today. This analysis is grounded in the expectation that these contexts are essential to any understanding of the meaning and the significance of political cartoons. The truth about political cartoons, whatever it may be, is always encapsulated in a humorous form. As Charles Schultz (1977) explains:

The best humor is always something of a puzzle in its camouflaged criticism, implicit standards of negativism. Its appreciation requires mental participation by the audience, and its lessons are not hortatory, but self-learned. We come to our own conclusions through the mix of our mind and the humorous materials (p. 332).

Political Cartoons as Satire

The traditional definition of satire as a didactic art form was articulated by Horace in the first century B.C., restated and amplified by Dryden at the close of the seventeenth century, and upheld by several prominent theorists in the first half of the twentieth century. According to Dryden (1693/1974), “satire is a kind of poetry . . . invented for the purging of our minds; in which humane vices, ignorance, and errors, and all things besides . . . are severely reprehended” (p. 77). Today, this traditional definition holds true as satire continues in all forms of society as critical humor that is both entertaining, and exposure-ridden, yet playful. By their very nature, characteristic, and function, political cartoons are inherently satirical. As a means of social and political commentary, editorial cartoons, through often-simple graphic illustrations, address issues that are covered in the local and international news and editorials. According to Roger Fisher (1996), political cartoons “...are at best a vehicle for irreverent iconoclasm and wry satire, and not as sanctifier of the status quo or patriotic icons” (p. 164). In Nigeria, where authoritarian tendencies run strong, satire is a wicked weapon that appears in political cartoons.

In his seminal essay, “The Satirist and Society,” Robert C. Elliott (1971) writes that ancient satirists’ verses were thought to be magical:

[t]he ancient Arabic satirist, for example, was the seer, the oracle of his tribe. His enormous prestige derived from his role as magician, for his primary function was to compose magical satires, thought always to be fatal, against the tribal enemy. The Arabs thought of their satires concretely as weapons, and as the satirist led his people into battle—his hair anointed on one side only, his mantle hanging loose, shod with only one sandal—he would hurl his magical verses at the foe just as he

would hurl a spear; and indeed the satires might be dodged, just as a spear could be dodged, by ducking and bobbing and skipping off (p. 207).

Elliott's account of the Arabian satirist bears a close relationship to political cartoonist who are most feared by government officials and politicians because of the great power they are thought to possess (Robinson, 1981). The notion of the ancient satirist is an appropriate metaphor for the political cartoonist because the metaphor speaks to the extent to which they draw the humorous and often most scathing critical evaluations of politicians. They function as extensions of editorials.

Political cartoons, like all satirical works, have always been weapons that are offensive because they attack and attempt to offend. "Most satiric writing," according to British essayist Gilbert Highet (1962, p. 18) contains cruel and dirty words." This observation is particularly valid for the cartoon since it tends to be excessive. In order to ensure its effectiveness, it must be joking, ironic, irreverent, iconoclastic, acidic, satirical, subversive, and—when the subject merits it—even has to be heartless, cruel, violent, intolerant, and rude. Cartooning does not kill, but it does make carnage of its prey.

The subject matter of satire is often aimed at the duplicity, rigidity, and corruption of religious, social, educational, political institutions and their rituals. Perhaps the most important characteristic of satirists is their in-depth knowledge about society and its different institutions. To be a satirist is to be relatively secure about one's position in and knowledge of the political institution one is satirizing. Satirists often inhabit the ironic position of being intimately familiar with the very conventions they attack and reasonably certain of their status within the institution. Perhaps most importantly, the cartoonists as a satirist manages to display a thorough knowledge of the history that has led to current crises without resigning him or herself to complete hatred. Furthermore, satire depends on a more

immediate social and ideological context for its full significance and sharpest wit. The Shakespearean fool, for example, always knows just how far he can go within the confines of his social position. The great satirists of the eighteenth century—Alexander Pope, John Dryden, and Jonathan Swift—though certainly examining their society from a critical distance, were insiders, acutely knowledgeable about the ridiculous conventions that deserved parodying.

Northrop Frye (cited in Test, 1981) has called satire “militant irony,” thereby affirming the existence of aggression that is not readily apparent. For the cartoonist, this aggression is transformed into a social and artistic expression that satisfies people’s need for play and humor. Since political cartoons are not read for moral instruction or directions like editorials, they offer readers the pleasure of superiority and a safe release of aggression. Although the essential quality appears to be entertainment, it must please the reader by imagination and richness. Often the pleasure may be in recognizing the contrast between the real and the pretended, as in the social satires of Voltaire, Sinclair Lewis, and George Bernard Shaw.

Political cartoons, like other verbal and graphical devices, have a preoccupation with “truth” and “reality,” thereby exploiting the ability of irony to expose, undercut, ridicule, and otherwise attack indirectly, playfully, wittily, profoundly, and artfully (Test, 1981). Satire has a common-sense briskness that brushes away illusion. It serves to prod people into an awareness of truth, reminding the people that what they hear from the government is only partially true.

Political cartoons often utilize camouflage, which is subtle satire. The satirist uses pseudo-realism, partially favoring usage of specific details. The use of detailed illusion of reality along with a profusion of authentic details, specific names, and statistics arouses the

interest of the audience. Although the essence of political cartoons is the exaggeration of material, it has components that are genuine and unquestionably authentic. In fact, a political cartoonist's apparent decision to use cartoon satire to criticize his or her own government and allies during a time of political turmoil could hardly be made with impunity in a country such as Nigeria where the press was more heavily censored than any other.

The appeal of the political cartoon as satire lies in its graphic merit and freshness of perspective. Political cartoons do not appear to be sympathetic; hence, they are not fair. To be fair is to forgive all, thereby undercutting the effectiveness of the message. Satirists have often been accused of not offering satisfactory alternatives for the conditions they criticize. The mind that sees and draws the faults in society is rarely the kind of mind that visualizes solutions. For the satirist, it is sufficient to point out the faults and let others connect the dots or correct them. As Mencken (cited in Hobson, Fitzpatrick, & Jacobs, 1994) puts it, "my business is diagnosis, not therapeutics" (p.107).

Chapter 2

Political Cartoons as Narratives

Over the past couple of decades, “narrative,” a multifaceted object of inquiry, has moved to the forefront of research in the humanistic and social-scientific disciplines (Edwards, 1993). Narrative gains its character from long-standing traditions of storytelling, oral history, accounts of personal memory, and a variety of literary genres. There have been many attempts to identify the characteristics of the well-formed narrative. They have occurred within domains of literary theory (Frye, 1957; Scholes & Kellogg, 1966; Martin, 1986), semiotics (Propp, 1968; Rimmon-Kenan, 1983), and certain sectors of social science (Labov, 1981; Sutton-Smith, 1979; Mandler, 1984). Attention to the workings of narrative was the subject of systematic study by early Soviet literary theorists. Russian formalists of the 1920s made their principle unit of study the ‘device’ (Erlich, 1981). Rather than focus on the meanings conveyed by narrative, their method explored the more abstract tools that gave stories a familiar structure. One of the most influential works of Russian literary criticism was Propp’s Morphology of the Folktale (1968) which reduced a mass of Slavic fairy tales to a series of functions (lack, quest, and resolution) and agents (e.g., hero and donor). This formal interest was further developed in the American literary school of New Criticism. Northrop Frye’s seminal work Anatomy of Criticism (1957) provided a series of techniques for the analysis of Western literature. His principle categories were the four mythoi: romance, comedy, tragedy, and satire. Such literary genres serve as tools for those who extend “poetics” beyond fiction to those practices of representation that have a formal

component. Frye's myths have since been used in the analysis of other extra-literary forms of narrative understanding, such as historiography (White, 1973).

More recently, the French structuralist school drew on the linguistic theory of Saussure for a purely semiotic analysis of narrative. Its principle focus was narrative as a structure of binary oppositions shaped by the operations of metaphor and metonymy (Barthes, 1963/1974). Various attempts have been made to combine a structuralist analysis with the phenomenological processes of consciousness such as intentionality. Ricoeur's Time and Narrative (1981) argues that one of the principle achievements of narrative is the experience of "event".

One of the recurring theories in narratological literature is that narrative operates as a fundamental process of understanding beyond any particular literary tradition. Butor (1969) describes narrative as "one of the essential constituents of our understanding of reality" (p. 26). According to this definition of narrative, storytelling is marked by its achievement of the humanistic goal of coherence, progress, and rationality. As Daniel Schwarz (1991) explains,

narrative is both the representation of external events and telling of those events....

The stories we tell ourselves provide continuity among the concatenation of diverse episodes in our lives, even when our stories inevitably distort and falsify. Each of us is continually writing and rewriting the text of our life, revising our memories and hopes, and proposing plans, filtering disappointments through our defenses and rationalizations, making adjustments in the way we present ourselves to ourselves and others. To the degree that we are self-conscious, we live in our narratives through discourse, about our actions, thoughts, and feelings....To omit narrative is to de-emphasize the kind of ordering on which we depend to convey meaning (p. 108).

“Modern western narrative,” as Schwarz (1991) elucidates involves a “continuous” plot with a beginning, middle, and end. To “convey meaning,” a story must proceed in a way that seems likely and, indeed, almost inevitable” (p. 108). The idea of an orderly linking of events into a meaningful sequence is so central to modern conceptions of how human experience is embodied in language that it is frequently assumed to be universal. Hayden White (1981, p. 1-2) makes this point when he defines modernity’s valuation of narrative:

Far from being a problem, then, narrative might be considered a solution to a problem of general human concern, namely the problem of how to translate knowing into telling, the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning that are generally human rather than culture-specific. Far from being one code among many that a culture may utilize for endowing experience with meaning, narrative is a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which trans-cultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted.

References to political cartoons as forms of narratives abound (Bostdorff, 1987; Edwards, 1993; Sullivan, 1987), but if the term is to attain significance within the realm of political cartoon analysis, there is a need to be more attentive to how specifically narrative functions in political cartoons. Although as a narrative text, political cartoons pre-suppose a structure of a beginning, middle, and end, that is not the case because it is not linear in the progression of the story or event that it depicts. This chapter proposes a way of understanding non-linear narrative in political cartoons and will attend to both its temporal dynamics and its structural qualities.

As accounts of what happened to particular people in particular circumstances and with specific consequences, stories have been recognized as a basic human strategy for coming to terms with time, process, and change—often told in the form of a narrative. At

best, a narrative can be described as tribal in the sense that it can be told in particular ways amongst those who feel that their lives are given shape by their telling. Stephen Crites (1975a) argues that “the formal quality of experience through time is inherently narrative (p. 291)... Narrative alone can contain the full temporality of experience in a unity of form (p. 303) ... Only narrative form can contain: the tensions, the surprises, the disappointments and reversals and achievements of actual experience” (p. 306). Crites (1975b) elsewhere suggests that “fictional stories, just because they are not restrained by documentary sources, factual data, may indeed provide greater scope for the exploration of more elusive dimensions of experience. ... Realistic fiction, for instance, can give us the very grit and intonation of a whole social reality” (p. 29-30). He says that “when we speak to and of what is immediately real to us we tell stories and fragments of stories” (p. 31). The form in which can be told in a linear or non-linear fashion.

Non-linear narrative is best described as a rupture in the narrative sequence or structure. As a technique, it implies the possibility of arranging and re-arranging the “original” events; it can also manipulate our ideas of history and present day and shape the images of the future. Temporality is an important aspect of human existence. Our sense of self is based on interpreting experiences in three dimensions: the past, the present, and the future. In essence, narrative is a meaning structure that organizes the human experience of time by attributing significance to individual actions and events according to their effect on the whole (Barthes, 1963/1974; Culler, 1975; Fischer, 1987; Polkinghorne, 1988).

According to Ricoeur (1981), “time becomes human time to the extent that it is organized after the manner of a narrative; narrative, in turn is meaningful to the extent that it portrays the features of a temporal experience” (p. 3). To Ricoeur, a narrative is what ties otherwise disparate occurrences into a significant experience that has developed over the course of

time. Within a single narrative frame, a single event is often experienced as having a specific temporal structure that unfolds itself as a story through small, interlocking episodes. It is this temporal structure that gives our experience more depth.

While the meaning or significance of an episode is produced by the part it plays in relation to other episodes in an unfolding event, a particular event together with other events will form part of a larger, still-developing story which constitutes our sense of a changing yet continuous self. In terms of temporal development, the realm of meaning is continuously enlarged by the new experiences, which at the same time deepen our understanding of the old experiences. In analytical terms, the temporal experience is always informed both projectively and retrospectively (Leitch, 1986). The realm of meaningful experience integrates, moment by moment, recollections of the past, perceptions of the past, perceptions of the present, and expectations of the future. As such, the meaning of a specific event will change as its relations with or significance to other events changes, as parts of a continuously enlarging whole. Although humans have a narrative inclination, the possibility is that often confusion and ambiguity arise and this may prevent us from attaining narrative coherence.

The narrative form is meaning laden (White, 1987). For instance, in interpreting political cartoons, the plot has temporal projections of thematic proportions (e.g., good versus evil, powerful versus powerless). The narrative progression in a political cartoon can best be described as 'transactional' and 'rhetorical.' Many themes are implicit in a text, but it takes a certain type of audience to release the meaning that the cartoonist intended. Phelan's (1989) theory of narrative progression attempts to sensitize the analysts to the experiential dynamics of reading a text. His theory was intended to show "the way texts work on readers and the way readers may exercise power over texts" (p. 74).

Phelan argues that,

...the concept of progression assumes that the narrative text needs to be regarded as the fusion of two structures: (1) the narrative structure per se...or what (he) call(s) the pattern of instabilities and tension; and (2) the sequence of responses to that structure that the text calls forth from the authorial audience. (p. 115)

If this is this case, the audience members are just not passive readers; they play an active part in shaping the specific narrative form of these events while responding to them. Readers do not respond to the movement of the plot—that is a beginning, middle, and end. What is more engaging, according to Phelan, is the “accompanying sequence of attitudes” that the audience is asked to take toward the pattern of conflicts and tensions. The plot then becomes a matter of individual (often disparate) interpretations of an event or story. So then it is possible to find conflicting and competing interpretations to an event. In public discourse, these different interpretations of relationality will get intertwined in that they may be conjoined with, embedded into, or made to alternate with one another (Prince, 1982). In the course of events, it is by means of this kind of intertextual complications that new themes or new plot lines emerge which then change the meaning of the opening event as well as the subsequent happenings. So the reading of the political cartoon does not always follow a cause-effect relationship. An example of this type of non-linearity is seen in movies such as *Pulp Fiction*, where director Quentin Tarantino allows the viewers to follow three stories that stopped, started, reversed, and replayed themselves as easily as a tape in a VCR. Another example is in the movie *Memento*, where the director chooses to play backwards—so we actually begin with the conclusion of the events, and work our way back to where it all began. This is similar to the graphic depictions in political cartoons, since readers oftentimes have to work their way (based on memory, knowledge, and socio-cultural

history) back to where the event depicted started, as is evinced by the historical and background perspective provided in the semiotic and hermeneutic analysis in this study.

As individual graphical depictions, political cartoons do not always have continuity or chronology. Furthermore, if we approach the analysis of political cartoons in one magazine as whole body of work, the different cartoons do not reflect continuity of a story or event. Many of the events and issues depicted in these political cartoons are told out of sequence. Since political cartoons are humorous snapshots of events that occurred, all too often the first frame of the cartoon does not depict the earliest event. Generally most stories have a defined sequence of events, or chronology, without which the story makes no sense. If there are any cause-effect relationships between events in a story (and there almost always are), then there is a chronology that cannot be logically reversed. If, as in most cases, there are many cause-effect chains in the story, then the chronology must satisfy a large number of dependency rules for the story to work.

If the telling of a story is linear, then that story has a default chronology, which is the chronology of the telling. That is, if nothing else is said, the first events described are the ones that happened earliest, and the last events described are the ones that happened last, and everything that happens in between is described in order. This is simply the default; stories with flashbacks and foreshadows, i.e., events described out of sequence, can have a much more complex chronology. Many literary devices are available to bend time, but no device is necessary to describe a well-ordered sequence of events linearly; it is what happens automatically unless an effort is made to the contrary. If the telling of a story is non-linear, however, there is no default chronology. The telling may go along many paths, each with its own implicit chronology. This process aptly describes what occurs in political cartoons.

Political cartoons are a chiefly discursive mode of generating intelligibility, and share with other linguistic structure a placement within particular socio-cultural circumstances. In the same way that we confront enormous variations in language practices throughout the world, so we must be prepared for broad variations in narration—both in its existence and in what counts as well-formed story. This is most obviously the case in terms of fictional narratives—of which political cartoons are examples. In political cartoons, there exists a dislocation of continuity and time. In political cartoons, there is an enormous suppression of description.

For that reason, the text accompanying these pictures is also unique, unlike all other narrative text. In cartoons, the text is characteristically succinct and not detailed. The text is always dependent on the accompanying pictures for specific meaning; they, often sound more like plot summaries than the actual words of a story. This is because the words and the pictures in cartoons both define and amplify each other. Instead of providing different modes of communication simultaneously, they alternate between their two modes, and we cannot read the words and peruse the pictures at the same time. Because of their features, cartoons have unique rhythms, unique conventions of shape and structure, and a unique body of narrative techniques.

Since the major task of the visuals in cartoons is to communicate information, they make most sense in terms of an approach that focuses on the conditions under which meanings are communicated. Semiotics, which has roots in linguistics, is such an approach; its prime interest is in codes on which the communication of meaning depends. It suggests the possibility of a system underlying visual communication that is something like grammar, something like the system of relationships and contexts that makes verbal communication possible.

Most cartoons to a greater extent tell a story about reality. They often have an outward appearance resembling non-fiction. Logically speaking, anyone who wants to understand them better needs only to understand more about politics, history, and non-fiction. Bormann, Koester, and Bennett (1978) argue that political cartoons play out the ritual dramas of political issues, events, and characters. Political cartoons challenge the humanistic notion of narrative as a liberal and liberating source of meaning and value.

In sum, narrative in political cartoons is a concept of both temporality and structure. Our cognitive, emotional, and moral responses are framed within narrative structures that are informed retrospectively and projectively. As literary theorist Stanley Fish (1980) said, "...the validity of any reading, however obvious it may seem to a reader, will always depend on the assumptions...that he or she happens to share with other members of a particular interpretive community" (p. 58). As a narrative event, political cartoons presented in discontinuous ways find a variety of perspectives during the experience of reading. They become acknowledged as full of different levels to contents, interruptions, and re-readings, which add further layers to the non-linear idea of reading. This might liberate the reader of the political cartoon from the pre-restricted theoretical frames of reading a political cartoon, thereby giving the reader an opportunity to change a unified perspective of a story into a plurality of points of views.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study uses structural semiotics as a tool and hermeneutics as a theoretical framework in analyzing political cartoons. The analysis is based on the theories of Ferdinand De Saussure, Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva, and Jean Gebser for identifying techniques, structure, and communicative qualities used in political cartoons.

Semiotics

Semiotics refers to a tradition of scholarship in which the meaning, experience, and knowledge communicated through signs and symbols are studied. This undertaking is important, many semioticians argue, because it generates a greater understanding of human societies, which they conceive of as being constructed systems of shared symbols and meanings. Humans communicate meaning and create shared experiences by using signs and symbols in many different realms of existence; for example, through art, music, architecture, gestures, clothing, spacial arrangements, and material possession. In fact, “we are capable of attributing meaning to any event, action, or object which can evoke thoughts, ideas, and emotions” (Applebaum, 1987, p. 477). The universal semantic promoted by semioticians like Roland Barthes, Charles Peirce, and Ferdinand De Saussure, predates, by at least five decades, Watzlawick, Beaven, and Jackson’s (1967) that “one cannot not communicate” (p. 48). As Hodge and Kress (1988) have observed, “semiotics offers the promise of a systematic, comprehensive and coherent study of communications phenomena as a whole, not just in some instances of it” (p. 1).

It is the use of symbols as a significant form of discourse permeating all human societies that has led to semiotics becoming an important area of inquiry within the social

sciences. Since the primary form of symbolic communication between humans is spoken and written language, semiotics has most frequently been applied in the field of linguistics. However, it has also been used with some frequency within anthropology, psychology, sociology, advertising, and film studies, to mention a few.

Seminal works in the area of semiotics have been presented by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1959), the American pragmatist Charles Peirce (1931/1958), and the German hermeneutician Hans-Georg Gadamer (1985). Even though there are important differences between the various semiotic theories, they share certain unifying themes:

- (1) Semioticians seek ways to establish—or crystallize—the existence of meaning, experience, and knowledge communicated through symbols so that this transference of culturally defining information may be studied in a meaningful manner.
- (2) Systems of signs are understood as being constituted by the complex meaning/experience relations between one sign and others. This relation is generally one of contrast and hierarchy. In this sense, a symbol's meaning can only be understood in a mutually contextualizing relation with the other signs within the symbolic system. Phrased differently, a semiotic inquiry focuses on “a system of symbols that express ideas and meaning within a self-contained network of elements that signify only in relation to each other” (Silverman, 1983, p. 6).
- (3) Signs often have multiple meanings. A distinction is frequently made between denotation, the definitional and literal meaning, and connotation, the socio-cultural association. Much of the analysis carried out within the semiotics tradition is concerned with uncovering the not-so-obvious and often unconsciously circulated connotative meaning—the deeper and often hidden

discourse of symbolic communication. This has led semioticians to study metaphors, as they are the primary vehicles of generating connotation. The metaphoric content of a sign allows it to communicate a meaning and experience that is not immediately familiar by structuring the sign in an unrelated, but familiar, pattern of meaning.

In general, semiotic methodologies do not try to establish the one true meaning or find the symbol's nature or essence. The search is most often for a multiplicity of meanings—denotative and connotative—condensed in a symbol. For example, a symbol may have a condensed meaning in the sense that it represents many ideas: relations between objects, relations between subjects, actions, and interactions, and transactions. It is not uncommon that the semiotic process uncovers connotative meanings, experiences, and knowledge that are not part of the official or well-known interpretative discourse. In some such instances, the semiotic process may make us aware of the hidden codes in our representation of social life and reveal previously veiled power relations. Uncovering the connotative meaning of a symbol may contribute to the process of questioning and challenging the dominant meaning of symbols, undermining universalizing, normalizing, and legitimizing sign systems (Eagleton, 1991). In this sense, semiotics radically critiques the ideological elements of a cultural order. As Ronald Barthes (1966/1987) puts it, semiotic investigation “will not teach us what meaning must be definitively attributed to a work, it will not provide or even discover a meaning, but will describe the logic according to which meanings are engendered” (p. 63). The value of a semiotic perspective for the analysis of political cartoons is that it explains how political cartoons create meaning through structural interrelationships of iconographic elements.

Umberto Eco (1979) wrote that “semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie. If something cannot be used to tell a lie, conversely it cannot be used to tell the truth—it cannot in fact be used to ‘tell’ at all” (p. 7). Anything from a comet to a police officer can be a sign. Many conceptual tools such as icons and symbols and binary oppositions have been developed to help comprehend the process as it occurs in various arenas. Nigerian political cartoons are texts that exploit symbols and signs to produce meaning in society. Thus semiotics is an appropriate tool for studying them.

Many scholars, including Charles Sanders Peirce, Ferdinand De Saussure, Ronald Barthes, Umberto Eco, Mikhail Bakhtin, Algirda Greimas, and Julia Kristeva, have contributed to the development and the maturation of semiotics. Semiotics as a field is marked by divergent approaches. But for the purposes of this study, the semiotic methods of three influential contributors to the field will be utilized: Ferdinand De Saussure, Roland Barthes, and Julia Kristeva.

Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure was an influential figure who made significant contributions to the field of semiotics in the form of his general theory of sign. His legacy shaped modern structural linguistics as well as structural semiotics. He proposed a program of semiology which was a new paradigm for linguistics (Saussure, 1959). The term *semiology* was used by Saussure to suggest a science that was not yet in existence. Semiology was intended to include not only human language, but also all forms of communication used within society—linguistic and nonlinguistic.

Saussure believed that while each spoken language uses different words, they are all used to denote much of the same things. Saussure’s underlying theory of sign begins with the bilateral model (Noth, 1995). This dichotomous model consists of three concepts: the sign, the signifier, and the signified. A sign for Saussure is the combination of a signified (a

concept) and a signifier (through which the concept is manifested). According to Saussure the sound image is the signifier and the concept the signified. For instance, a bunch of roses is a sign when the flowers stand as signifiers of the signified “passion.” The sign represents the whole (See Table 1). According to Saussure, the linguistic sign is arbitrary. Thus, there is no absolute link that connects a signifier and a signified.

TABLE 1

Saussure’s Dyadic Sign Model

1. Signifier	2. Signified
3. Sign	

Saussure also focuses on discussion about the language system as a whole. He categorized the structure of language into two forms, “la langue” and “la parole.” The structures that exist outside of the individual he referred to as la langue, the abstract system of rules underlying speech. Saussure conceived of la parole (human speech: literally, words) as an intrinsically unordered quagmire, an infinite and arbitrary combination of the elements of la langue by individual speakers (cited in Hawkes, 1977). But he discarded la parole as an impossible object for systematic study.

Saussure further distinguished between two more types of structural relations in language, namely syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations (Noth, 1995). Syntagmatic relations, he defines, are the relations between elements in the sequence of combination. This suggests a linear relation. While paradigmatic relations exist between linguistic

elements that may structurally occupy the same position within the same context, paradigmatic relations are relations of equivalence. For example, the presence of the word “girl” in a sentence implies the existence of many like-minded words that could have been used such as “youth,” “teenager,” or “female.” Another binary pair (binary opposition), as Saussure sometimes calls them, are diachrony and synchrony. A diachronic study investigates the same word or sign over time, chronologically, allowing for the consideration of a shift in signification over time. A synchronic study, by contrast, is ultimately concerned with the set of relations among a whole complex of signs and elements that arise at the same time.

For Saussure, then, language is a phenomenon of structural relations and differences. Meaning is created diachronically and synchronically by precisely the same mechanism difference. The syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes compose the structure of language, and their presence constitutes a system of signification that happens due to the combination of rules of association and juxtaposition. From the semiotic perspective, all cultural phenomena are systems of signification because they are structured according to the relations and contrasts of both the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes. For Saussure, all culture is structured as language, hence, a mode of communication.

Rather than the science of the life of signs within society envisioned by Saussure, semiology or semiotics has become, at the hands of practitioners with backgrounds in anthropology, communication, literature, and the arts, the vehicle by which interpretive insights are applied to complex cultural forms.

Roland Barthes has applied the Saussurean model to a great variety of cultural systems. He created ways for people to deepen their understanding of language, literature, and society. In Elements of Semiology (1967/1968), Barthes developed an extremely

influential theory of sign. According to Barthes, a sign, as defined by Saussure, is a form of denotation. That is, the signifier names directly a particular object or identifies plainly what it is referring to. Barthes believed that signs can also refer to culturally determined meanings—connotations—that have added meanings. For Barthes, the sign can itself become a signifier of another sign, a connotation, or second order sign, which signifies a cultural value (See Table 2). Connotative codes produce richer structures of meaning than was assumed by Saussure.

In Mythologies (1957/1972), Barthes decodes the messages of mass culture. His concern was with the values and attitudes implicit in the variety of messages relayed to the masses in France through advertisements, photographs, and sporting events. Barthes called these messages myths. He asserts that a myth is not just any message, but a message produced by a certain signifying process. Barthes argues that signs dispense messages which are both manifest and latent. But the primary message functions to conceal the secondary message, in order to facilitate its delivery (See Table 2).

Just as a sign or the unity of the signifier and signified can itself be a signifier of another connotative signified, the levels of connotation can develop further (Kramer, 1988). In a special case, the connotation becomes its own referent and we reach the level of myth. Susan Hayward (1996) offers a useful example of the three levels of signification in relation to a photograph of Marilyn Monroe. At the denotative level, it is only a photograph of the movie star Marilyn Monroe. At a connotative level, we associate this photograph with Marilyn Monroe's star qualities of glamour, sexuality, beauty. At another level, this picture can be associated with her depression, drug taking, and ultimately her untimely death if it is one of her last photographs. At a mythic level, we understand this sign as activating the myth of Hollywood: the dream factory that produces glamour in the form of the stars it

constructs, but also the dream machine that can crush them all with a view to profit (Hayward, 1996, p. 310). Although Jacques Derrida (1978) would argue that the traces of meaning continue indefinitely – in the form of an endless deferral.

Barthes was particularly interested not so much in what things mean, but in how things mean. Barthes is highly regarded as an intellectual figure in this field because of his skill in finding, manipulating, and exploiting theories and concepts of how things come to mean. His framework in analyzing myth is useful and applicable in understanding how political cartoons work in generating meaning.

TABLE 2

Barthes' Model of Myth

	1. Signifier	2. Signified
1. Denotation⇒	3. Sign = Meaning	
2. Connotation⇒	I. Signifier=Form	II. Signified=Concept
(Myth)-----⇒	III. Sign= Signification	

Source: Lavers, 1982, p. 252

More than any of the semioticians discussed here, Julia Kristeva has entertained hopes of transforming the world through an art guided by a theory. To Kristeva, semiotics is a “science of the text,” one that is critical of its very foundations (Kristeva, 1969, p. 30). Being a “science of the text,” semiotics is a signifying practice in itself. The focus in the analysis is always the text, which Kristeva posits as a generative activity. This generative activity she refers to as a signifying practice and productivity that suggests that meaning in texts is always polyphonic and a seemingly never-ending process.

Mikhail Bakhtin, the Soviet philosopher of language, introduced the notion of intertextuality or heteroglossias. However, Kristeva, a Bulgarian living in Paris, coined the term “intertextuality” as it is widely referred to today. Intertextuality refers to the ready-made quality of linguistic and visual signs that a writer or artist finds available in earlier texts produced by a culture. The idea of intertextuality emphasizes that no text is an island. It refers to the complex structure of interrelations that exist between single works and other texts. According to Coward and Ellis (1977), “it is a use of language that calls up a vast

reserve of echoes from similar texts, similar phrasings, remarks, situations, characters” (p. 51). The point is that the discursive processes and structures constitute a textual system that may generate meaning without the intentional participation of sign users, perhaps behind their backs. Therefore, intertextuality is not merely or even primarily a stylistic device, it is defined here as the process by which elements of discourse express specific meanings to audiences by implicit reference to other, familiar discourse, themes, and genres, which may also be present or inferred.

Intertextuality as an approach recognizes the signs necessary to form political communication and criticism without turning the signs into things that are not necessary. What the text does not say, or says vaguely, the intertext spells out. Intertextuality in a text enables the political cartoonist to convey the often-tangled relationship between past, present, and future that characterizes political cartoons.

The aesthetics of Nigerian political cartoons is often bewildering to the Western eye. A critical examination, however, would show that it is informed by Nigeria’s political and social history, cultural traditions, and the influence of Colonialism in both form and content. Intertextuality alters and explicates the semiotic system of political cartoons in a fundamental way.

Hermeneutics

The use of hermeneutic analysis in this study will aid in understanding the interpretive character of contemporary Nigeria. Hermeneutics is a rich and varied tradition composed of many different schools of thought. It is a tradition that stresses understanding through context. Traditionally, hermeneutics was concerned with the interpretation of biblical and judicial texts, for uncovering the intentions and meanings of their authors. The

discovery of meaning was arrived at through different procedures, some of which involved a kind of interplay between text and context, part and whole, sentence and paragraph.

Increasingly, hermeneutics ventured beyond biblical and judicial texts to penetrate the human sciences generally, so much so that it has become a familiar term to those working in the social sciences (Giddens, 1984, p. 215).

Since political cartoons contain so little detail and invite such a wide range of interpretations, a rigorously reliable analysis requires a strategy that enables readers to enter into the story (leaving behind their own perspectives) and to emerge from the story with a systematic analysis of their own. Structural semiotics and hermeneutics provide such a strategy.

Hermeneutics offers a solution to a problem that social scientists have struggled with throughout the twentieth century. In looking for a solid vantage point, modern social scientists increasingly have begun to move toward hermeneutics. In recent years, hermeneutics has confirmed that cultural interpretation is an inevitable part of every perception, including the experience of texts. The commitment to hermeneutics as the art of interpretation is directed toward the production of understanding (*Verstehen*). Structural semiotics as the general science of signs offers methods for acquiring knowledge about the semantic activity of structures of texts. Although hermeneutics is criticized for its subjective orientation, and semiotics for its excessive objectivity, at the intersection of the two, the dynamic process of signification and signifiability opens up the space in which both can operate. Together, hermeneutics and semiotics provide a framework of interpretive production of knowledge.

Jean Gebser's approach to the understanding of human consciousness offers insights into the analysis of political cartoons as a form of popular culture. Gebser's method presents

a unique way of understanding the forces that are at work in an individual's interpretation of reality. The fundamental premise of Gebser's hermeneutics is that humans are on the threshold of a new structure of consciousness. Gebser describes five mutations of consciousness that have occurred in the history of humans. These mutations are not just changes of perspective; rather they are fundamentally different ways of experiencing reality. Gebser identifies these five structures of consciousness as the Archaic, Magical, Mythical, Mental, and Integral. For the purposes of this study, the analysis only includes the Magical, Mythical and Mental. These are the structures most apparent in Nigerian political cartoons.

Hermeneutics here serves as the philosophical basis for the analysis, producing a shared dialogue between the cartoonists and the readers. At best, this dialogue aspires to a conversation that bridges both historical and cultural boundaries.

Paul Ricoeur provides an answer to blending hermeneutics and structuralism. His response to the problem of conflicting interpretations is that structuralism supplies empirical scientific values (distance, methodological procedure, and objectivity) while philosophical hermeneutics supplies humanist values (reflection, ethical concern with life decisions, and connections between the analyst and the subjects of study, or subjectivity). He explains that structuralism seeks knowledge of others, of persons outside the analysts community, while hermeneutics seeks knowledge of the self and one's own tradition. The former requires distant vision—the latter interprets a transmitted tradition that necessitates intimate knowledge of a particular position on the horizon (Ricoeur, 1974, p. 27-61).

Hermeneutic and structural semiotic approaches, when combined, constitute a veritable crossing where one may elucidate an understanding by bracketing metaphysical concerns about subjective and objective excesses in the process of perception/meaningful awareness.

Data Collection

This study is a structural semiotic and hermeneutic analysis of political cartoons of Nigeria. Semiotics plays a pivotal role in this analysis by providing structural devices in describing how meaning is produced while hermeneutics provides a framework linking political cartoons to a particular social political context. To this end data were collected from three weekly Nigerian magazines (*Newswatch*, *Tell*, and *African Guardian*). The political cartoons included those published in *Newswatch*, *Tell*, and *African Guardian* from June 12, 1993, through December 1996.

These magazines were selected for their wide circulation and diverse reader demographics. Each of these magazines has a circulation of more than 100,000 copies per issue. Although they each have head offices in the same city, Lagos, they are not regionally biased.

The political cartoons included both those published on the adjacent page to the editorial and those published on pages other than the editorial page. Data selected included political cartoons drawn by staff political cartoonists of the magazine. Therefore, political cartoons included have appeared only once in each magazine. The study sample was limited to major magazines that publish political cartoons. It was invalid to include smaller magazines as sources for cartoons because they were unlikely to publish political cartoons.

Framework for Analysis

Political cartoons are a primary ingredient in political communication in that they can foster social and political reflection, which can serve as a basis for social action. Structural semiotics play a pivotal role in this analysis by providing tools for understanding how meaning is generated in Nigerian political cartoons.

To analyze the data, the semiotic approach influenced by Ferdinand De Saussure, Roland Barthes, and Julia Kristeva is used. Following the logic of the semiotic approach, the following dimensions are used to analyze Nigerian political cartoons. These called for an analysis of the oppositions central to each cartoon, the connotative qualities that help illuminate the varied texture of the cartoon, and the intertextuality of the complex structure of interrelations that exist between political cartoons and other texts.

The analysis begins with an identification of the issues and themes in the political cartoons. This is followed by a framework for analysis that evolved from the work of Saussure and Barthes. Therefore, using the images in the cartoons, we can divide the

meanings into what Roland Barthes coined the denotative (or perceptual iconic) meaning and the connotative (or cultural iconic) meaning. Indeed these common cultural meanings are not simply false, they are also not simply confined to texts—they are reproduced by texts, and help define real-life situations. Political cartoons are combinations of signs and the cartoons' meanings are a product of this combination. Each individual sign is comprised of two elements: the signifier, which is the material or physical aspect of the sign that we engage with our senses; and the signified, which is the meaning conventionally associated with an image. In this first instance, the signified is simply a literal interpretation of the signifier. Barthes referred to this literal interpretation of the signifier as its denotation.

However, meanings cannot be restricted to literal interpretation—different associations are brought into play. At the first level, there is a need to supply a literal meaning, then comes the second level of meaning that is not literal, but symbolic. These are the wider cultural associations which that are brought to the literal meaning, and which Barthes called connotations. This formula, denotation and connotation analysis, constitute the process of understanding the mythic aspects of the dominant issues identifiable in the political cartoons discussed further into the analysis. This is followed by identification of the paradigmatic dimensions in the cartoons. The paradigmatic dimension suggests that, at least in theory, these signs will have been chosen from a range of options, and therefore that their meaning is conditioned not only by their combination with other signs in the text but also, to some extent, by our awareness of other possibilities which have not been used. For example, in a political cartoon an airplane is featured instead of a train or car, which have symbolic connotations in other contexts. This is also known as the binary oppositions that are present in each text. In Saussurean semiotics, binary oppositions are the essential elements to the generation of meaning. The meaning in each case depends on the differences that exist

between signs. According to John Fiske (1982) “the meaning of what was chosen is determined by the meaning of what was not” (p. 62). Paradigmatic analysis offers a useful technique in comparing and contrasting between the differing treatments of varying themes between different cartoonist. For instance, Eco (1976) analyzed the James Bond novels in terms of series of oppositions: Bond vs. Villain, West vs. Soviet Union; Anglo-Saxon vs. Other Countries, Ideals vs. Cupidity, Chance vs. Planning, Excess vs. Moderation, Perversion vs. Innocence, Loyalty vs. Disloyalty. Clearly for Eco, understanding the premise of James Bond novels is derived from the series of oppositions that are present in the text. Eco asserts that the textual oppositions are part of a wider, ideological discussion (Woollacott, 1982, p. 96-97).

Perhaps the one weakness of semiotics is the treatment of texts as islands—closed-off entities— and the exclusively focus on internal structures. But as Gunter Kress (1988) asserts, within a structuralist paradigm this problem can be addressed only if one looks at system of structures (i.e., in the form of a new structure). The semiotic notion of intertextuality offered a useful tool in analyzing how each medium’s texts exist in relation to others. In reality, most texts owe more to other text than to their own making. Texts are framed by others in many ways. One’s understanding of any individual text relates to its framing by another. Texts also provide context within which other texts may be created and interpreted. Instant identification of the appropriate interpretative code serves to identify the interpreter of the political cartoons as a member of an exclusive club, with each act of interpretation serving to renew one’s membership. Tony Thwaites (1994) argues that texts are elastic and their frames or boundaries can always be redrawn by readers.

These dimensions form the basis of this structural semiotic analysis and they are essential to illuminating how Nigerian political cartoons work in producing meaning.

Chapter 4

Historical Overview of Political/Editorial Cartoons

Visual satire—or political cartoons—have made significant contributions as a form of pictorial communication and political rhetoric. Increasingly sophisticated and extremely popular, published cartoons reflect the most wrenching episodes of a country's history in a light and often humorous manner. Most importantly, it represents a stop-action picture of what a group of artistically minded observers feel is noteworthy at a particular moment. The political and economic dynamics of a country provide cartoonists with a rich and easily accessible source of material. By satirizing a person, place, issue, fad, or thing that people are talking about or doing on a daily basis, political cartoons can tell a reader what the politics and fads are at any given time.

The history of political caricature dates back to prehistoric caves. In fact, the first known political caricature, preceding the terminology as it is known today, was the portrait of the founder of the Sun god religion, King Akhnaton of Egypt, father-in-law of King Tut (ankhamen) (Press, 1981). Caricature (or cartoon as it later became known) was born in Italy in the early sixteenth century, during the Mannerist period as a rebellion against the academy and its aesthetic canons¹ (Hoffman, 1958). The term “caricature” comes from the Italian “caricare,” which means to exaggerate. It was first used as a personal hobby by the Carracci brothers, who were Mannerist painters of the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. It never was intended to be “high art,” but rather a way of poking fun at art's longing for prestige. As Hoffman (1958) so aptly describes it, “cartooning lies at the opposite end of the spectrum from the ideal of beauty, and constitutes its total negation” (p. 17).

However, the foundation for cartoons of a more editorial nature was not laid until the Protestant Reformation began in Germany in the sixteenth century (Shikes, 1969). Extensive use of visual propaganda was the norm during this era and it helped Martin Luther's socio-religious reforms because he used broadsheet posters and illustrated pamphlets to reach a highly illiterate population. This proved to be an effective strategy because the images reached the masses and provided the greatest possible amount of comprehension. The modern political cartoon emerged when seventeenth-century satirical artists, mostly in England, brought together the two cartooning traditions most used during the fifteenth century: Dutch allegorical engravings, in which a crowd of characters represented the visual equivalent of a political situation and the Italian tradition in "which deforming physiognomy is used to make a political statement" (Hoffman, 1958, p. 17). In time political cartoons became a substantial medium of commentary that took serious issues and presented them in a manner which was not only funny, and therefore more socially acceptable, but also designed to affect the viewer's opinion (Shikes, 1969).

Some of the notable contributors to the art of cartooning are William Hogarth from England, and Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Nast from America. William Hogarth is recognized as the father of English caricature. Hogarth had a perennial scorn for the House of Hanover and his satire of George II was contemptuous (Shikes, 1969). Although known and recognized for his contributions to political cartoons, his best work was done on the social scale. His most famous political series, "The Elections," is by and large broad (Shikes, 1969). It is not in any sense campaign literature, but a demonstration of that period's etiquette. In eighteenth-century England the political cartoon was a fundamental part of journalism.

¹ Mannerism is a painting style once described as a perversion of high Italian Renaissance and now

Benjamin Franklin was another influential contributor to the history of political cartoons. In 1754, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* published by Franklin ran one of the famous cartoons referred to as an “America classic” (Pogel & Summer, 1980). This cartoon, prompted by the outbreak of the French and Indian War, showed a snake cut up into small sections, each of which were labeled with the initials of one Britain’s American colonies. The printing below the snake read, “Unite or Die.” For this very reason, some credit Benjamin Franklin as the father of American cartooning. But many claim that his main task was that of introducing editorial cartoons to Americans (Pogel & Summers, 1980; Tyler, 1985).

In many circles, Thomas Nast is credited in many circles as the father of American editorial cartooning, since he brought it to the fore as a journalistic venture (Press, 1981; Tower, 1982). In fact he helped transform the cartoonist into a “real” journalist. His weekly cartoons for *Harper’s Weekly* magazine were responsible for this, as cartoonists now had to follow policies and guidelines that were expected of journalists. No longer were cartoonists free to draw on any issue. The new guidelines dictated that all cartoons be timely. In this new era, journalistic standards required the cartoons to establish opinions through time (Johnson, 1958). Essentially the job of a political cartoonist called for quick wit and simple artistry that would appeal to the public (Press, 1981).

As a cartoonist, Thomas Nast tackled traditionally taboo topics. During his most productive years, Nast created a number of symbols of American political life: the Republican elephant, the Democrat donkey, and the Tammany tiger, which became the symbol of the corrupt Democratic machine of New York City (Tower, 1982). In the summer of 1872, Nast drew “Uncle Sam as a friendly, polished and patriotic older man, and the

identified as a conscious revolt against Classicism.

popularity of Nast's drawings stamped this image as the traditional one recognized today" (Press, 1981, p. 221). Nast is best known for his forceful political cartoons, which were instrumental in defeating Boss Tweed in New York City (Nelson, 1975). The American politician and Tammany leader Boss Tweed controlled nominations and patronage in New York City Democratic politics after 1857 through his control of the Tammany organization. He and the notorious Tweed Ring, which consisted of Tweed, the mayor, the city comptroller, and the city chamberlain, sold political favors and defrauded the city of at least \$30 million, largely through padded construction contracts (Nelson, 1975). Nast, considered the leading American cartoonist of all time, drew more than 100 pictures of Boss Tweed, which ran about six weeks in the *Harper's Weekly* preceding the elections of 1871 in which Tweed lost his power as Boss (Tower, 1982). Nast and the *New York Times* primarily were responsible. Tweed's comment on Nast's cartoons: "Let's stop them damned pictures. I don't care so much what the papers write about me—my constituents can't read—but damn it, they can see pictures" (Tower, 1982, p. 121).

In time, political cartoons became more closely tied to newspapers and magazines, where they were found mostly on editorial pages. Walter McDougall fathered the editorial cartoon as a regular newspaper feature with his 'Belshazzar's Feast,' in the *New York World* during the Presidential campaign of 1884 (Tower, 1982). But it was not until the 1890s that editorial cartoons became regular features in most American newspapers. Prior to the 1890s newspapers did not print editorial cartoons on a daily basis because the engraving time was too long and would not meet the daily deadlines.

Newspaper mergers that occurred in and around 1915 resulted in staff cartoonists being replaced with more popular cartoonists (Press, 1981). Syndication gave cartoonists some independence, but within bounds. Editors were no longer held responsible or liable for

any cartoons. They could always claim that they were trying to show both sides of an issue. After World War II, political cartoons proliferated as weekly opinion publications adopted them.

By the early 1970s cartoonists had grown more vigorous in their attacks on public officials, especially with such political fiascos as Watergate and President Nixon's subsequent resignation. The 1980s and 1990s brought a plethora of issues, such as the Iran Contra Affair, Whitewater Investigations, and the Republican's Contract with America, and recently, the Clinton-Monica Lewinsky affair and Clinton's subsequent impeachment, which gave the cartoonist more than enough subjects to tackle.

Early editorial cartoons affected politics in much the same casual manner; it was easy to look at a single unambiguous statement of opinion and to decide almost immediately whether or not one agreed with it. The political cartoon, as a form of communication, is intended to influence public opinion (Nelson, 1975). In its strongest form, it strictly represents a political, social, or economic problem and by implication offers some solution; but in its weakest, it restates the news in purely graphic form. Nelson (1975) writes that, "the strength of an editorial cartoon lies in its analogy...and the best of the cartoonists do not depict a problem in literal terms, they often liken it to something else and invite the reader to stretch his or her imagination" (p. 7). The editorial cartoonist draws in a sort of shorthand, taking complex issues and reducing them to simple if not simplistic terms (Nelson, 1975).

The power that cartoonists wield was recognized as early as 1889, as John Ames

Mitchell (1889), the founder of *Life* magazine, compared the cartoon panel to the traditional editorial when he noted:

To the politician...who is delicately balancing between right and wrong, a scorching editorial, boldly placing him upon the evil side, is easier to live down, no matter how ably written, than the clever caricature which gives ocular demonstration of his sin.

The editorial appeals to the intellect; the caricature appeals to the intellect, to the eye, and the worst of all, the sense of humor of the beholder. And the beholder will carry with him, perhaps forever, either a vague or a vivid impression of having seen the victim in a compromising position. The editorial, moreover, is more or less local and is read by comparatively few. The caricature is national, and reaches every city in the country. Thousands who would not read the letter-press if placed in their hands, revel in the details of the caricature with delighted eyes; and their dominant impression of the victim is the one they thus receive (p. 726).

The fact still remains that political cartoonists “employ conventions that are in fundamental harmony with the mass culture” and the political situation at hand (Fisher, 1990; Morrison, 1969). Cartoons are now one of the most important weapons in a newspaper’s armory of political analysis. Unlike a news article or column, the cartoon has the capacity to almost instantaneously dissect a political issue. A cartoon can often have more veracity and insight than hundreds of words of text-based analysis. At least that’s the way it has been through history. A picture, as they say, is worth a thousand words, and political cartoons and caricatures have traditionally been a devastating method of cutting the powerful down to size.

Political Cartoons in the Context of Nigeria

The history of political cartoons in Nigerian magazines and newspaper is spotty and limited. The official history of cartooning in Nigeria dates back to the late 1940s and early 1950s, when they were believed to have contributed to and enhanced the content of Nigerian newspapers (Duyile, 1987). The *West African Pilot* and the *Daily Times* were among the first Nigerian newspapers to publish cartoon strips and political cartoons (Duyile, 1987). When the *Punch* newspaper was first published on March 18, 1973, the publishers credited the success and increase in circulation to the daily satirical cartoons on political and social occurrences in Nigeria (Duyile, 1987). As a result, when *Punch* began publishing an evening edition in 1986, it featured political cartoons on the front page (Duyile, 1987). In a survey of newspaper readers in 1979, two-thirds of the readers cited political cartoons as one of the reasons why they purchased newspapers (Duyile, 1987). Today, the framework of many newspapers and magazines in Nigeria include political cartoons, and this has resulted in the comparison of cartoonist to political and social critics (Gbenro, 1985). Cartoon journalism, as it is often referred to, has become a permanent feature in modern journalism in Nigeria today.

The definitive history on Nigerian political cartoons has yet to be written. A review of the media history of Nigeria reveals few references to political cartoons with little information on how they have evolved since their inception. But the fact remains, political cartoons are viewed as an important dimension of communication that has contributed immensely to the political commentary of Nigeria. The primary characteristics prevalent in Nigerian political cartoons are best described as “traditions,” or the sum total of the conventions and narrative habits that have coalesced to assume what may now be referred to

as indigenous ingredients that wear a peculiarly Nigerian face in the corpus of African political cartoons. This tradition includes use of the vernacular language, creative use of local proverbs, legends, customs, rituals, institutions, and mythology. This aids in giving imaginative expression to the national culture and politics. Another characteristic of these cartoons is that they are dynamic rather than static and they easily blend the new with the old—therefore the urban ethos is very much present with its mixture of pidgin English and plain speech styles. Furthermore, its crime-bent, politically revealing, convention-breaking presentation of the real-life political figures is very rich in portraying the country's rich and powerful.

In lieu of the traditional editorial, political cartoons have served to set the historical record straight and preserve a memorable, even traumatic experience in the political life of Nigeria for the benefit of posterity. In other cases, they are for propaganda purposes, which result in an opportunity to score a diplomatic point by demonstrating to the International community the real and hidden issues involved. More importantly, they can propagate the impression that the struggle continues, especially the struggle for full re-integration into the mainstream world politics. The depiction of the suffering and agonies is not lost on cartoonists as they highlight the greed and corruption of officials in high places who have cashed in on the tribulation of the populace as opportunities for self-enrichment.

Nigerian political cartoons are filled with journeys of many kinds. These are journeys of the romantic kind, undertaken mainly as part of an artistic imagination. These journeys are imprinted, imposed, and burned into the consciousness of the Nigerian people by the many rigors of the country's history.

Chapter 5

Historical Overview of Nigeria

In paraphrasing Mao, no examination of culture can succeed without a real concrete knowledge of the actual conditions of that society. In order to know these conditions and to understand how semiotic and hermeneutic analysis is applied, a review of the conditions of Nigerian society at large is pertinent. Hence the following discussion on the history of Nigeria.

Nigeria is the most densely populated country in Africa with a population of 126 million people in 1996 (World Almanac, 2001). The country occupies a geographical area totaling approximately 923,769 square kilometers. It is bordered on the west by the Republic of Benin, on the north by the Niger Republic, on the east by the Republic of Cameroon and Chad and on the south by the Atlantic Ocean (World Almanac, 2001).

Early cultures in Nigeria date back to at least 700 B.C. From the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries, more advanced cultures developed throughout Nigeria, at Ife in the southwest, the Yoruba area, and in the north, where Moslem influence prevailed. Portuguese and British slave traders appeared from the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries (World Almanac, 2001). Britain seized Lagos in 1861 and gradually extended control inland until 1900.

In 1954, under British rule, the Nigerian constitution was changed and Nigeria—which had been a unitary government—was divided into three administrative regions: the North, East and West (Peters, 1997). This also led to the creation of the Federal territory of Lagos (Beckett, 1987). While this division provided for a closer administration of the country, it has been argued that the partition was largely arbitrary and, in consequence, created sensitive political problems, the impact of which can still be felt in Nigeria today.

Nigeria gained independence from Great Britain in 1960 after more than a hundred years of British association (Beckett, 1987). Three years later, in 1963, Nigeria became a Federal Republic, which, by implication, officially brought an end to British influences on the political, economic, and social policies of the country.

At this time, the former Western Region was divided into two, thus creating the fourth Region, the Mid-Western. Unlike the 1954 partition, the creation of the Mid-Western Region in 1963 paid closer to tribal identification.

There are as many as 50 ethnic groups in the country. Amongst the major ethnic groups are the Hausas, Yorubas, Ibos, Edos, Urhobos, Efik, and Fulanis. Languages more closely reflect the 1954 regionalization; thus the Yorubas are in the west, the Hausas in the north and the Ibos in the east. It is important to bear in mind, however, that Nigeria is a multi-language country with as many as 250 languages and dialects. Sometimes this has brought about pronounced sensitivity and tribal affiliation and has often been responsible for suspicion and disunity that have almost torn the country apart.

Religions are many and diverse, but the two major religious groupings are the Christians in the south and the Muslims in the north—40% of Nigerians are Christians, 50% are Muslims, and the remaining 10% fall under traditional religion. Religion, too, has had a significant impact on social and economic development in the country. For example, Christianity was the vanguard of Western education in the country, particularly in the south. In contrast, the Islamic religion, as practiced in the northern part, appears to have been a major stumbling block to the spread of Western civilization, the consequence of which has been a significant educational gap between the south and north. What is instructive from this discussion is that these discrepancies have, at one time or another, added fuel to the problem of disunity and ethnic suspicion. There can be little doubt that these were

contributing factors to the collapse of the first Republic in January 1966 and the subsequent Republics.

The post-independence era was accompanied by parliamentary and military government. This marked the beginning of the fragmentary life of Nigerian politics.

TABLE 3**Key Players****Federal Regime Changes in Nigeria: 1960 - 1999**

First Independent Civilian Government: First Republic Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa	10/60- 1/66
First Military Government: Major General J. Aguiyi Ironsi	1/66 - 7/66
Second Military Government: Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon	7/66 - 7/75
Third Military Government (I) Brigadier Murtala Muhammed	7/75 - 2/76
Third Military Government (II) Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo	2/76 - 10/79
Second Civilian Government Second Republic President Shehu Shagari	10/79- 12/83
Fourth Military Government Major General Mohammed Buhari	12/83 - 8/85
Fifth Military Government Major General Ibrahim Babangida	8/85 - 7/93
Third Civilian Government Ernest Shonekan False Republic	7/93 - 11/93
Presidential Candidate Chief M.K.O Abiola Third Republic?	Results for the June 12, 1993, elections were annulled
Sixth Military Government General Sani Abacha	11/93 – 06/98
Seventh Military Government General Abubakar	06/98 – 05/99

As a result of several periods of political chaos brought to a peak by election irregularities in the former Western Region, Nigeria experienced serious political instability by the end of 1965, and the civilian government was displaced by force, following a military coup in January 1966 (Beckett, 1987). Many political leaders, including Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa and the Premiers of the Western and Northern Regions, were killed during this military take-over. For a few months there was some degree of calm, but a stalemate developed in the period following July 1967 when another military coup, by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, displaced the earlier one, intensifying ethnic suspicion and disharmony. The developments that followed were disastrous. The country was torn by a bloody civil war between 1967 and 1970 over an attempted secession by the former Eastern Region. Casualties in the war were estimated at over 1 million, including many “Biafrans”—mostly Ibos—who died of starvation despite international efforts to provide relief. The secessionists, after losing ground, surrendered on January 12, 1970 (Beckett, 1987).

Shortly before the beginning of the civil war in 1967, the four Regions of the country (West, East, North, and the Mid-West), were replaced by a 12-state structure which reflected, more accurately than in the past, the ethnic groupings and cultural identity of the Nigerian people (Beckett, 1987). This development was, however, seen as a temporary wartime measure, for no sooner had the civil war ended than there were continuous demands for the creation of more states. Thus, even by 1967, the grouping was regarded as largely unsatisfactory. Yet, because of the country’s preoccupation with the civil war and the prevailing views of the then military administration, further states were not created until early in 1976 by another military government which had come into office following a bloodless coup d’etat in July 1975 (by Brigadier Murtala Muhammed). At that time, Nigeria was then divided into 19 states. Since then Nigeria has further been divided into 30 states

plus the federal capital territory (Pedder, 1993). The federal capital was moved from Lagos to Abuja. While the creation of more states may neutralize ethnic hegemony it is hardly likely that such a proliferation of states will achieve greater economic co-ordination and advancement, or indeed, political stability for the country as a whole. In fact, the creation of more states has in itself brought about unprogressive rivalry and cutthroat competition and heightened unnecessary ethnic consciousness with all the attendant serious social, economic, and political repercussions.

The military administration which came to power in July 1975 elaborated its political program clearly, the main goal being the return to civilian rule (Joseph, 1987). Accordingly, it appointed a Constitution Drafting Committee made up of 49 eminent Nigerians. After about a year the Committee produced a draft constitution of the presidential system. In February of 1976, there was an attempted coup, but the only major casualty was the head of state, Brigadier Murtala Muhammed. He was soon replaced by his Army Chief of Staff, General Olusegun Obasanjo.

The draft constitution was debated in the media and by a Constituent Assembly that was partly elected, partly appointed. The Presidential Constitution was approved, and the election was held between July and August 1979, bringing into office Nigeria's first executive president—Shehu Shagari (Joseph, 1987). This achievement was perceived as being attributable to the progressive political program of the last military administration. But it is important to note that the political crisis in Nigeria was far from being solved. The political problems of Nigeria have been complicated by other social ills, especially by the unprecedented disrespect for social and cultural values. The increasing emphasis on materialism has added to the prevailing acrimony, just as tribalism, nepotism, greed, and corruption have exacerbated Nigeria's political problems.

For long, rule by the military was treated within Nigeria as an aberration, as a corrective system that was charged with returning the country to the norm of constitutional civilian rule (Joseph, 1987). Of course, what was supposed to be an aberration lasted 13 years (the first time around—1966-1979), more than twice the life of the first independent government it replaced. And the term “remedial” was stretched to its limits by regimes that altered the Federal structure of the country, decreed far-reaching transference of ownership from foreign to indigenous hands within the economy, and played a highly interventionist role in determining the rules and structures of the Second Republic of 1979-1983 (See Table 3).

The 1983 coup, and the draconian actions of General Buhari’s regime, signified not only the end of a long era in Nigeria marked by an implicit confidence in the superiority of democratic systems of government but, concurrently, a more confident reliance by the military praetors on their own accumulated principles and practices for governing the Nigerian nation (Joseph, 1987).

A second coup occurred in 1985 and the new regime, headed by General Babangida, promised elections but voided the result of a presidential election on June 23, 1993. Babangida eventually resigned and appointed a civilian head as an interim government on August 26, 1993. General Abacha ousted the government of Ernest Shonekan in a military coup, on November 17, 1993. On June 11, 1994, the presumed winner of the 1993 presidential election, Chief Abiola, declared himself president. On June 23, 1994, Abiola was jailed for treason against the government.

The return to divisive politics, massive corruption, and electoral fraud during the Second Republic served to undermine the fragile superior legitimacy that liberal democracy had enjoyed for several decades (Joseph, 1987). The politicians were given their chance and

they seemed to have used it to reintroduce each of the ills that General Murtala Muhammed has ascribed to Nigerian party politics in his inaugural address to the Constitution Drafting Committee in October 1975 (Joseph, 1987).

The 1983 coup (much like other coups) often served as both a rupture and recuperation. It was rupture in the sense that the military now felt less bound to acknowledge, even verbally, the norm of democratic contestation for power. As things would appear, these matters proceeded in cycles, and unpredictable developments could disrupt, and did disrupt, the course of both military and civilian governments alike.

The peacetime government of military regimes exemplify Sam Finer's (1962, p. 45) comments about the "ambivalence of military regimes, they can neither stay nor go"—a theme which is portrayed in editorial cartoons. With minor alterations from military regime to military regime, Nigeria's cabinet is composed of a who's who of military officers and a preponderance of civilian appointees to give the illusion that perhaps they might be a true democratic form of government. Under some of the military rulers, many of the well-known civilian political figures from the past, including those from the opposition, also served.

It is indeed ironic that the Nigerian military has achieved in its own fashion what has always been regarded as the litmus test of governmental stability in the new states of Africa, that is, the capacity to transfer power according to stipulated guidelines to political successors. Not only did General Obasanjo's regime transfer power according to constitutional principles to its democratically elected successors, when it became apparent that the military would have to intervene again, the senior military establishment—including those in active service and retirement—acted to ensure that certain principles of its own mode of government would be followed.

Improving the quality of democracy in the pursuit of governance has been an elusive goal over the last four decades of Nigerian history (William, 1992). Although successive military governments shared a cynical view of democratic rule, they nonetheless invested an enormous amount of time and resources in re-establishing its framework in 1978 and again in 1999. Stimulated in part through determined public demands and an enduring democratic political culture, new constitutions have been promulgated and a complex transition program put into motion in the hope that some institutional means could be found to overcome trends towards societal inertia.

In Africa, “where democracy is widely approved, but everywhere in doubt, open public participation in politics has tended to be characterized by divisive struggles among ethnic groups over power and resources” (Sklar, 1986, p. 115).

Political Economic Setting

Nigeria is a country rich with physical and human resources. The nation possesses a wealth of natural resources including major oil and gas deposits, a variety of solid minerals, good agricultural land, a well-developed industrial base, an extensive banking system, a large labor force, and a vibrant private sector.

Nigeria has a mixed and dual economic system in which the ownership of the means of production is shared between the private and public sectors, with latter having become increasingly involved in the modern industrial sector in recent years. In this sector, both government and private establishments are fully involved in manufacturing, construction, petroleum, service, and financial undertakings. Yet, real income and consumption per capita today are scarcely higher than they were in 1971 before the start of the oil booms which provided vast but temporary financial resources (World Almanac, 2001). But between 1973

and 1993, approximately US\$200 billion was invested in the country, with fully two-thirds of this coming from the government, and with very little return (Peters, 1997). Much of the public infrastructure has deteriorated while most of the public enterprises have been running far below capacity or were never finished.

Social and economic indicators have been improving but remain far below what some would consider acceptable levels, and below the level that should have been expected on the basis of previous high expenditures. For example, infant mortality is twice as high as it is in Mexico today and much higher than in Indonesia; fertility rates are two times higher than Indonesia's and Mexico's and consequently three million people are added to Nigeria's population every year (World Bank Report, 1998). Only 64% of Nigeria's children under the age of five are free from malnutrition compared to 86% and 94% respectively for Mexico and Venezuela (World Bank Report, 1998). Life expectancy is 18 years shorter than in Mexico and 8 years shorter than in Indonesia. Primary school enrollment is only 40% of that achieved by Indonesia. Primary school enrollment is only 40% of that achieved by Indonesia and Mexico and the quality of education is poor and declining. Adult literacy rates are well below those of the other three comparator countries.

Essential infrastructure services such as power, telephones, and potable water also lag far behind. Even the supply of refined petroleum products is uncertain. Poverty is widespread, with 35% of the population falling below the poverty line compared to 20% in Indonesia (World Bank Report, 1998).

The growth rate of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in real terms grew by an average of 5% in the 1960s to 7.6% in 1970-75, and 10.3% in 1976-77 (Ihonvbere, 1988). The relatively small overall deficits of 1989 and 1990 gave way to a full-blown fiscal crisis in 1993-94 (World Bank Report, 1998). Almost all of the growth in expenditures has come

from increases in non-debt spending rather than interest due or paid. Non-debt spending by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) more than quadrupled from 5% of GDP in 1989 to 21% of GDP in 1993. Consequently, Nigeria's primary balance (meaning revenues less non-debt expenditures) declined sharply, from 9% of GDP in 1989 to minus 7% in 1993, while the overall deficit climbed from 1% of GDP to over 17% of GDP over the same period.

The rising deficits have been financed by ever-increasing amounts of domestic borrowing from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) which caused most of the growth in the money supply during 1989-1993 (World Bank Report, 1998).^{*} This monetary financing of the deficit fueled the acceleration in end-of-period inflation: from 4% in 1990 to 61% in 1993. Real growth has slowed, private investment has slowed, and interest rates are severely repressed.

While outcomes of the macroeconomic front worsened, there were also severe problems of resource misallocation at the sectoral and program levels. During the period that non-debt spending increased so dramatically, some programs nearly lapsed while others were ineffectual. For example, the national immunization program nearly collapsed, textbooks were in short supply at all educational levels, road conditions deteriorated further, electrical power generation was inadequate and unpredictable, and the refineries were falling into disrepair.

These developments can be traced to the fundamental quality of governance. The budget process is characterized by the general lack of checks and balances. Part of this is attributable to the blurring of functions for appropriations and expenditures as distinct from the administrative and regulatory functions. In the recent past, ministers seeking extra funding were able to access several different decision-making offices. This method of

obtaining additional funding was facilitated by the establishment of several off-budget funds. The internal system of expenditure control and accountability was further weakened by the 1988 civil service act which designated ministers, rather than permanent secretaries, as the chief accounting officers (World Bank Report, 1998). In addition, the internal auditors were to report to the ministers rather than to the Office Accountant General. In such an environment, there was every incentive to spend freely with little need to adhere to spending targets, prioritize, and cut back programs. The higher oil revenues realized during the crisis in the Persian Gulf, combined with the imperatives and uncertainty associated with the planned political transition in 1992/93 added to the spending momentum (World Bank Report, 1998). When oil prices returned to normal levels, spending continued at the new, higher level financed primarily through increased use of CBN credit. This fueled a huge expansion of the money supply and thus fueled a high rate of inflation. Although the FGN has attempted to contain some of the consequences of these policies, it has done so mainly by trying to suppress market mechanisms, thus introducing distortions and inefficiencies in resource allocation.

The 1994 and 1995 budgets included a number of fiscal policy changes. Significant streams were created by introducing a value-added tax in January of 1994 and by increasing taxes on crude oil to the refineries in October 1994. Expenditure targets in 1994 were meant to produce a balanced budget but, as in 1993, were vastly exceeded (World Bank Report, 1998). Preliminary estimates indicate that the deficit was over 8% of GDP. The deficit was financed through heavy monetary borrowing and, as a consequence, inflation accelerated to an end-of-year rate of approximately 77% (World Bank Report, 1998). The deficit was also financed by a large accumulation of arrears to joint venture oil companies and to external creditors. These policies were accompanied by an elimination of the autonomous foreign

exchange market and a cap on domestic interest rates. Real GDP growth in 1994 was nearly absent as a consequence of these combined policies.

In 1995, one third of all federally retained revenues came from the new taxes on domestic crude sales. These accrued to an off-budget fund, referred to as the Petrol Special Trust Fund (PSTF), which was controlled by a board of trustees (World Bank, 1998). The privatization program, which had been stagnant since 1992, was suspended and replaced by a new policy offering private firms the opportunity to lease many major public enterprises (World Bank Report, 1998). This new policy was made attractive through the repeal of the 1989 Promotion Decree and the 1962 Exchange Control Act. During this time new decrees were enacted, intended to support private-sector ownership and exchange operation.

Nigeria's tremendous potential for growth and development has yet to be fulfilled. A key constraint has been the recent conduct of macroeconomic policies. These have led to rising inflation, falling growth, and declining real incomes. The public delivery of services is poor and deteriorating. Moreover, there has been little transparency and accountability in the management of public resources. Thus, the issue is not only one of improving economic management, but also of improving overall governance.

Media History of Nigeria

Political independence in Africa since the 1960s witnessed massive investments in modern mass media. There have been the proliferation of mass media facilities in Nigeria since its independence from the shackles and tentacles of colonial oligarchy. The Nigerian press is comparatively young in terms of the world's press system, but by African standards, it is by far the oldest. The press in Nigeria can best be characterized as a specialized interest group. As a "societal watchdog," it remains the most vocal interest group in the country,

since other interest groups channel their demands and support through the press. Ideally the role of the societal watchdog is quite effective in Western democracies, but it is not without its challenges in Nigeria, especially since the press functions in a non-democratic environment where pre-publication and post-publication censorship is prevalent.

The British heavily influence early Nigerian Journalism. Nigeria's first newspaper was published in 1859 by an early European missionary, the Rev. Henry Townsend (Odusanya, 1976). The fact that Townsend had an interest in mass communication and was able to speak Yoruba, the language of the ethnic tribe in the southern part of Nigeria, resulted in his establishing *Iwe Irohin Yoruba* (translated to mean "Yoruba Newspaper"). This newspaper launched the foray of Africa into journalism and served as the Continent's first and oldest native-language newspaper (Hachten, 1971). Townsend's reason for publishing this paper was to increase literacy, while promoting Christian literacy among the Yoruba people (Coker, 1970).

As a native-language publication, its success was unrivaled and in January 1866, an English language edition of *Iwe Irohin* was added (Coker, 1970). With circulation increasing to a more-literate population, the paper expanded its news coverage to include non-religious stories to general news about trade, commerce, sports, education, and other items that were of national significance. Consequently *Iwe Irohin* served as a great critic of both the slave trade and the inter-tribal wars in Nigeria in the 1800s. Today it remains a conservative newspaper, and perhaps this explains why *Iwe Irohin* enjoys relative success and is Nigeria's longest published newspaper and conceivably the most widely read native-language newspaper in the country.

The colonial period also saw the launching of a number of other short-lived newspapers. Most of the papers published during this era were anti-colonialist in content.

Each nationalist paper was supposed to be a vehicle for opposition to colonialist policies. But once Nigeria received her independence, the press became a medium for the struggle of political leadership. In time, the press had ceased to be an oppositional press and had to assume a contributory responsibility in the lofty task of transformation that was ushered in at independence.

Post-independence Nigeria also ushered in the era of government-owned newspapers and national newspapers that included the *West African Pilot*, the *Daily Times*, the *Nigerian Outlook* and provincial papers as the *Eastern Nigerian Guardian*, and the *Nigerian Spokesman* (Coker, 1970). In terms of editorial content the *West African Pilot* seemed to lead the way but as a successful commercial venture, the *Daily Times* was in first place.

However, publication of some of these newspapers, which included the *West African Pilot*, along with its offspring like the *Nigerian Spokesman*, the *Eastern Nigerian Guardian*, and the *Comet*, was short lived. They ceased publication because they were unable to adapt to changing conditions (Coker, 1970). Nigeria has had an endless list of newspapers some of which still exist today, such as the *Daily Times*, and *Punch*. Nevertheless, Nigerian newspapers (and newsmagazines) have made their impact on Nigerian society, as they are the strongest feature of and supporter for democracy (Aboaba, 1979; Ainslie, 1966; Coleman, 1971).

Newsmagazines, on the other hand, were late to bloom in Nigeria compared to newspapers. Although there were some magazines established in the 1960s, the new era of magazine publication did not officially begin until the 1980s through the 1990s. The Daily Times Group, which also published a daily newspaper, was one of the first to publish a magazine, the first of which was a woman's magazine, *Spear*, published in 1962 (Duyile, 1987). *Spear* was considered one of the leading magazines of its time and it enjoyed a

monopoly because of its choice of news and articles. But by 1986, it ceased publication. A few other magazines such as *Drum* rounded out the roster during this period. Their circulation was short lived and publication ceased due to decreasing readership.

The 1980s marked perhaps an era in which there was the largest concentration of newsmagazines, most of which were privately owned by former journalists, oil barons, and millionaires. Among these was Dele Giwa (a former journalist) of *Newswatch*, Chief M.K.O. Abiola (who would later feature prominently in Nigeria's politics), owner of the Concord Press that published *African Concord*, and Chief Chris Okolie, who published both *The President* and *Newsbreed*. Alex Ibru, publisher of *African Guardian*, and Gamaliel Onosode, Chairman of *This Week Magazine*, rounded out the circle of prominent publishers (Duyile, 1987).

History of Newswatch, African Guardian, and Tell

Newswatch, Nigeria's first weekly newsmagazine published its inaugural issue in December 1984 (Duyile, 1987). Dele Giwa, who was the Chief Executive and Publisher, established the magazine. He had joint ownership with three prominent and widely read journalists, Dan Agbese, Ray Ekpu, and Yakubu Muhammed (Duyile, 1987). Early controversies at *Newswatch* had conferred on it the status symbol of a leader in investigative journalism (Duyile, 1987). The financial setup and the democratic shareholding policy of the company gave *Newswatch* its initial strength. Each one of founding partner controlled a 15% equity share of the company. Together they held 60% while the other 40% share was held by members of staff and other interests (Duyile, 1987). This was an unusual ownership structure for a Nigerian magazine.

Although lauded for its approach to journalism, in October 1986 the investigative reporting in Nigeria took a tragic turn when Dele Giwa, founding editor of *Newswatch*, the country's then-foremost newsmagazine, was killed when he opened a letter bomb. There was speculation that the letter was sent on orders of a top official of the military regime in power. The murder of Giwa, who was regarded as an outspoken and tenacious investigative journalist, was seen as a veiled message to the press and a coded warning to other journalists who might have been inspired to take up investigative journalism. The death of Dele Giwa marked the beginning of the Military's interventions in the administration of *Newswatch*.

Giwa's death did not stop nor prevent *Newswatch* reporters from continuing in their relentless pursuit of reporting on issues related to corruption within the Military. Moreover, in April 1987, the military government banned the newsmagazine. The government had proscribed it due to what was considered illegal and irresponsible action of the management of *Newswatch* magazine. An article that leaked the contents of a government report on Nigeria's political future had riled the government. However, after a much-publicized apology from the editors of the magazine, the ban on *Newswatch* was lifted on August 28, 1987.

This did not mark the end of *Newswatch*'s encounters with the government. The editors and contributing journalists for the magazine were arrested on subsequent occasions for violating a number of decrees or committing treason against the government. This characterized the relationship of *Newswatch* journalists with the government in the 1980s and through much of the 1990s. The Military's proprietary rights over a large section of the press invariably threatened the press's autonomy. Moreover, repressive measures such as draconian decrees successfully silenced and regulated the press on all fronts.

Notwithstanding, today *Newswatch* is still a major journalistic force to reckon with in Nigeria.

An equally important newsmagazine in the history of Nigerian journalism was the *African Guardian*. The *African Guardian* was established by Alex Ibru, a wealthy Nigerian businessman, who owns the Guardian newspapers. He ventured into the newspaper business as a matter of taste and conviction (Duyile, 1987). His great admiration for the *Guardian of London* newspaper is said to have contributed to his adopting the name “Guardian” for his newspapers and magazines (Duyile, 1987).

The Guardian newspaper debuted on February 27, 1983. It started as a weekly paper appearing only on Sundays; and on July 4, it began to circulate as a daily newspaper.

The *African Guardian* magazine began weekly publication on November 29, 1985. Alex Ibru (1985), the publisher, proclaimed in one of its premier issues the following:

Unto us today is born a baby. We deliver as promised a beautiful one. The *African Guardian* magazine—the one piercing maiden voice will report Africa to the world and the world to Africa, every week (p. 1).

As Ibru (1985) further declared, *African Guardian* was responding to the challenges of a New World Information and Communication Order and to counter the stereotypical images of Africa and the Black Diaspora (Ibru, 1985). He stated that his magazine would be neutral on issues concerning the political, social, and cultural destiny of Africa and the Black Diaspora. Ibru identified *African Guardian* as a liberal magazine, committed to the highest ideals of democracy in which the masses of the people have a meaningful role in determining their destiny (Ibru, 1985, p. 5).

But publication of *African Guardian* was short lived and not without the intervention of government agents who made regular visits to their offices several times

during 1993. The magazine editors were charged with treason and seditious portrayal of the government. In 1994, *African Guardian*, the magazine, was proscribed by the government and has since ceased publication. In February 1996, the publisher of *African Guardian*, Alex Ibru, narrowly escaped an assassination attempt (Jukwey, 1996). The reason for the attack was Ibru's attempt to present an accurate portrayal of the politics and corruption that characterized the military government in his other media outlet, *The Guardian*—the newspaper.

Despite government proscription of some newsmagazines in the 1980s, the 1990s witnessed the introduction of another magazine. In 1992, *Tell* magazine was first published. In fact it was widely believed and reported that *Tell* was established to be a more challenging and critical publication, given the level of government intervention in *Newswatch*'s operations especially with pre-publication and post-publication censorship. Ironically, the founding editors of *Tell* were five journalists who had previously worked for *Newswatch*, Nigeria's first weekly newsmagazine (Dare, 1996). These journalists included Nosa Igiebor, Kola Ilori, Onome-Osifo-Whiskey, Ayodele Akinkuoto, and Dare Babarinsa (Dare, 1996).

Within the first year of publication, *Tell* had gained a reputation as a leader in interrogating Ibrahim Babangida in his administration's unwillingness to hand over power to a civilian government (Dare, 1996). The magazine's popularity soared preceding the 1993 presidential election and in the turbulent aftermath. The magazine's print run was as high as 100,000 copies a week at the time (Dare, 1996). In time, *Tell* became one of the Babangida regime's favorite targets. In April 1993, after the magazine published an interview with former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo in which General Babangida was depicted as a fraud, the magazine was placed under surveillance for four months (Media Review, 1993). Thousands of copies of the magazine were seized and on several occasions its

journalist were assaulted (Media Review, 1993). This consistent pressure from the government forced *Tell* to begin printing underground in July of 1993 (Media Review, 1993). However on August 15, 1993, state security agents ransacked the magazine's offices and detained editor Igiebor, executive editor Kola Ilori, managing editor Onome Osifo-Whiskey, and senior associate editor Ayodele Akinkuoto for 12 days (Media Review, 1993).

When the editors were finally released on August 27, 1993, it was the dawn of a new administration. General Babangida handed over power on August 26, 1993, to the interim government of Ernest Shonekan. The end of the Babangida regime was a welcome break for *Tell*, but the magazine remained under surveillance by the security forces through Shonekan's short reign. This continued even after General Sani Abacha seized power.

Today *Tell* is the number one magazine in Nigeria and has a circulation of 200,000 copies per week in Nigeria (Media Review, August, 2000). Nevertheless, its tenuous relationship with the government continues.

Chapter 6

Semiotic Analysis of Nigerian Political Cartoons

Third World politics have been marked by considerable conflict and unrest often related to class and ethnic divisions. In Nigeria, ethnic and regional splits have been paramount. Faced with weak political institutions and instability, the military has often intervened in politics to create political order and/or to further its own institutional interests. While military rule sometimes offers short-term advantages, its overall effect is to undermine political development. In recent decades the Nigerian military has ruled the country most of the time, claiming to fight corruption and promote stability. In fact, military rule has intensified corruption and brought substantial repression of the people and journalists who have published investigative reports. Like most of Africa, Nigeria suffers from a multiplicity of such problems with little hope of significant improvement. It is within this political climate that Nigerian political cartoons began to thrive as they became a safe means of commenting on the political issues of the day.

In recent years, researchers have shown interest in analyzing political cartoons as a subtle form of political communication that rivals editorials in newsmagazines and newspapers. In some cases, political cartoons are perceived as packing a more potent punch than editorials, since they are not bound by the norms of conventional media. In a country where freedom of the press is limited, the powerful image that a political cartoon depicts is more telling of the political climate at any given time as compared to a printed editorial.

Through a semiotic framework, this chapter aims to explore the workings of semiotics in various Nigerian political cartoons focusing primarily on political cartoons published, from 1993-1996, in three of Nigeria's most widely read news magazines. This

period marked a critical time in Nigeria's political history. By examining these political cartoons, this chapter will illustrate how political cartoons create meaning in a politically unstable environment.

Political cartoons use a myriad of regular verbal tools or literary *faux pas* such as puns, mixed metaphors, metonymy, synecdoche, and non-sequiturs. They are used as subtle tools of "suggestion" where no specific thing has to be delineated visually or told verbally in order to make a point. The power of suggestion implied in political cartoons is enormous because it allows the reader to use his or her own mind and imagine what personally would be most outrageous or funny.

In addressing the first two research questions of what are the recurring themes/issues depicted in the Nigerian political cartoons in this study, and how the themes and issues are depicted, the analysis begins with an identification of the thematic content/issues in the political cartoons. This is followed by a discussion of the themes as signs (both the denotative and connotative aspects). After this, the binary oppositions within the cartoons are discussed. Identifying the intertextualities and applying hermeneutic analysis to select cartoons address Research question 3. These serve as a framework for explicating the structure of political cartoons. The specific cartoons analyzed and discussed herein are illustrative of how connotative analysis, binary oppositions, intertextuality are used in creating structure in cartoon. What this suggests is that this framework can be applied to any of the cartoons.

The Nigerian political cartoons in this study are categorized into two thematic groupings: substantive and non-substantive themes. The two categories were loosely based on the model used by Koetzle and Brunell (1996) in a study where they categorized the evaluative contents of editorial cartoons published during the United States 1992 presidential

campaign. To this end, substantive themes are herein defined as cartoons that address real policy issues and concerns (i.e., economy, domestic policy, human rights, press freedom, foreign relations, and democratic governance). As RePass (1971) argues, substantive policy issues are those confined to broad hot-button issues like the economy, war and peace, and corruption. These issues are substantive because they resonate with the public at large. Non-substantive issues are defined as those cartoons that deal with stylistic qualities (i.e., depictions of government officials, politician's and Nigerian citizen's characteristics and behavior, election issues, and campaign strategies).

A codebook was developed based on the two categories outlined in the previous paragraph. Twenty political cartoons were randomly selected from the sample to insure intercoder reliability. Two graduate students who were familiar with the political history of Nigeria coded the political cartoons. Category reliabilities were computed between the two coders. The validity of the coding was determined by calculating the number of times they agreed on coding the themes of the cartoons. The results of this procedure indicate an intercoder reliability of $\pm .85$. These are the dimensions against which these Nigerian political cartoons were classified.

The aggregate frequency for each of the newsmagazines and how the issues were categorized under substantive and non-substantive themes provide interesting results. Some of the general characteristics that occur in these political cartoons are reported as follows. Out of ninety-nine (N=99) political cartoons, *Newsweek* cartoons represented 44% (n=44) of the sample, followed by *Tell* with 42% (n=42) and *African Guardian* with 13% (n=13) of the total political cartoons.

The results also indicate that overwhelmingly the political cartoons focused on substantive themes and to a lesser degree on non-substantive themes. Overall, 80% of the

political cartoons focused on substantive themes, which included the following issues: Economy, Domestic Policy, Human Rights, Press Freedom, Foreign Policy, and Democratic Governance. Clearly all the magazines adopted a definite pro-substantive tone in presenting political cartoons. Only 19% of the political cartoons depicted non-substantive themes such as Electoral Strategies and Military and Politician's Characteristics and Behavior. For the most part, cartoon references to these issues are graphically brief yet invite a range of interpretation that presupposes an understanding and knowledge of the history of Nigeria, both political and socio-cultural. Tables 4 and 5 present a comparative breakdown of the thematic content of cartoons by newsmagazines.

Several patterns emerge from the substantive theme analysis in Table 4. The newsmagazines tended to vary in what themes they emphasized and these differences were sometime significant. First, *Newswatch* (40.4%) was more likely to depict substantive themes than *Tell* (31%) or *African Guardian* (9%). Second, three of the substantive themes received no coverage in some of the magazines. For instance, a sizable percentage of the cartoons concentrated on the issue of "Democratic Governance" (See Table 4) as evidenced by *Newswatch* (37.5%), *Tell* (51.6%) and *African Guardian* (54.5%). Another issue that received considerable attention was the issue of "Domestic Policy" in *Newswatch* (22.5%) and *Tell* (25.8%), while *African Guardian* cartoonists did not focus on this issue at all. In other instances some issues were not depicted; for example "Economy" and "Press Freedom" were not depicted in *Tell*, nor were "Domestic Policy" and "Human Rights" in *African Guardian*. In *Newswatch* the political cartoons did not depict "Economy," but 1% of the cartoons in *Tell* and *African Guardian* did.

TABLE 4

Substantive Thematic Content of Editorial Cartoons						
Cartoons (%)						
	<u>Newswatch</u>	<u>%of Total</u>	<u>Tell</u>	<u>%of Total</u>	<u>African Guardian</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
<u>Substantive Issues</u>						
Economy	6 (15%)	6%	-		1 (11%)	1%
Domestic Policy	9 (22.5%)	9%	8 (25.8%)	8%	-	
Human Rights	5 (12.5%)	5%	3 (9.6%)	3%	-	
Press Freedom	5 (12.5%)	5%	-		1 (11%)	1%
Foreign Policy	-		4 (12.9%)	4%	1 (11%)	1%
Democratic Governance	15 (37.5%)	15%	16 (51.6%)	16%	6 (66.6%)	6%
Total	40 (40.4%)		31 (31.31%)		9 (9%)	

In Table 5, the analysis of non-substantive issues reveals that political cartoons in *Tell Magazine* were twice as likely to depict non-substantive themes (11%) versus *Newswatch* (4%) and *African Guardian* (4%). *Newswatch* cartoons did not depict “Electoral Strategies” in comparison to *Tell* (36.3%) and *African Guardian* (100%).

TABLE 5

Non-Substantive Thematic Content of Editorial Cartoons						
Cartoons (%)						
	<u>Newswatch</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Tell</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>African Guardian</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
<u>Non-Substantive Issues</u>						
Electoral Strategies	-		4(36.3%)	4%	4 (100%)	4%
Military and Politicians	4 (100%)	4%	7 (63.6%)	7%	-	
Characteristics & Behavior						
Total	4 (4%)		11 (11%)		4(4%)	

This analysis and comparison offers a look at the different treatment given to themes by political cartoons in three Nigerian newsmagazines. Furthermore, it also identifies which newsmagazines were most likely to focus on one issue over another. Not all types of themes

appeared in newsmagazines with the same regularity. Perhaps there was a bias in the coverage of certain issues by some of the editorial policy, but this was not a focus of the analysis, and one could not be readily determined without more in-depth analysis that would take into consideration possible intervening factors.

Yet a more comprehensive and qualitative analysis of the political cartoons offers another reading. As information from these various cartoons is accumulated, it reveals in many ways, certain themes that have characterized the Nigerian political landscape. This dissertation suggests that the task of analyzing these political cartoons can be furthered through discussion of the themes as signs. An accurate understanding of the cartoons is dependent on knowledge of the beliefs that were reflected in the institutions of the time. The broad range of historical information helps to address patterns and themes in these political cartoons. Although grounded in history, it should not be read as a history lesson that provides a detailed narrative or analysis of what has actually occurred and how it is portrayed in these cartoons. Thus, while patterns and recurring themes may be discussed, a solid appreciation of their implications is generally acquired only through experience or through a discussion of history and cartoons as a sign system.

Political cartoons seem to have a narrow range of graphical illustrations, but even within the narrow range we can find examples of different kinds of signs; the different pictures refer to entities in the world in quite different ways. We can look to semiotics for ways of defining these differences through the following: indexical references based on a link to the referent, iconic references based on resemblance, and symbolic references based on arbitrary conventions (Noth, 1995).

Indexical signs are linked directly to the thing referred to. The lip-shaped red print on a cheek or sheet of paper is taken as a sign of a kiss because it is supposed to be the mark

lipstick leaves behind. Another way a picture can refer to something is by resembling it, as a cartoon illustration resembles a person; these are referred to as iconic signs. In many of these cartoons, we will see standard icons that help represent certain individuals. This is what helps assure accessibility for the reader of the cartoons. Once this resemblance is established, the image becomes conventionalized and will be read unambiguously. On the other hand, a symbolic sign can refer to a referent because of some arbitrary convention treated as an agreement between people. The usual examples are from language, where words generally have an arbitrary relation to things. These three ways of referring— as an index, an icon, or a symbol—offer good categories for most purposes. But in any real example one may see some blurring of the distinctions. Signs, therefore, can be on the border between two kinds of representation, and can be conventionalized so that they are read as symbolic, not iconic. Also, any one figure can incorporate examples of different categories of signs. For instance, cartoons include indexical, iconic, and symbolic signs without impairing the reader's comprehension. The challenge for any reader of cartoons is the socio-cultural aspect of that particular country, which may not be readily apparent by viewing the illustrations. But as Berger (1995) argues, cartoons are visual signifiers and the meanings these drawings generate are their signified. Basically cartoonists turn concepts into graphical representations that the readers will understand and find amusing.

Although substantive and non-substantive themes are discussed below separately, they should not be regarded in isolation. They are, in fact, closely interrelated.

Substantive Themes

Economy

As a theme, the “Economy” was referenced in the cartoons. At the time of the cartoons’ publication, most African countries were restructuring their economies and many saw democracy as a means to reform. Without a democratic base, most development-oriented countries could not move forward and quite often the support and goodwill needed from the international community to achieve the desired level of economic growth was not forthcoming. Nigeria until then was an undisputed leader. But this leadership role appeared to be contestable in the face of emerging political developments across the continent.

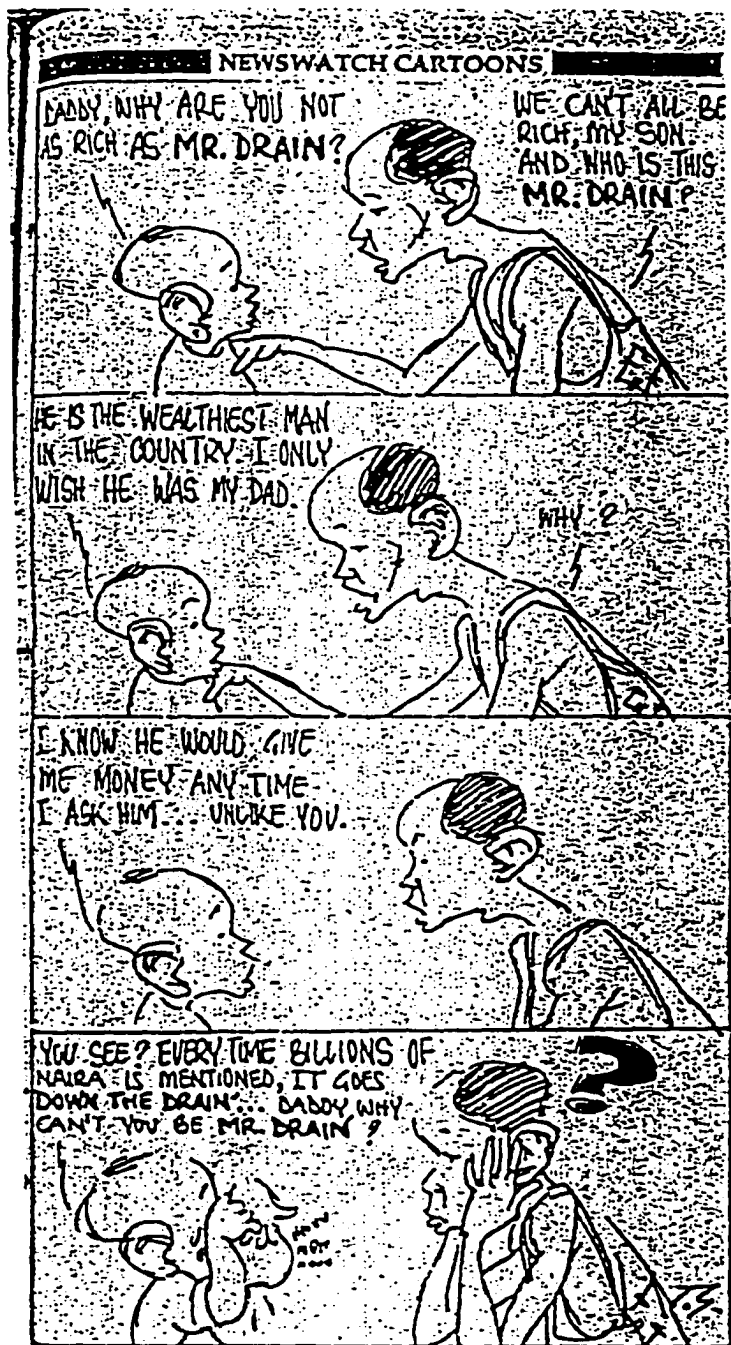
Nigeria’s economic potential for years lay in its resources and a vast capacity for economic growth, but poor governance that had hindered development had marred this. Nigeria, in 1994 was a primary U.S. trading partner in Africa (Adams, 1994). It was the fifth-largest supplier of imported oil to the United States. Nigeria had abundant natural resources and substantial human resources in the form of an educated urban elite, innovative entrepreneurs, and private-sector participants with knowledge of international business standards and practices. Its deposit of natural gas may be the world’s largest and could power not only its own growth but also all of West Africa’s. Nigeria’s agricultural potential remained largely untapped and could provide jobs and food for Nigerians and others. However, years of poor incentives, limited access to credit and technology, and a negative investment environment had taken a heavy toll on the economy.

Nigeria’s economy had been relatively stagnant and inflation prone since 1992 (Adams, 1994). It was constrained by top-down, ineffective but pervasive state control and intervention. Nigeria’s state-run economic structures had been reinforced with rigorous military discipline. Corruption has become institutionalized into the fabric of society at all

levels. A fundamental issue that had grave implications for the business climate of Nigeria was the uncertainty created by political crisis. This led to continued economic decline with dire consequences. Nigeria's huge external debt is depicted a number of times in these cartoons—a debt that was estimated at between \$28 billion and \$35 billion (Adams, 1994).

At this point, it is useful to look at a specific example about the “Economy” (Fig. 1). In this cartoon, a young boy asked his father why he was not as rich as Mr. Drain. The father quite curiously asked who Mr. Drain was. The boy answered that he was the wealthiest man in the country. The boy told his dad that he wished that Mr. Drain were his Daddy because if he needed money, he would be given some. He goes on to say that “every time billions of naira (Nigerian currency) is mentioned, it goes down the drain.” The father is perplexed by his son's response. Denotatively speaking, this appeared to be a conversation between a child and his father. However, connotatively the word “Drain” had taken on an economic meaning in Nigeria since the Military took over ruling Nigeria. The waste of public funds as a result of poor management, importation of heavy equipment that lies unused for years, and many uncompleted projects created opportunities for many Nigerians to wash away millions and billions of Naira and dollars down “the drain.”

Figure 1



The word, “Economy” itself is also part and parcel of everyday speech in Nigeria. There is also an implicit message of an economic model of greed—no one engages in trade simply for the enjoyment of performing the task. Trade is done for acquiring gains, profits, and wealth. For that matter, all economic activities are engaged in for some personal gains—either in the short term or in the long term. Each person, under the system, tries to maximize his or her gains at the expense of another person in any trade transaction. The system, as a whole, tries to maximize the division of labor, division of knowledge and division of ownership in order to empower the system itself. The system also promotes the maximum inter-dependencies among individuals, families, and communities. Greed has become greed for the sake of greed, greed for the sake of power, which create classes of haves and have-nots at the national level.

Judith Williamson (1982) was most concerned with decoding the connotative meaning of advertisements. The connotative meaning takes the consumer beyond the deceptively simple initial message of the ad, which is purely promoting a product (p. 266). Similarly political cartoons can be said to take the reader beyond the simple initial message. Much like advertisements, political cartoons promote lifestyles and values. However, although this political cartoon also promotes an implicit desire of economic independence, its reading or interpretation depends on the individual situation of the person reading the cartoon.

The father in this cartoon is portrayed dressed like a pauper. His clothes are slack and he has a patch over what was perhaps a gaping hole. His neck is long and thin—a symbol of vulnerability and helplessness. In comparison the child is in a complete state of dependence and vulnerability. The height of the image of the child further exaggerates the

fantasy quality of what the child longs for. Perhaps of greatest significance is the expression on the faces of our two subjects. The man has a stern look of composure as he gazes down at the child. This political cartoon as a whole, with all these connotations included, becomes a sign for the signified meaning of “economic emancipation.” Economic emancipation is equated with control.

Newswatch, the newsmagazine in which this cartoon appears, is a widely read magazine among Nigerian citizens. The editorial stance of investigative journalism that blows open the ills of the military government purportedly mirrors that of its readers. These readers are mainly citizens wanting economic emancipation and democratic government. The depiction of this type cartoon in this issue is intended to relay to the reader that the cartoons in this magazine will attempt to relate to him or her. The images depicted in the political cartoons “work to signify and underline the ideology” (Barthes, 1957, p. 180).

Domestic Policy

“Domestic policy” as a theme entails a number of issues, most notably corruption, ethnic unrest, and environmental encroachment. Endemic corruption is not found only at the apex of government, but permeated every level of the state. The culture of kickbacks, bribery, and embezzlement has encouraged mismanagement and wasted huge amounts of limited national resources. It also has fueled political instability by placing a high premium on the control of state offices. Corruption as an undercurrent in the discussion of domestic policy is a major inhibitor of democratic development, especially when it is prevalent at the highest levels of government. Bribery is used to neutralize leading politicians who have self-selected themselves to represent the people of Nigeria and to act on their behalf. Intimidation, violence, and murder suppress many of those who want to act in a way to raise

their voices against corruption. Such phenomena served to rupture the democratic process in Nigeria.

Corruption also hinders political and economic transparency, necessary in a democracy. Key decisions are made secretly by a few top Military officials for their own benefit. The majority of Nigerians are excluded from the political mechanisms that govern their lives. Corruption holds back economic reforms and the development of a true market economy from which the majority can benefit because the status quo is the one convenient to those reaping the profits of corruption. Although some Western companies have undoubtedly taken part in corrupt activities, most have been dismayed by the adverse business environment fostered by corruption.

Another component of the “Domestic Policy” theme is ethnic tensions. Nigeria, like most countries in Africa, is an amalgamation of some 250 different ethnic groups with varying cultures. Competition for power and resources among the three main ethnic groupings—the Hausa-Fulani in the north, the Yoruba in the southwest, and the Ibo in the southeast—has contributed to a turbulent political history that has helped to stall national economic development. In recent years, a fourth dimension has been added to Nigeria’s tripartite competition. Smaller ethnic groups in the Niger Delta, where most of the country’s oil reserves lie, have become increasingly restive, demanding political self-determination and a greater share of Nigeria’s oil revenue. Despite the billions of petrodollars (as the revenue is often referred to) collected by governments over the past decades, little has been done to improve living conditions in the oil-producing areas, where inhabitants are among the poorest people in Nigeria. Angry at their neglect and the environmental degradation of their land, growing numbers of communities in the Niger Delta have attacked the

installations of multinational oil firms operating in their midst, causing serious and costly disruption to oil production.

The Niger Delta region has also been fraught with ethnic unrest, partially as a result of environmental destruction in the area. The Ogonis, an ethnic group that predominates in the region, protested that not only have foreign oil firms degraded the local environment, but that the Nigerian Federal Government also has acquiesced by not enforcing environmental laws and regulations. Clashes between tribal groups and security forces resulted in several deaths, as well as many disruptions in oil production.

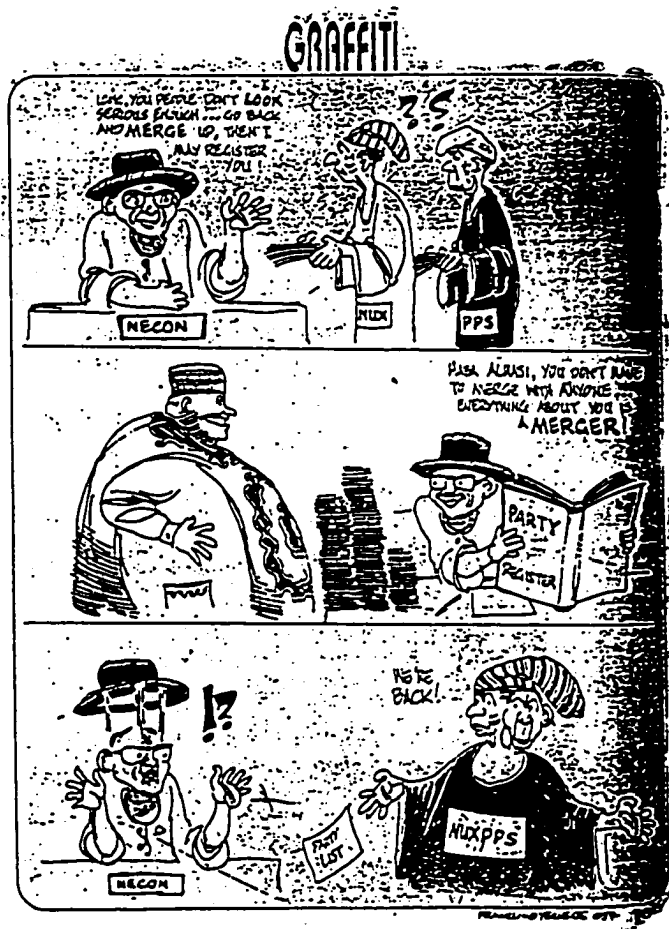
In this political cartoon (Fig. 2) depicted are various subsets of the "Domestic Policy" themes, most notably corruption and ethnic division. The first frame shows two men, both of them Nigerian Chiefs², one a Yoruba man and the other an Ibo man, each of them representing a political party. They are holding the documents listing members of their respective political party associations (NUX and PPS) and are asking to be registered by Chief Dagogo Jack, Chairman of the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON). He is iconically identified by the big hat that has become his trademark.

Chief Dagogo Jack gave the two men a stiff condition before they could be registered, and that was for both associations, "NUX" and "PPS," to merge as one association, and lose their separate political party affiliations. In the middle frame, an Alhaji³, from Northern Nigeria (as can be deduced from his embroidered flowing gown with the cap—another iconic sign), approaches Chief Dagogo Jack, with money and without

² This is a status symbol in the Nigerian society. It is a tribal title of high honor that is conferred on important individuals who have made significant contributions to their community.

³ Alhaji means that he has completed a religious pilgrimage to Mecca, in Saudi Arabia. Women who have completed a similar pilgrimage are known as Alhaja.

Figure 2



asking, hands over the list of party members in his attempt to register his party.

Connotatively, the plump depiction of the politician in the second frame defines greed and corruption—he has been fattened by greed and corruption. But since the Alhaji has satisfied the unwritten criteria of bribery, he did not need to merge with anyone. That is why Chief Jack utters the expression, “Everything about you is a MERGER!” His political association, without further delay, is now registered as an approved political party. In the last frame of the cartoon, the two political associations whose representatives came to see Chief Dagogo Jack in the first frame have returned having merged their two political associations as required by the Commission. They also submit to Chief Jack one list of the party register. With their hands at their side and nothing but the party register, they are suggesting to Chief Jack that there was no bribe to be given. Chief Jack is portrayed with a disappointed and shocked look on his face because they had not only merged but there was no bribery brought forward. Denoted by Chief Jack’s stretched-out fingers is the conventional hand signal, “Give me ten (the thousand Naira, or 100 thousand Naira) or Forget it”.

The publication date of the cartoon helps contextualize the events in the cartoon as providing background to the illustrations. The Electoral Commission had just completed its assignment of registering Political Parties that would contest in future elections in Nigeria. At this time, political associations comprised of politicians who were members of previously registered political parties of the immediate past were banned by the government. Political parties also had to conform to criteria of tribal diversity. One tribal group could not overwhelmingly represent a party. As a result party registers became part of the application process. However, even if associations did not conform to criteria of membership diversity,

there was another shadow criterion, more important to the Commission than any other, namely, the payment of a large sum of money as bribe to the commission.

Connotatively, this cartoon accurately depicts what often transpires between the ruling elite and politicians and the level of intense corruption and ethnic tensions that permeates Nigeria. The differences between the body types of the politicians in this cartoon on the denotative level do not really represent different masculine types. It is only when we make use of our cultural knowledge that we actually see how they vary.

Semiotics argues that in order to understand the sign, the codes and conventions need to be understood, the difference between denotative and connotative analysis must be comprehended, and the viewer must share the cultural knowledge of the society for which the visual product, in this case the cartoon, the sign was intended.

Human Rights

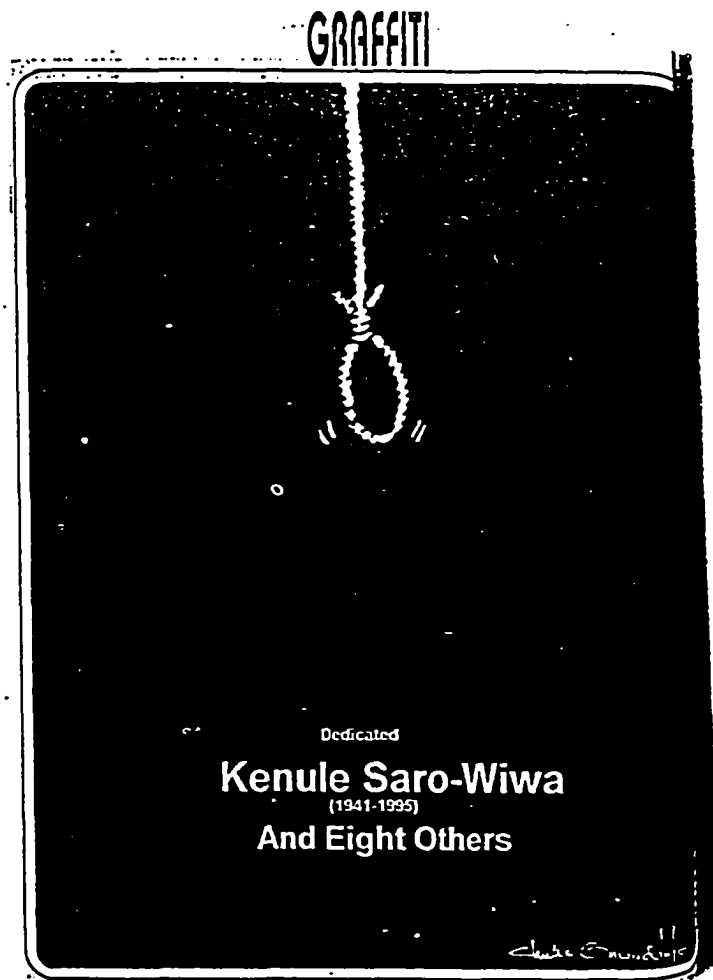
Nigeria's most atrocious human rights violations during this period (1993-1996) were the detention without trial and judicial killings of many, including some journalists. Under a 1994 decree, the Inspector General of Police has the power to detain a person considered a risk to security for up to six months. In general, human rights work is viewed by the military government as an anti-government activity.

Nigeria became a pariah state shortly after the Nigerian military regime executed nine human rights activists amid worldwide calls for clemency. The trial and eventual execution of the nine human rights activists stemmed from the struggle of the people in Ogoni-land against the deprivation and exploitation of their land by multi-national oil companies, in this case Shell. Ken Saro-Wiwa, as leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), had been instrumental in shaping the organization into a

powerful and vocal opposition to the military regime and was no doubt a thorn in the side of Abacha. At the time of his execution, MOSOP was enjoying strong support in Ogoni-land and was able to effectively draw international attention to their cause.

Throughout the period, Abacha's government relied regularly on arbitrary detention and harassment to silence its most outspoken critics. The winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election, Chief M. K.O. Abiola, remained in detention on charges of treason, as did prominent politician Olu Falae, pro-democracy activist Fredrick Fasehun, and several others. In this cartoon, the violation of human rights by the Military is drawn by a powerful visual indicator of a noose (Fig. 3). Taken at face value it is representative of a hanging. Connotatively, it signifies the ultimate submission to authority through the mechanism of death. The immediate message conveyed by this cartoon is that Nigeria's Military rulers will stop at nothing to silence those that oppose their governance. Images such as these imply what is normal and acceptable in Nigerian society and how its citizens are meant to behave. This view implies the dominant ideology of Military oppression.

Figure 3



Press Freedom

The Nigerian military, which has ruled Africa's most populous country for 28 of the 41 years since independence in 1960, are traditionally impatient with criticism and typically resistant to change. Consequently, conditions facing the press were not likely to change dramatically in Nigeria, where more journalists were jailed than in any other country in Africa. During General Abacha's regime, journalists in Nigeria suffered inordinately. General Abacha's five-year rule exacerbated the deep and historic divisions—those of ethnicity, politics, religion, and economics—that have long characterized the history of Nigeria.

In Fig. 4, the cartoonist depicts a journalist asking General Abacha to tell him when he would vacate the office of the President. This question is asked in the name of the people. In the third frame, General Abacha asked the journalist if his newspaper was registered. In the last frame, General Abacha asked pointedly, "Are you registered?" The implication of this question is clear to the journalist and would be more clearly understood by the proprietor of the newspaper that he represents. A closure of the newspaper company in question may be in the newspaper's immediate future, given the type of question posed by this journalist.

Restrictions on media freedom are among the most serious impediments to a genuine transition to democracy. Print and broadcast journalists, editors, and publishers have a key role to play in disseminating information regarding political parties, candidates, platforms, registration, and voting procedures. The presentation of various political viewpoints fosters a free exchange of ideas about the transition process, but not in Nigeria. This cartoon masks the reality of the ideology of intimidation by the Military on the press. It also symbolizes the fragile relationship between the two.

Figure 4



Under General Abacha's regime, the government appeared more interested in narrowing the spectrum of public debate by maintaining an elaborate framework of media decrees.

A number of media decrees relate specifically to the transition program. For example, the Offensive Publications (Proscription) Decree No. 35 of 1993 provides for the proscription, seizure and confiscation of any publication likely to "disrupt the process of democracy and peaceful transition to civil rule, having regard to its contents; or hinder or prevent the progress and process of grass roots democracy as established by the transition to civil rule program; or disturb the peace and public order of Nigeria" (Media Review, 1996). Decree No. 35 also circumscribes the jurisdiction of courts to prevent them from addressing alleged violations of fundamental rights as a result of banning orders (Media Review, 1996). The government imposed oppressive registration requirements on newspapers and broadcasting establishments under the Newspapers Decree No. 43 of 1993 and the Nigerian Press Council Decree No. 85 of 1992. Additionally, a government-appointed National Broadcasting Commission, with authority to advise the government on the issuance of radio and television licenses, was established under Decree No. 38 of 1992 (Media Review, 1996). Where an applicant fails to persuade the Commission that it seeks to promote national interest, unity, and cohesion, the Commission may deny or revoke its license. The vagueness of this standard creates the potential for arbitrary revocations on political grounds—the point made in Fig. 4.

The Abacha regime relied on these and other laws to justify harassment, arbitrary detention, and prolonged detention of journalists, editors, and publishers who are perceived as opponents of the government. Chris Anyanwu, editor-in-chief and publisher of *TSM* (The

Sunday Magazine); Kunle Ajibade, editor, *The News*; Mr. George Mbah, assistant editor, *Tell*; and Mr. Ben Charles-Obi, editor, *Classique*, were arrested, secretly tried, and convicted by a special military tribunal for being “accessories after the fact to treason” after they published articles questioning the authenticity of the alleged coup plot of March 1995 (Olaniyan, 1997). They were sentenced to fifteen years in jail in mid-1995.

When General Abacha became Head of State of Nigeria in November 1993, another of his major actions was the setting up of a commission for the registration of all newspapers, periodicals, and magazines in the country. Abacha knew that opposition to his action would come primarily from the Southwest, which had a great number of newspaper houses and which he felt had too much press freedom under his predecessor in office, the retired General Babangida. He also knew that media houses from the Southwest would refuse to register with the commission. This would therefore give him an excuse to reduce their number and thereby prevent or reduce criticisms of his government’s policies and actions.

Foreign Policy

“Foreign policy” for any nation defines how that nation relates to strangers—to those who are outside the state or who are alien inside the state. The prevailing perception in Nigeria’s foreign policy was that, as a predominant African leader, Nigeria, a founding member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) often channeled major policy initiatives through that Organization (Odinkalu, 1996). Most of its relations with other African states took place outside the OAU framework, but were guided by OAU principles. Nigeria’s primary African commitment was to liberate the continent from the remnants of colonialism and to eradicate apartheid in South Africa. Nigeria’s foreign policy was

domesticated in nature in that it was limited to African states and not linked to a global foreign policy (Odinkalu, 1996).

To this end, Nigeria had played a role in the independence of Zimbabwe and in the late 1980s was active in assisting Namibia to achieve independence. Nigeria also contributed financially to liberation movements in South Africa and to the frontline states of Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, which were constantly harassed by South Africa. Although Nigeria's armed forces were among the largest in Africa in the early 1990s, sizable military might was rarely used in foreign policy. The army participated in peacekeeping forces, either alone or through the OAU, and contributed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping missions (Odinkalu, 1996).

In Fig. 5, the scene depicted by the cartoonist is the World Court in The Hague, Netherlands. The cartoon shows the international court in session. The first case to be heard is a Land dispute, but in each case a colonial master is missing. The second case is a Racial dispute. The third frame captures the Bakassi dispute. The court is sitting to hear arguments for the ownership of the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula, which is being claimed by two countries, Nigeria and the neighboring Cameroon. President Mitterrand of France, with his imposing figure, stands close to Mr. Biya (President of Cameroon) and at a distance from General Abacha of Nigeria. Cameroon was colonized by France, explaining why President Mitterrand is included in the cartoon. However, the fact that Mitterrand is in the cartoon also speaks to the fact that French Imperialism was still present in Cameroon, suggesting that Nigeria had completely cut its ties to British Colonialism and was independent.

Figure 5



Democratic Governance

Maintenance of democratic governance in Nigeria has proven to be particularly problematic since independence in 1960. Nigeria has been under Military rule for 27 of 41 years of independence and attempts at transition to democratic rule have failed a number of times, most recently in 1993.

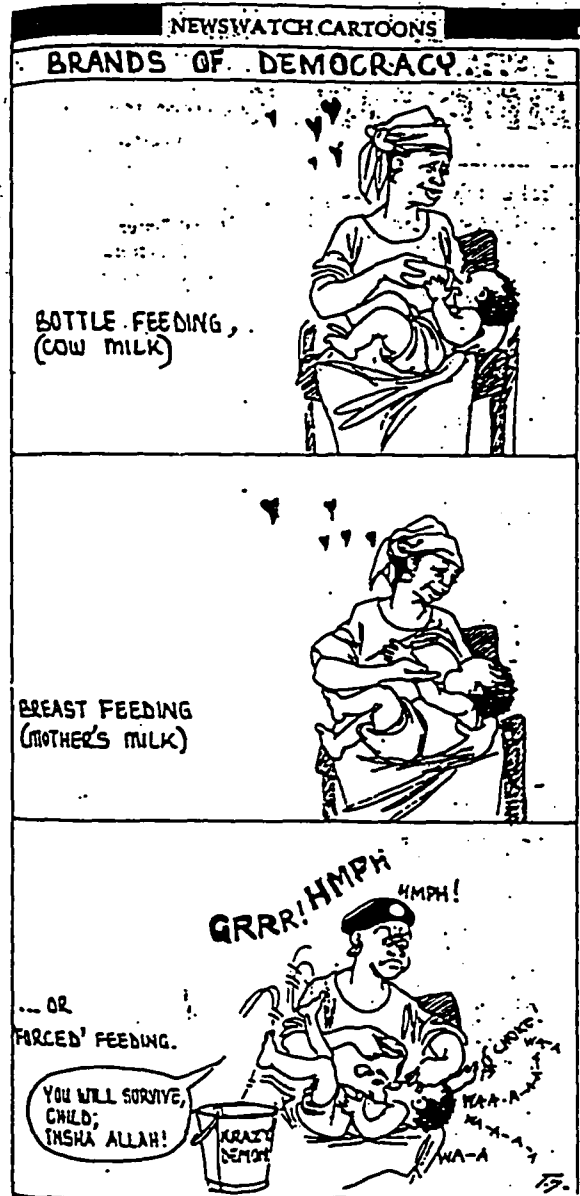
Given this, the theme of “Democratic Governance” captured a wide variety of issues related to the events surrounding the aftermath of June 12th, 1993, and the government’s decision to annul the election. Coverage of June 12 in political cartoons was driven by the annulment of the elections.

In Fig. 6, the cartoonist portrays a woman nursing her child. Each frame depicts a brand of Democracy as understood in Nigeria. The first brand, “bottle feeding” (Cow Milk), was the initial understanding of what democracy meant when Nigeria attained its independence in 1960 from Britain. The second brand was “breast feeding” (Mother’s Milk), which Nigeria practiced by itself until January 15, 1966, when the Nigerian Army staged the first military coup in the country. This also has overtones of European and Western Brand of democracy.

The third and current brand of democracy being administered by a mother wearing a military cap is a novel approach to illustrating democracy in Nigeria. It is a “forced democracy,” a military type of democracy, one that chokes—a democracy that gives no room for breathing. Thus, Fig. 6 is a strong example of the way cartoonists use shared prior cultural and historical experience to attribute meaning to its symbolic representation. The cartoon also speaks to the diminishing role of citizens and the dictatorship role of the Military in the governing process of Nigeria. Furthermore, this example reiterates the

various levels of meaning which are present in a sign, as was most predominately argued by Barthes.

Figure 6



NewsWatch, August 2, 1993

Non-Substantive Themes

Electoral Strategies

As a country in transition, presumably, process to democracy, Nigeria is constantly evaluating strategies for elections that often wavered between what is good and what is evil. This theme of “Electoral Strategies” was often depicted in Nigerian political cartoons as drafting a process for an electoral college. Here the starting point is the importance of the drafting process for an electoral law and the impact that this choice has for the acceptance of the law and the move towards a democratically elected civilian government. For this, a dialogue among all the political forces (Military and Politicians) was opened to try to reach the widest possible consensus on how to attain the democratic ideal.

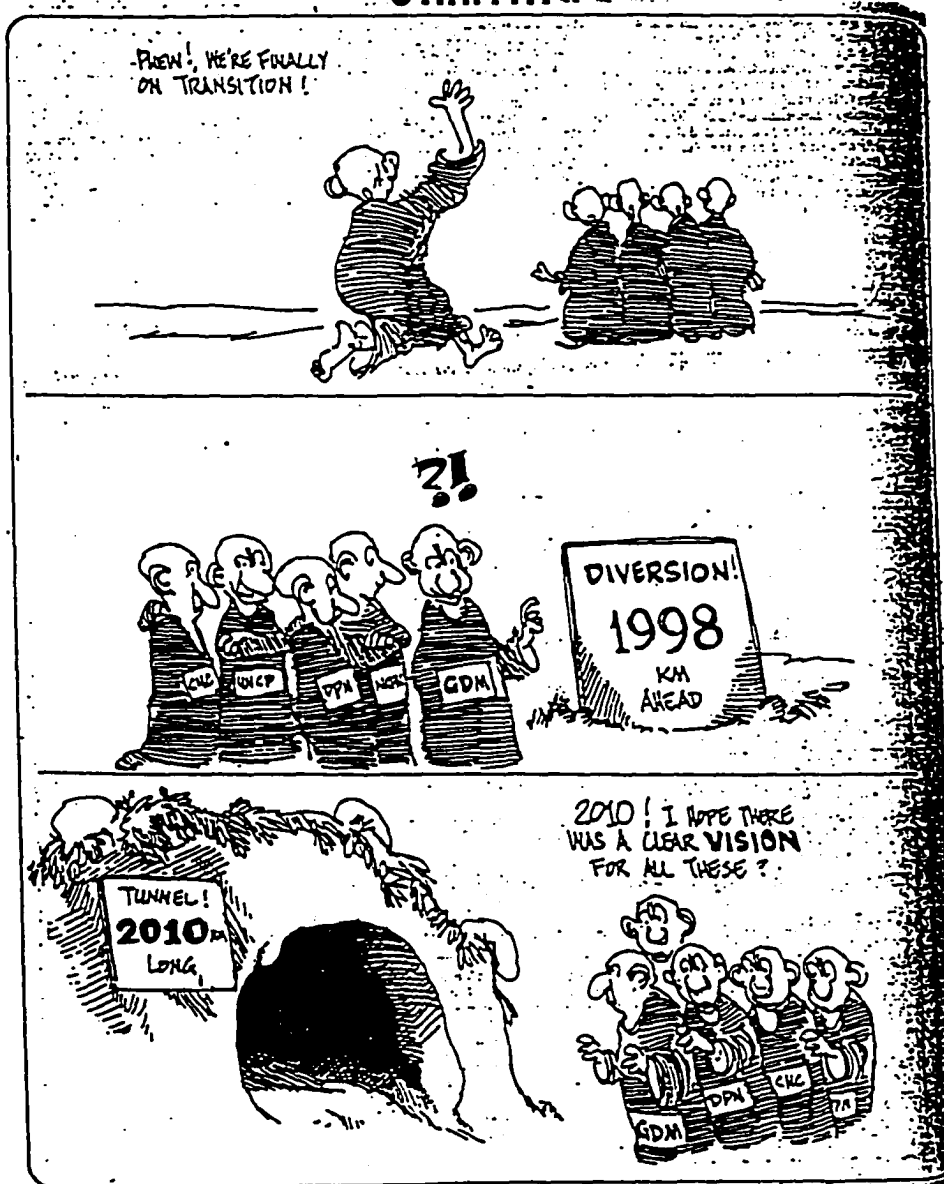
In Fig. 7, the top frame of the cartoon depicts five individuals representing the five registered political parties in Nigeria. This group of individuals had undertaken a journey. In the middle frame, the five representatives of the parties are progressing towards the year 1998. In the second frame of this cartoon, “Diversion 1998” is illustrated as a mile marker noting a diversion on the road. However, in the last frame, the diversion is to a tunnel with a sign that reads, “Tunnel 2010 KM Long.” This cartoon depicts the sabotage of electoral strategies. Furthermore, this cartoon refers to the establishment of a “National Committee on Vision 2010” by General Abacha in December 1996. At that time, he announced at the inauguration of the project that it would formulate a long-term development plan (a 14 year plan) for Nigeria that would transform Nigeria to a democratic society. Each State government was also mandated by General Abacha to set up its own “State Committee on VISION 2010.”

General Abacha, as part of the Transition program, organized a Constituent Assembly to draft a new Constitution, the fourth to be drafted since Nigeria became an independent nation in 1960. After he received the report of the Assembly, he instructed the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON) to organize political associations from among which the Commission would register Political Parties. After several months of interaction with political associations in the country and conformity to the set criteria, NECON requested five political parties for the Nation. These were: The Congress for National Consensus (CNC), The Grassroot Democratic Movement (GDM), The United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP), The Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN), and The National Center Party of Nigeria (NCPN). All other political associations that failed to meet NECON's criteria were banned from registering as legitimate political parties.

On a connotative level, this cartoon also speaks to the sabotage of democracy and the constant domination of all affairs by the Military. Even though any Military official was not depicted in this cartoon, at an implied level, it is obvious they had a hand in the diversion.

Figure 7

GRAFFITI



Military and Politician's Characteristics and Behavior

Military officials and politicians are featured prominently in these cartoons. Cartoonists are able to capture the essence of their character and behavior. They are portrayed as heroes, scoundrels, or even grandiose figures. Noticeably, the classic image of both is as a desensitized and often sadistic individual plotting battles. Politicians are often pliant and malleable instruments for the Military. The Military for three decades has been entrenched in all facets of Nigerian civic and economic life, as is readily apparent in some of the cartoons.

With non-substantive themes, political events are presented through the activities of selected political leaders, in particular what people in key positions do and think. The political climate in Nigeria is thus reflected more in why and how political leaders and particularly the Military rulers create and manipulate events. Whenever the Military President is depicted, he is featured symbolically as an authoritative political figure or the ultimate policy maker. Juxtaposed against the political climate of the country, Military rulers appear as the icon of anti-civilian rule in Nigerian society.

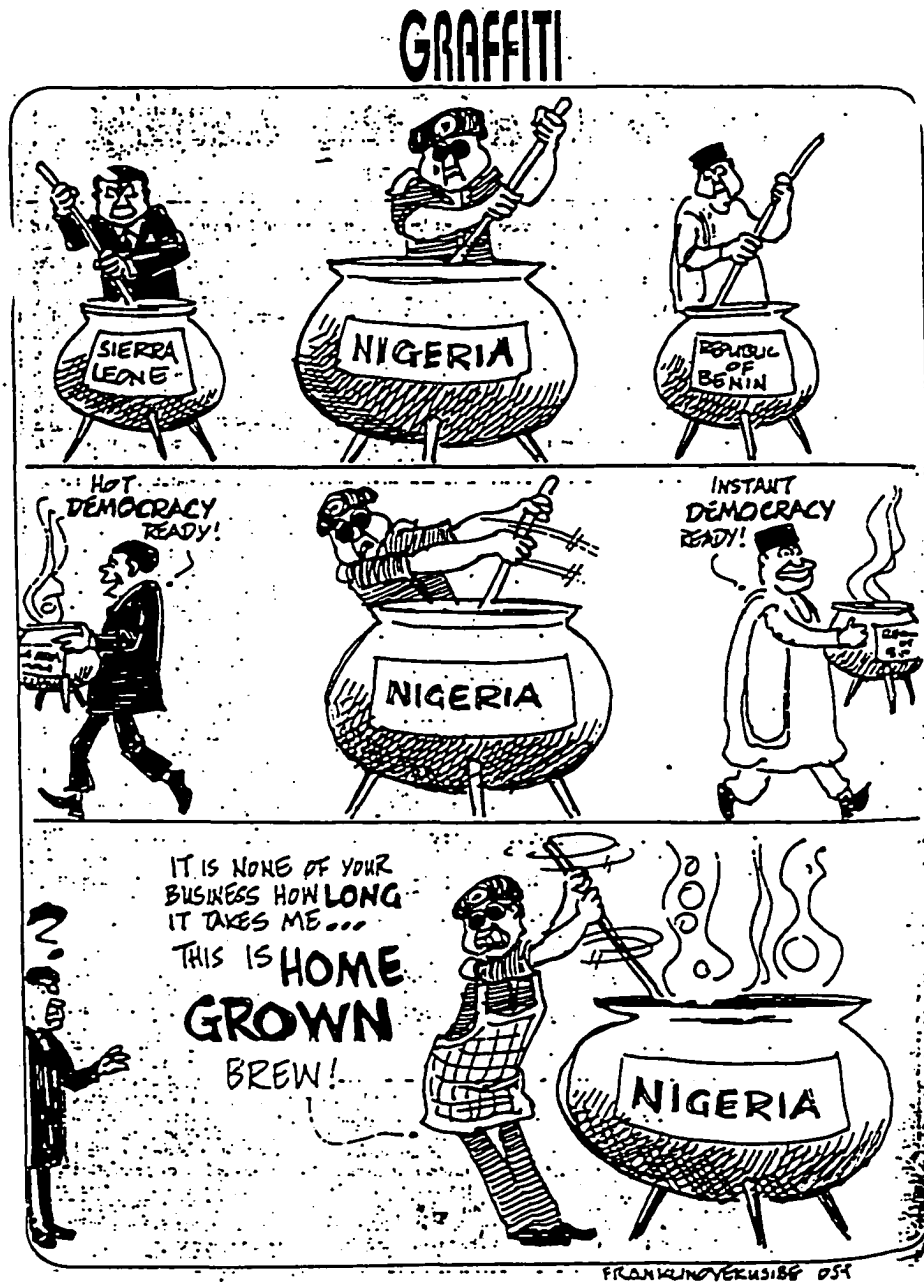
There is tendency across the board to illustrate the Military President(s) negatively. However, rarely are they shown as a weak. For the most part, they are always depicted as leaders who work not for the benefit of the general public, but for their own personal agenda. For example, General Sanni Abacha is illustrated (see Fig. 8) along with two other Heads of States from West Africa, each of them brewing "Democracy" in a pot that represents their individual countries. The three men in the first frame, from the left, are the Head of State of Sierra Leone, Ahmed Jejan Kabbah, followed by General Sanni Abacha and then the Head of State of the Republic of Benin, Mathiew Kerekou. Sierra Leone and Nigeria are English-

speaking countries, having gained independence from Britain. The Republic of Benin, formerly Dahomey, is a French-speaking country, which obtained its independence from France. For the Presidents of these neighboring countries, “Democracy” is on its way to realization. But for Abacha, his continued stirring of the pot of “Democracy” reveals the fact that he is holding on steadfastly to military dictatorship—essentially prolonging military rule.

This examination of political cartoons suggests to a large degree that cartoons portray and reflect political reality, related to the role the Military rulers play and the different styles of political leadership that exist in Nigeria. The Nigerian Military ruler, illustrated in the cartoons, is not unlike his role in real life. Not only is he involved in the often-corrupt behind-the-scenes negotiations, he is a symbol of all the ills that befall Nigerian society and remains the symbol of all that is wrong with Nigeria. He is the perpetual bully in the editorial cartoons of the Nigerian newsmagazines.

These previously discussed examples depict one part of the significant semiotic parameters of political cartoons. For in all the cartoons discussed, the iconic resemblance of the characters to actual Military officials and politicians fulfills an illustrative function. The system of signs on a denotative level is taken over by another system of signification on a connotative level, and these new forms of representation naturalize certain meanings and make them seem normal.

Figure 8



Binary Oppositions

The best way to understand the structure of political cartoons is to consider the shared meanings. In order to acquire this understanding, we further analyze the cartoons by revealing binary oppositions and intertextual references used by the cartoonists to draw distinctions between opposites like good and bad. This part of the analysis focuses on four themes in the cartoons: June 12, Democracy, Military, and Citizens. Readers need to work at acquiring the graphical system of the cartoonist in order to understand what they read. Because communication can involve different persons representing diverse perspectives, a variety of interpretations can occur. What this suggests is that the ambiguity within the cartoons presents a problem with precise interpretation. However, the fact that it relies on a complex system of meanings involves an additional layer of ambiguity, which is both its strength, in that more is said, and its weakness, in that it becomes difficult to fix the meaning of what is said into a single model. Even so, none of this means that a narrative or an ambiguous depiction is open to a myriad of interpretations.

Paul Ricoeur (1984) explains that the “surplus of meaning” which narrative carry make it possible for a story to have different meanings in various contexts. Yet, the range of admissible interpretations is also fixed and closed because interpretations must be tested against the story itself. If a cartoon is to qualify as an authentic interpretation, the reader must find commonalities between his or her world and the cartoon’s world. What ensues is a dialogue in which both parties submit some rules and structures that guide the process of interpretation.

In addition to providing a litany of themes, these political cartoons also frame several of these themes in the form of binary oppositions (contrasts). Western thought is permeated

with a style of thinking based on dichotomy and binary opposition. The structuralist paradigm in anthropology suggests that the structure of human thought processes is the same in all cultures, and that these mental processes exist in the form of binary oppositions (Winthrop, 1991). Some of these oppositions include hot-cold, male-female, culture-nature, and raw-cooked. Structuralist argue that “binary oppositions are reflected in various cultural institutions” (Lett, 1987, p. 80). Anthropologists may discover underlying thought processes by examining such things as kinship, myth, and language. Structuralists aim to understand the meaning involved in human expression as manifested in cultural acts or texts such as political cartoon.

Embedded in this fundamental style of binary thinking are not only oppositions but also hierarchies, in that the existence of such binary oppositions suggest a struggle for predominance. If one position is right, then the other must be wrong. Helene Cixous (1986, p. 63) observes “that oppositional terms are locked into relationships of conflict, and moreover, this relationship is one in which one term must be repressed at the expense of the other.” For example, nature without nurture is meaningless; often one struggles to negate the other.

Saussure demonstrated that language is a system of differences. Although binary opposition is mostly been applied to the study of language and film, I posit from this analysis that it is possible to apply it to cartoons as well. We are able to know what something is by comparing it to what it isn't. The central focus of this part of the analysis is an exploration of binary oppositions that exist in these political cartoons and, in so doing, provide a deeper appreciation of how these dynamics are manifested.

June 12: Timelessness versus Time

Whether with the Christian conception of linear time or the Greek idea of cyclical time, we all, like Augustine in his *Confessions* and *The City of God*, wrestle with the monstrous question of time. So do the characters depicted in these political cartoons. They wrestle with the subject matter of “June 12.” This theme has a recurring role in the political cartoons and is best discussed through a binary opposition of timelessness versus time.

On the one hand in the cartoons, the Military rulers do not have a watch or a timetable for when they want to hand over power to civilian rule. In certain instances cartoonists depict the Military’s notion of time as flawed (see Fig. 7). In this cartoon, time is portrayed by the establishment of a Transition Commission that is to oversee when they will formally hand over power to civilian rule. But from 1998, it appeared to have been postponed until 2010. Their idea of time is constantly shifting. In another cartoon, even when pinned down for an answer (see Fig. 4) by the posing of the question to General Abacha of when the Military is departing, the response does not answer the question of time. The Military’s notion of time is fragmented, indicating that their participation in time has torn them to pieces and is in eternity.

For the citizens, they have a concept of history, but it has stopped at June 12th, 1993—precisely the date when they envisioned emancipation from Military rule. After this event, they are still obsessed with time as cartoonists depict in several cartoons.

Nigeria has been in one crisis after another since her independence from Britain on October 1, 1960. Besides the several changes of government from the civilian to the military, and from the military to the civilian, and from the civilian to the military since 1960 until today, the recurrent major crises that have hit Nigeria have been the rampaging,

destructive activities of Nigerian university students, politically motivated riots on university campuses, infighting and killing among secret cult members on university campuses, constant strikes among university lecturers for unpaid salaries, students remaining idle, regular indefinite closure of universities, and many more. The Federal government's solution to these problems has not always addressed the basic causes of the problems, and because of this fact, the crises have continued to erupt. So, one can say that since 1960 the atmosphere in Nigeria has been one of crises.

The cartoons reflect a rhythm of interrupted time --by one of the aggressive time merchants—the annulment of the elections. The contrast between the restless chronocats (Nigerian citizens) and the timeless pilgrims (Military) is evident.

Democracy: Truth versus Lies

Political cartoons seem to lend themselves especially well to the tropes of doubleness, as they repeatedly invoke dualities or binary oppositions. To illustrate another example of the duality, we look at an instance of how it works in political cartoons, distinguishing between truth and lies. This is descriptive of the pursuit of Democracy in Nigeria.

On one hand the Military keeps on promising to hand over power to civilians. However, underlying this premise of truth are lies by the Military who have intense anxieties about losing power. These are constantly illustrated in the cartoons. The promise to hand over has become a well-structured lie with a model of success carefully thought through and masterfully implemented. Under Military rule, lies are constructed: what is to be lied about, what a lie is to consist of, how it is to be told, and whom it is to be told to, on a regular basis. Official lies were as much a part of the Military oppressiveness and the quest to sabotage

Democracy. Accused of lying, the Military keeps on lying—they re-define their lies in their own terms as non-fiction and thus their non-fiction as necessary lies. An unstable duality pervades these cartoons, especially with the discourse of lies told by the Military, although the lies are predominantly a highly valorized form of truth telling. This also registers that in order to maintain Military rule that certain truths can—must— never be told.

The following cartoons depict the binary opposition of truth versus lies juxtaposed against the mobility of the modern west—the quest for democracy—and the deplored stasis of the Nigeria. The cartoons sketch a transition stalled.

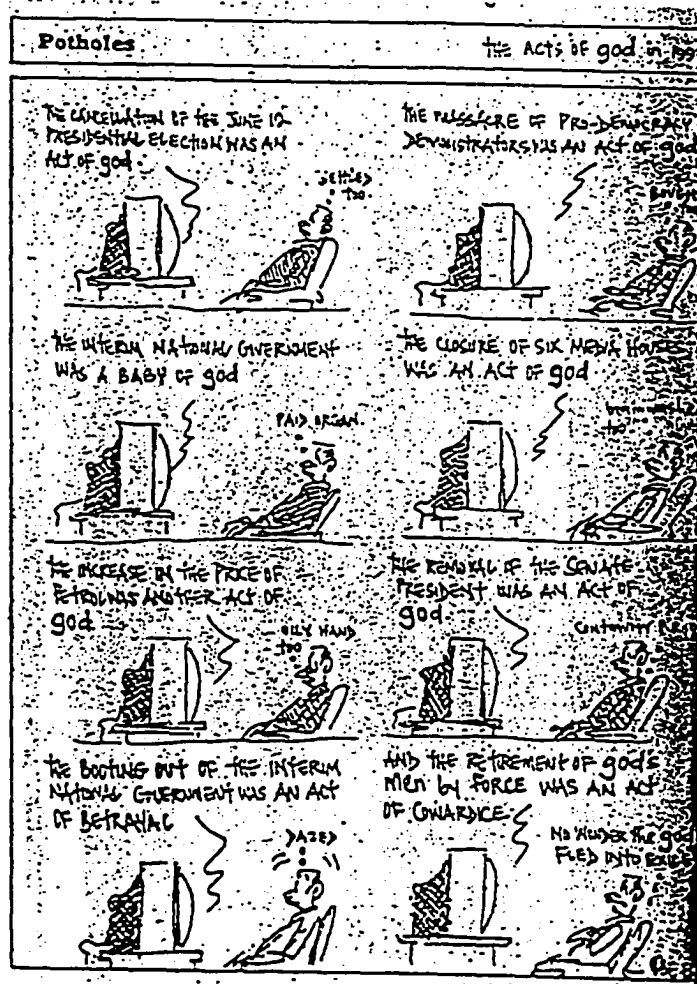
In Fig. 9, the cartoon is an indictment against those Nigerian leaders, many of them top Muslim religious leaders from the Northern part of Nigeria, who because they themselves had supported the military government of retired General Babangida to annul the June 12, 1993, election, were then telling the Nigerian nation that the nullification was “an act of god.” This reference to is an attempt to qualify a lie as a truth. Chief among those making the statement was the then Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, who was the President General of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. Alhaji M.K.O. Abiola was the Vice President of this council.

The cartoon then lists a number of atrocities carried out by the Babangida regime after the June 12, 1993, crisis, before General Babangida himself was forced out of office. The cartoon lists the atrocities as follows: (1) the massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators; (2) the setting up of “the Interior National Government”; (3) the closure of six media houses; (4) the increase in the price of petrol (or gas); (5) the removal of the Senate President; (6) the removal of the Interim National Government; (7) the retirement of god’s men by force—a reference to the compulsory retirement of army Generals who were Christians by General

Babangida himself before he left office. The first four are attributed to God, while the penultimate is termed an “act of betrayal” and the last termed an act of cowardice.

The following expressions uttered by the viewer in the cartoon, “settled too,” “bought too,” “paid organ,” “brainwashed,” “oily hand,” and “continuity P.R.O” (P.R.O.=Public Relations Office), all refer to those Nigerians, in and out of the federal government, who were bribed with large sums of money so that they could defend General Babangida’s action in canceling the June 12, 1993, Presidential election as “an act of god.” The concluding statement in the cartoon that “No wonder the god fled into exile” is not only a play on the word “god” but a conversion of the word “god” to refer to Babangida himself as the god who fled into hiding, into his home town of Minna, in Northern Nigeria.

Figure 9



Political cartoons convey some “truth” through a message, demonstrating a mood about the social or political situation that inspired the cartoon (Press, 1981, p. 62). Yet some critics argue that “cartoons do not change minds, but at best precipitate thought and dialogue” (Fisher, 1996, p. 14). “It is likely that those cartoon most effective as propaganda have tended not to confront and to challenge but rather to reinforce and build on a priori beliefs, values, and prejudices” (p. 15).

Military and Citizens: Power versus Powerless

In order to uncover how the infrastructures of oppositions I begin with a look at the construction of power relationships between the Military and the Citizens as portrayed in these cartoons. Here I examine the binary pairs of activity/passivity and military/citizens. Most specifically, I examine the cultural valorization of the fusion of “activity” with military and “passivity” with Nigerian citizens and the relationship of these value-marked pairs to another binary couple of powerful/powerless. The binary opposition of powerful versus powerless also suggests a dialectic that is Hegelian in the sense that creation of one half of the binary pair necessarily calls into being the other half.

The lure and the fear of the powerful and the conviction of the inferiority of the powerless justify the undertaking. The territory of the powerful are those who both allure and terrify. Fearing to succumb to the citizens, the powerful attempt to contain them—through subordination, suppression, or conversion. These strategies of containment are designed to preserve the opposition and inequality between the powerful and the powerless.

Underlying the cartoonists’ efforts to expose and exploit binary oppositions is the powerful’s intense anxiety about being taken over by the powerless. The cartoonists’

strategy of containment emerges most forcefully throughout the cartoonists' graphical depictions of the military and of the citizens.

Binary oppositions of powerful and powerless are constantly repeated in various sets of the political cartoons. A striking number of political cartoons used the stereotypes of the citizens of such powerless and often devalued groups. In general, a powerful male role is assigned to the Military. Military values contribute to the construction of narrow definitions of them as masculine characters. Militarism encompasses much more than just the armed forces of a state and their activities. It is an ideology of power affecting government with different political objectives and its influence can become part of a social process that penetrates all areas of a society. "Power over the other" is the basic value of militarism and the military is an exaggerated microcosm of this dominance that protects those in power. It is hierarchical and unaccountable to the people. In a militarized society, the population begins to accept the idea that "might is right" and that society should be founded on a dominant-submissive mode of relationship.

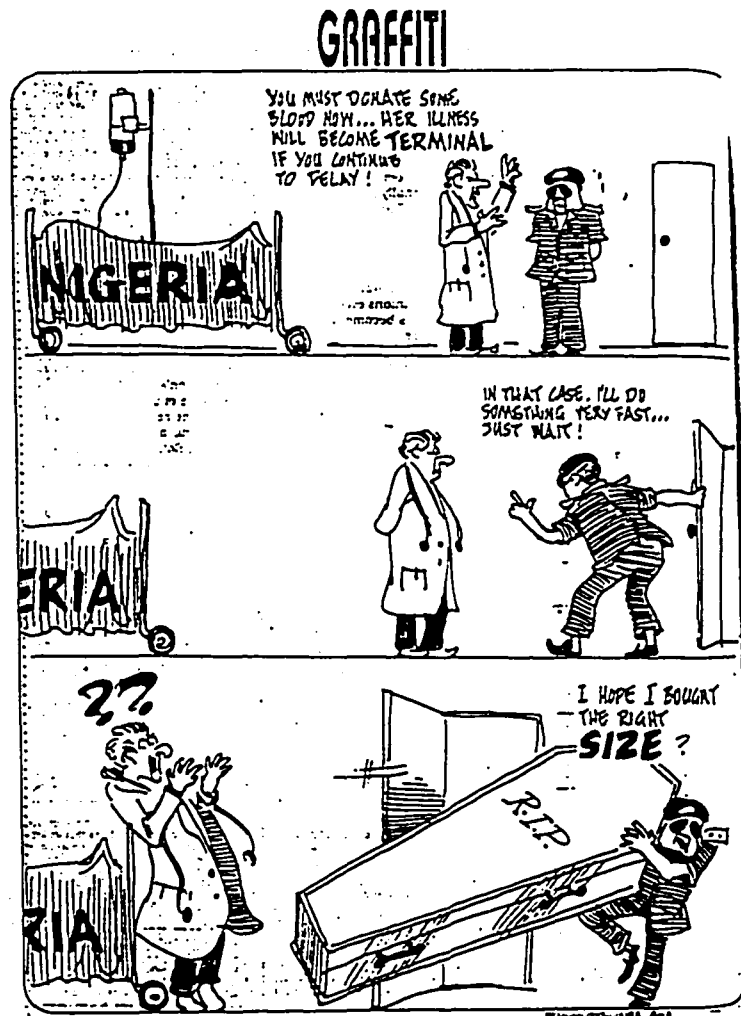
In Fig. 10, for example, Nigeria is pictured as a nation that is very sick (economically, politically, and socially). The man who holds the key for the survival of the nation is General Abacha, then Head of State. No new investment is coming into the country. Armed robbery and assassination has become the order of the day. Many workers, both in the public and private sectors, are being laid off. The government's transition to civil rule is constantly being postponed.

In this cartoon, a doctor approaches General Abacha—who is always identified by his dark sunglasses—to ask him to donate some blood, in order to rejuvenate the dying country. He promised to do something fast. But instead brings a coffin, as the solution to saving Nigeria—the patient. The implication is that Abacha does not want to offer the type

of government that can save Nigeria from his ultimate goal of death to which she is being forced into. Military rule in Nigeria continues to bring out about the relationship between the powerful Military and the subservient citizens.

The relationship of the military and the citizens is best characterized in the dialectical constructs apparent throughout Paulo Freire's pedagogical analysis in Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970/1998). For example, the relationship of the oppressor and the oppressed is presented in typical Hegelian dialectics. Freire reminds us that the status, power, and domination of the oppressor are not possible without the existence of the oppressed. Freire takes our understanding of this relationship one step further in his conception of both the oppressor and the oppressed as "manifestations of dehumanization" (p. 30). The oppressor is dehumanized by the act of oppression while the oppressed are dehumanized by the existential reality of oppression and the internalization of the image of the oppressor. Consequently, the oppressed sustain an existential dual identity being "...at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized" (p. 30).

Figure 10



Thus, the goal for a pedagogy of the oppressed is to restore lost humanity and thereby liberate both the oppressed and the oppressor: “As the oppressed, fighting to be human, removes the oppressors’ power to dominate and suppress, they restore to the oppressors the humanity they had lost in the exercise of oppression” (p. 38).

Clearly the “readable” portions of these cartoons depends on the readers’ grasp of the binary infrastructure, especially the association of the Military with action and the citizenry with a lack of access to action. In these cartoons, significant action is associated with the Military and is valorized. Fig. 11 illustrates an example of the Military’s valor. This cartoon is set in an unrelated event—the Olympics. The event according to the cartoonist was “The Centennial Harmattan Olympiad Medal Ceremony, 100, Nigeria 96.” Although the Olympics have never been held in Nigeria, there exists that intertextual reference to an Olympic event—the medal ceremony. Three top Military officials are depicted as medal recipients in the Medal Ceremony of the Centennial Harmattan Olympiad. Five medals are to be shared among three men. The three men are, from the left, Walter Ofanagoro, Sani Kiptanui, and Tom Ikimi. The correct name and official position in Nigeria of the man on the left is Dr. Walter Ofonagoro, Nigeria’s Federal Minister of Information. The inscription on his medal stand is “FREE STYLE GOOFING” because of the regularity with which the information that he releases about government’s policy is denied and contradicted by that General Abacha’s Press Secretary. Many times Dr. Ofonagoro has been reported in the Nigerian media as having made statements that people believe he made up. Yet, he was a very close adviser to General Abacha. Nevertheless, in this cartoon, he is awarded a medal for his “good work.”

The man in the right-hand picture is Chief Tom Ikimi, Nigeria’s Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs. He, too, is very close to General Abacha. Amongst Nigerian citizens, he is

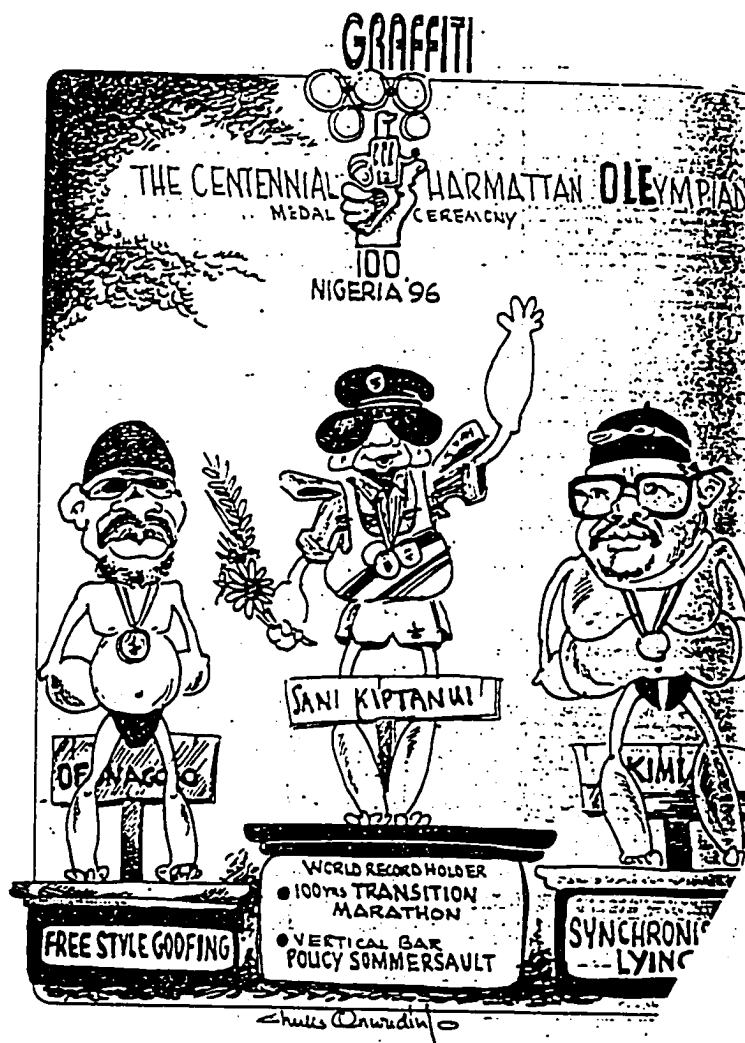
often referred to as a liar. So it is humorous that he is portrayed in this cartoon as having won the medal for "Synchronized Lying" because of the regularity with which he deceives the Nigerian public and foreign missions in Nigeria. The man in the middle who is portrayed as having won the gold medal is General Sanni Abacha, identified as "Sani Kiptanui," that is "Captain Sanni," who also received three medals.

The "Olympiad medal ceremony" at which the five medals were distributed is unlike other Olympiads. This one is a "Harmattan Olympiad." The prefix of "ole" means "thieves" in the Yoruba language. In essence, the "Olympiad" signifies an event dedicated not to athletic sportsmanship, but to duplicitous sportsmanship of honoring "thieves." So the three men are receiving stolen honors, stolen medals.

General Abacha, who is represented in the middle picture is described as a "World Record Holder" because of the: (1) indefinite nature of his Transition to democratic rule in Nigeria, that is, "100 years Transition Marathon," and (2) the ever-changing policy of his government. So the cartoon portrays General Abacha and his cabinet as: (a) thieves, (b) liars, (c) selfish, (d) unstable, (e) unreliable, and (f) people characterized by contradictions. Equally important here is that at an implicit level, the military are valorized.

There is a vast array of interplay of visual messages in this cartoon. There is that specific allusion to an event, such as the Olympics. Crucially, the association of the citizens with passivity occurs as a necessary response.

Figure 11



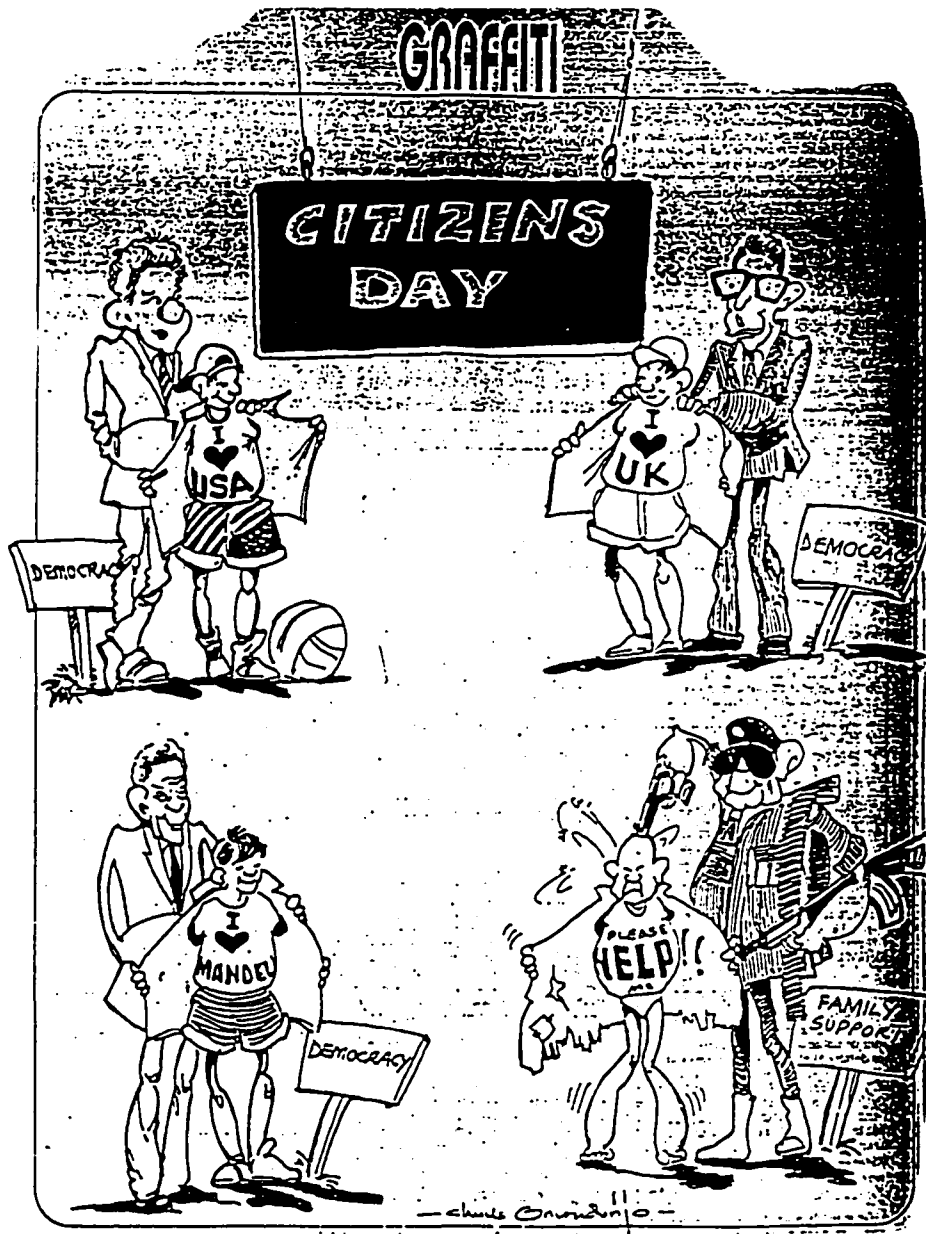
While the civilians and the populace searches for ultimate meaning, the military cares more about immediate cause and effect. While the populace shows signs of inner agony, the military revels in temporal pleasures. The polarization of these groups dramatizes the separation of the haves versus the have-nots within Nigerian society. Though the citizens desire a civilian rule, the curse of death and doom has greater sway over their relationship than the blessing of life.

In Fig. 12, the essence of Nigerian citizens' relationship with the government is captured. In the first frame is Bill Clinton, President of the U.S.A., standing behind a young man, wearing a T-shirt with the inscription "I love U.S.A." Why? Because the U.S.A. is a "Democracy." The youth is wearing a pair of shorts bearing the colors of the U.S. flag. In the second frame, the cartoonist portrays the former British Prime Minister Mr. John Major standing behind a young boy whose T-shirt is inscribed with the message "I love U.K." Why? Because the U.K. is a "Democracy." In the third frame is President Nelson Mandela of South Africa, standing firmly behind another youth wearing a T-shirt with the words "I love Mandela." In the last frame, the cartoonist portrays another youth standing in front of General Abacha. Nigeria's Military Administrator is pointing a gun to the head of the young boy, and the boy's T-shirt, "Please help me."

This cartoon adds an additional message that comes from the inscription on the signpost standing close to him in the last frame. And that is "Family Support." "Family Support" was a program conceived, nurtured, and executed by General Abacha's wife, Mrs. Maryann Abacha. The program was intended to provide support for every area of family life. At that time, the program commanded priority interest from General Abacha. In fact it was the second-most important program in the nation.

At best this cartoon portrays the notion of silence—enforced silence of the citizens by the Military. The citizens appear mute and passive. The citizens of Nigeria are made invisible and for the most part that is how they are portrayed in the cartoons—with barely a voice.

Figure 12



These themes and issues are the ingredients with which the mythic fare (discussed later) is exposed in these political cartoons. Political cartoon also yield fruitful content for an economic study of social classes. In these cartoons, there is a backdrop of class struggle between the ruling elite on one side and the proletariat on the other. That which is revealed and seemingly innocuous is belied by its hidden and shadowy counterpart.

In these political cartoons, we are shown that the Military has violently suppressed human rights. In some of the cartoons, depicted is the decadence of the military ruling elites in the form of General Abacha. Chief Abiola, symbol of paternalism, by contrast, exhibits accents of a higher class while identifying with and defending the rights of the oppressed.

It is interesting to note that these pairings tend to support and verify one another in their superiority over one another. In each text, an introduction of subordination rather than equality is evinced: the first term is superior to the second, so the relations between the two terms is hierarchical (superior/inferior), not reciprocal.

Indeed, one way to learn about the structure of political cartoons is by becoming familiar with the oppositions traditionally laid out by that culture in which the cartoons' context is placed. Political cartoons are typically composed around a number of key oppositions, which set the scene for interpretation of the cartoons and also help identify the major narrative themes that are inherent in each cartoon. Contrasts propel certain themes throughout these political cartoons.

Overall, many of these themes attest to a neocolonial mentality in Nigerian contemporary culture. The tragic consequences of the longing for identity and fusion dramatized by the political cycle are related to what may be understood as a failure of the paternal function of culture itself. Instead of helping the country negotiate the difficult

passage to adulthood, it preys on its nostalgia for the imagined unity of Eden promised after independence in 1960.

The Western world's general preference for mimetic spectacle may not be an index of innocence or sincerity, as it is sometimes supposed, but a sign of dangerous naiveté. Like the colonials who wished to see mirrored in their subjects a glorified image of their own influence, the West markets a seductive vision that casts lengthening shadows made of sterile myths, perpetuating the fear and longing that fueled the machinery of empire. Left outside the gates—outside the frame—are not primarily people or even facts but modes of apprehending and interpreting the world, ways of reading one's experience and that of others in the light of history. Mimicry ends in pathos: the natives sent back to the colonials a grotesque reflection, which betrayed the mortality of the empire even as it appeared to radiate eternal light.

Intertextuality

The analysis here focuses on the phenomenon of intertextuality in political cartoons. Therefore, it will be demonstrated that taking the phenomenon of intertextuality in political cartoon into consideration permits a better understanding of the framing present in the political coverage of the key themes in political coverage during Nigeria's most volatile political era. These four themes are as follows:

How is June 12 depicted?

How is Democracy depicted?

How is the Military depicted? ; and

How are the citizens depicted?

Intertextuality has become a major focus in postmodern literary criticism probably for two main reasons. First, its hybrid character is both applicable to concrete passages of text and as an abstract concept of the relatedness of all writing; second, the pleasure which can be gained from investigating the hide-and-seek games which literary texts present with their intertextual references. The latter point relates to the playful aspect which is often highlighted in postmodern works and likewise, in contemporary criticism. This point is what is sought in the current analysis. Seen from the cartoonist's point of view, intertextuality is introduced into the cartoon on two levels: consciously and subconsciously. In its conscious use, i.e., as strategy to create meanings, it allows for intricate, complex stories, challenging the reader with a handful of more or less clearly recognizable texts. Typically, and not unlike the attempt to look up an unknown word in the text which will reveal a fuller presence of the passage in question, the reader tries to identify these other texts. This may happen to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the level of recognition of the texts and on the reader's patience, or on his or her wish to find the actual pre-texts. On a conscious level, a

concrete kind of textual criss-cross can be seen to emerge in all its contemporary multi-facetedness.

However on a subconscious level, the cartoonist always and inevitably falls prey to intertextuality, in the sense that no written or graphically depicted text can possibly be free from the influence of all other texts. In any political cartoon, abstract intertextuality is of course much harder to grasp, or to define, since much of the intertext may only be partially grasped and it is up to the reader to call up an active reservoir of other texts, both verbal and graphical as well as socio-cultural. This potential, which is left to the reader to define as he or she likes, (the vagueness about the actual content of the work in question), is what can appropriately be called a work's intertext. But even on the level of concrete intertextuality, it can assume that political cartoon, with its sharpened awareness of an ever-intruding universe of texts as well as with its elective ways of composition, contains more consciously chosen texts.

Intertexts in Depictions of June 12

The historical influence of religion in the national life and personal lives of many Nigerian citizens and the interplay between religious and national affairs in public discourse is played out in the political cartoons. For a deeply religious society, religion provides a language, values, and institutions through which groups struggle and over which groups contend, both within and between religious communities. Religion has become a part of the fabric of political and economic affairs, not just the culture, but includes political and economic institutions. The use of intertextual religious references in these cartoons suggests the cartoonists were guided by a vision of traditional religious values.

On June 12, 1993, in what is believed to have been major strides in political-socio-cultural relations, Nigerians overcame their ethnic rivalries and came out in record numbers to vote in the elections in part of a transition from military rule to democratic rule. Subsequently the results of this election were annulled by General Babangida. Following this annulment, the declared winner, Chief M.K.O. Abiola, was charged with contempt of court for declaring himself the rightful winner of the election. He is portrayed in many of these cartoons as a symbolic representation of the failure of the elections of June 12.

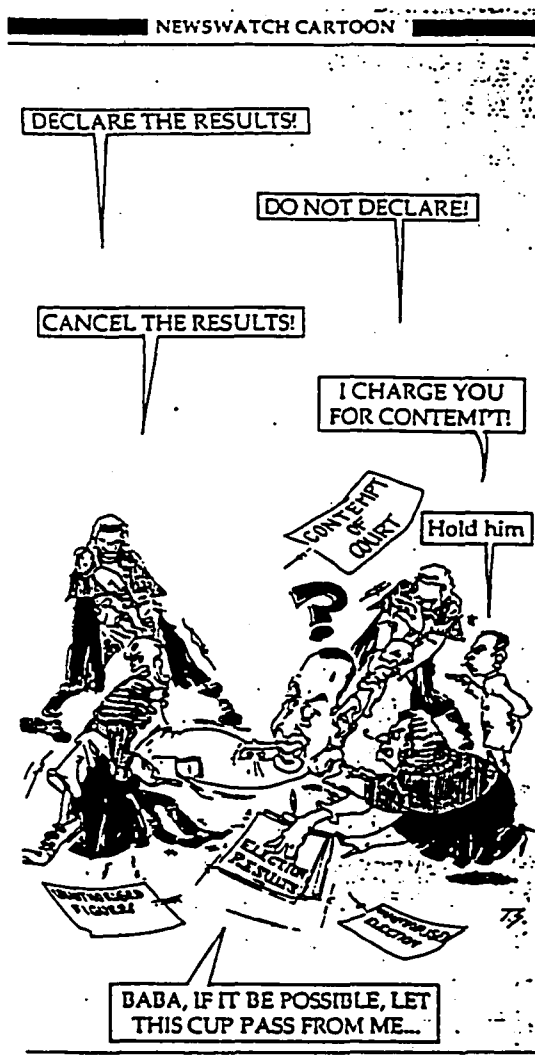
In Fig. 13, Chief Abiola is drawn amidst Nigerian chief justices who are shown making statements reflective of arguments that took place in the courts. In the middle, Abiola is shown with a paper, perhaps his own publication declaring the results of the elections. He utters one statement, “Baba (which means “Father” in the Yoruba language), if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” This cartoon is filled with glancing references and overt borrowings from the Bible. For example, Abiola’s words mirror text from the New Testament’s Luke 22:42 and Matthew 26:39.

In both Luke 22: 42 and Matthew 26:39, the passage reads, “if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (which are parallel passages). The context is Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, right before His betrayal. He was praying to the Father about the ordeal that He was about to undergo. Several points are worth bringing out here, which are similarly depicted in this cartoon.

First, Jesus (as is Abiola in this cartoon) is expressing a desire, a hope. What is that hope or desire? It is that “this cup pass from me.” The cup Jesus is speaking of is the imminent ordeal of betrayal, scourging, and crucifixion. Jesus did not want to go through this. He was expressing His desire. It was His will not to undergo the severe ordeal ahead of Him. If this was not so, He would not have expressed the desire to have the cup pass from Him. The

same could be said for the cartoonist's portrayal of Abiola in this cartoon. Abiola speaks to his imminent ordeal of betrayal and being arrested by a Military Government that he once courted and had very cordial relationship with. The cup he speaks of is his incarceration. Furthermore, his desire is not have the June 12th elections annulled, so he can be rightfully sworn in as the next President of Nigeria.

Figure 13



In Fig. 14, Chief Abiola and Alhaji Baba Gana Kingibe, the President and Vice Presidential candidates who were the presumed winners of the June 12th elections, are depicted as biblical characters. In the first frame, Chief Abiola and Alhaji Kingibe are introduced as Moses and Aaron. Abiola here is the one who stutters, while Kingibe is portrayed as the orator—an interesting depiction considering Abiola stuttered in real life. Alhaji Kingibe, on the other hand, is quite known for his oratory skills. In the second frame, both are shown kneeling before General Abacha, who took over as Head of State when the election results were voided, begging him to restore the “throne,” that is, the Presidency, to them, because they must have it.

In the lower left frame, Kingibe (as Aaron) is depicted showing clandestine wisdom where he daydreams that he take the throne himself instead of Abiola (as Moses). And so in the next frame, Kingibe (Aaron) is shown on his knees pleading to General Abacha, not to restore the presidency to Abiola, “so that King I (may) be.” The “King I” here is a play on words because Kingibe should be the “King,” that is, the President.

The reference in this cartoon is to the biblical story of Aaron and Moses. After 40 years of shepherd life, Moses speaks with God—in the form of a burning bush. The flame that burns yet does not consume attracts him, and a miraculous voice forbids his approach and declares the ground so holy that to approach he must remove his shoes. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob designates him to deliver the Hebrews from the Egyptians, and to conduct them into the “land of milk and honey,” the region long since promised to the seed of Abraham, the Palestine of later years. When God told Moses to go to Pharaoh, Moses answered that he was not good at public speaking, so God told Aaron to go with him to speak for him.

Moses stuttered, and he was afraid that people would not listen to him when he delivered the words of God. So God sent along Aaron, who was well spoken, to deliver the messages Moses received from God. To this day, the role of the Priest is to make clear the word of God, which was Aaron's first task.

Figure 14



Newswatch, June 13, 1994

Religion in Nigeria has come a long way. Religious faith of Nigerians varies from one region to another. Historically, Nigeria practiced traditional religion. In the early twentieth century, the traditional religion of the Yoruba was altered significantly because of Colonial rule. Where the modes of worship conflicted with Western mores the ruling colonial powers placed restrictions on religious practice. Religion has remained a core, largely divisive part of the politics of regions and ethnicity in Nigeria. Raw appeal to the religious persuasion of candidates for public office is common. The Bible and the Koran have become part of the staple of playing the divide and conquer strategy in the geopolitics of the country. The portrayal of known Moslems as Christians in this cartoon is very interesting, but this goes to show the religious bias of a Christian-dominated southwest, a region where Christianity is being eclipsed by Islam.

The use of religious intertextuality in political cartoons becomes its lifeblood. Nigerian political cartoons appear to use intertextuality in the form of religious and cultural allusions, and drawing upon the graphical aspects of the cartoon to enhance its meaning.

Intertexts in Depictions of Democracy

The movement for Democracy in Nigeria has long been an upward battle as years of Military rule gave way to limited and short-lived democratic governments. But the elections of 1993 would have led the country to what was now perceived as the last bastion of hope. Political cartoons after the annulment of the election featured graphical depictions of Nigeria's pursuit of the democratic ideal. But these cartoons are interwoven into other historical, domestic, and foreign texts.

In Fig. 15, the political cartoon speaks to the political crisis that Nigeria experienced beginning June 12, 1993. The message of the cartoon is set in the context of a terrorist hijacking. The inscription on the plane reads, "J-12 Nigeria 27 Aug." The means June 12, 1993, the date the elections were held. August 27th denotes the date on which General Babangida was supposed to hand over power to the winner of the election. However, the results of the elections were annulled and the outgoing government set up an interim government. Chief Ernest Shonekan headed this interim government. The phrase, "we've been settled by the captain," means that the characters involved in the hijacking—the men who helped Babangida to annul the election—are saying, "we've been bribed by the captain."

The "Promised Land" in the second frame refers to a democratic Nigeria, which Nigerians have looked forward to since the army took over in 1983. But the "trip is now aborted" means that the elections are annulled. The plane "is now diverted to head for the deep blue seas" meaning a journey into the unknown with the establishment of the Interim National Government.

The last frame depicts the story of the Post-Interim government period when a new Captain, that is General Sanni Abacha, took over from Chief Shonekan. The reference to "His Face" in part of the cartoon refers to the face of General Abacha, which carries the

distinguishing tribal marks of the Kanuri tribe of Northern Nigeria. Of course, this another “act of God,” a statement used to attribute the annulment of the election to God.

The intertext most prominent in this cartoon is that of the journey towards the Promised Land. This is another example of religious intertexts in Nigeria political cartoons. Much like the Israelites who after 40 years of wandering in the desert were finally permitted to enter the Promised Land, Nigerians are the chosen people leading humanity across the red seas to new shores to freedom and Democracy. The only difference here that 40 years for the citizens of Nigeria is not over and therefore the journey continues into the unknown. It should be noted that June 12th and the pursuit of Democracy are portrayed in tandem with each other in these cartoons. As one is always is portrayed as a precursor (June 12th) to another (Democracy).

The Promised Land is defined to be the region of which the Lord gave to the Israelites. Moses led these people away from a life of slavery in Egypt from to settle in this land. Much time has passed, and another domain in another world in another reality has been decreed by several gods and goddesses to those who shall worship them. With the promise of this land, another promise is made that if their followers perform the required acts of heroism, bravery, and valor, that they shall be made immortal. By equalizing opportunity, political and economic liberation tend to draw both poor and rich into the middle class. As an expression of social justice, this constitutes a genuine advance, ethical as well as material. But it is no easy guarantee of spiritual gain. Middle-class traits include virtues such as industry, thrift, restraint, and commercial and professional rectitude, but, on the other hand, less desirable traits such as low prudentialism, self-satisfaction, and an inclination to regard material well-being as a sign of righteousness. Hence, even in the Promised Land, what Paulo Freire calls "conscientization" (roughly, consciousness-raising through social

commitment), emphasized and refined by liberation theology, must continue although in a different vein.

Figure 15



Intertexts in Depictions of the Military

Even a first, brief examination of the cartoons will show that several clearly distinguishable intertexts are integrated in the cartoons, for example plays of Shakespeare—King Henry V being the most prominent.

In this cartoon (Fig. 16), Alhaji Baba Gana Kingibe, former Vice-Presidential candidate to Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the Presidential candidate in the annulled June 12, 1993, Presidential election, and now a Minister of Cabinet rank in the government of General Sanni Abacha, praises General Abacha and denounces Chief Abiola. The cartoon portrays Kingibe as a politician who denounces his former ally.

In the top frame, Alhaji Kingibe, addressing General Abacha as “O Henry The 5th,” praises him for his military might—one “who crushed 200 rebels on the street of Lagos,” and a “man of great competence.” In the top left picture, Alhaji Kingibe tells General Abacha what he had heard about Chief Abiola, that “he wants to make himself King,” a reference to the plan of Chief Abiola to declare himself President of Nigeria. Alhaji Kingibe suggests to General Abacha the just punishment for the action being contemplated by Chief Abiola, and, according to Alhaji Kingibe, it is death.

In the lower right frame, Kingibe expresses that he wished he could be “King,” that is the President of Nigeria. If he were President (an ambition that he carried to his Party's National Convention in March 1993, but which was denied him), he would certainly deal ruthlessly with Chief Abiola. Kingibe then advises him to beware of Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the full meaning of whose initials Kingibe has changed from Moshood Kolawole Olawale, to “MY KING”S OPPONENT.”

As an intertextual reference, King Henry V is the last of the eight great Shakespearean history plays dealing with medieval English History. This play is based on

the life of Henry V (1387-1422, king of England 1413-22), known for his victorious campaigns against France. In 1403 Henry led the royal army that defeated the rebellious Percy family, led by Sir Henry Percy, at Shrewsbury (Labarge, 1976). He also commanded the English forces that put down the revolt of the Welsh chief Owen Glendower. The new king continued his father's policy in persecuting the religious sect known as the Lollards and executed their leader, Sir John Oldcastle, in 1417 (p. 34).

He was known as the most influential ruler in western Europe at the time of his death in Vincennes, France, on August 31, 1422 (p. 76). Sadly, his death ended the period of political stability and England soon found itself in civil war once again.

The use of this play takes on several functions, its most striking one being that of a general key or aid towards understanding the cartoon. As an intertext it takes over the stabilizing function and provides a means of comparison. The cartoonist, in a way, demands that his audience read King Henry V for a more realistic, more reliable, indeed the almost 'truer' story of the two (cartoon versus the play), offering the readers a way to qualify the graphical representations. In fact, given the intertextual foil of King Henry V which accompanies the whole cartoon, the cartoonist can be said to underestimate his readers' power and far-sightedness.

To go once more back to Shakespeare's play, it also is worth pointing out that what unites the figures of King Henry V and General Abacha is that they are both warriors and conquerors. The intertext assumes the function of helping shape the cartoons. It establishes meaning(s) by evoking common features, such as similarities between the two characters. The shaping process takes place on every level of the cartoons: figures, plot, and narrative. The only difference here is that one conquered for the good of his country (King Henry V); the other (General Abacha) conquered and oppressed for his own gain.

Figure 16



NewsWatch, June 20, 1994

The influence of religion in the national life is illustrated once again in Fig. 17. In this cartoon, the biblical story of David and Goliath is used as an intertextual reference to illustrate how the weak but brave can overcome the strong (Military). This cartoon illustrates events of the dispute that occurred in 1994, between the Head of State of Nigeria, General Sanni Abacha, and a former military Federal Minister of Communications in the military regime of the retired General Ibrahim B. Babangida, Colonel (then retired) David Mark. Col. Mark lost his ministerial position when General Abacha took over power in November 1993, and fled into exile in England thereafter. From there, he began to fire a salvo of criticisms against General Abacha and his military men for daring to seize power again. Mark felt that Abacha and his men have thrown the country into deeper political, economic, and social woes, and have thereby caused great sufferings to the people.

General Abacha is portrayed in the cartoon as the Goliath of the Old Testament, and Col. David Mark as the Old Testament David. In the top frame, General Abacha, fully armed, “bestrides the land and its people like an angry pharaoh.” Col. David Mark, in the middle frame as “a small soldier,” confronts General Abacha because he (David) has been “emboldened by vengeance and defiance in his heart.”

So, Col. Mark is pictured in the third frame, casting his “stone” (a salvo of condemnations) at Goliath, General Abacha, “the fearful giant,” who in this cartoon refused to die. In the end, to what does this amount? The cartoonist had depicted a tale that ends up supporting reality of the oppressive nature of the military. However, as with any good tale, it not the ending that counts so much as the theme that it implies.

In the biblical context, the story of David and Goliath is often told—how one young man delivered Israel from Philistine oppression by one heroic act. David and Goliath are

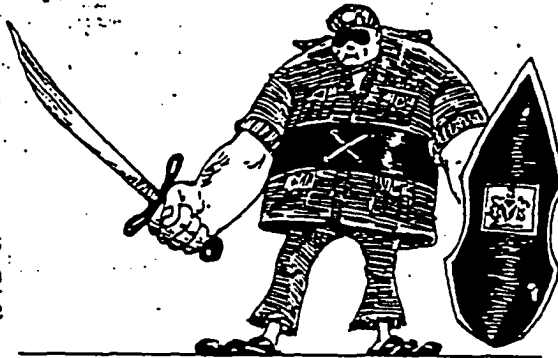
metaphors for the battle between the big guy and the little guy or the big company versus the little company or individual. The parallel elements of these stories go back a long way before David took the battlefield with Goliath as there are similarities between the whole series of events that culminated in the slingshot action of David and Nigeria's political history. The simple beginning of the story tells us that Israel, the people of God, are immersed in conflict yet again. Goliath of Gath was a champion of the Philistines. These Philistines were not native to Canaan. They did not develop as a nation within Canaan. They were dislodged from what is understood to be the area of the Aegean at the end of the thirteenth century B.C. (1 Samuel, 17). The structure therefore suggests that this is not just a story about a boy (in this case, Col. Mark) killing (or attempting to kill) a 10-foot giant (General Abacha) with a stone from a slingshot. It also exhibits dual content of intertextuality. Not only is this biblical reference depicted in the cartoon, the cartoon itself runs along a similar theme present in the David and Goliath story, that of Powerful versus Powerless.

Figure 17

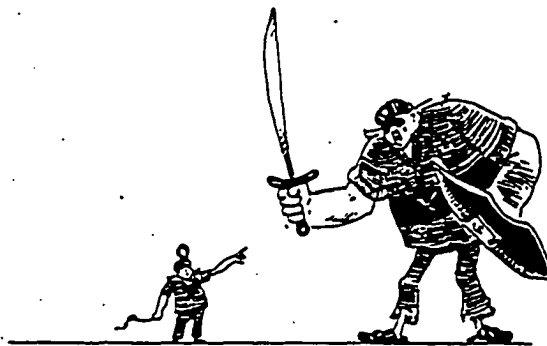
GRAFFITI

Once upon OUR time...

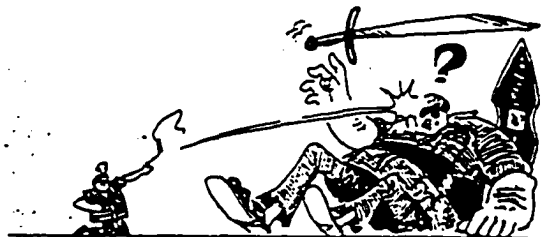
Another GOLIATH rises from the king's army, and bestrides the land and it's people like an angry pharaoh.



But out from the small ranks comes DAVID, a small soldier, but emboldened by vengeance and defiance in his heart.



Armed with his only SLING, and a lone spirit of betrayal, he casts a stone at the fearful giant. Though he fled into exile and the goliath refused to die.



...DAVID MADE A MARK !

Besides the numerous examples of biblical intertexts in these cartoons, there are references to other historical types of texts. For instance, in Fig. 18, the cartoon uses a combination of a scientific intertext coupled with a biblical intertext. In this cartoon, the cartoonist uses the word "Eureka!" Eureka in Greek is, "I have found it" (Dijksterhus, 1987). These are the words excitedly cried out by Archimedes, an ancient Greek scientist and mathematician, as he left his bathtub and ran down the street having discovered the riddle of the crown. King Hiero of Syracuse, Sicily, had summoned Archimedes to examine a crown made for the king by a goldsmith. The King was suspicious that the goldsmith had deceived him in some way. The King felt that the goldsmith might not have made the crown totally out of the pure gold originally provided. Archimedes tried without success to find a solution to the King's concerns. But, one day, as he sat in his bathtub, he noticed how the water level rose as more of his body was submerged. This is when he realized he had discovered a method of providing an answer to the King. Was the crown made of pure gold, or was some other metal substituted? The ancient scientist decided to conduct an experiment comparing the volume of the crown and a piece of pure gold having the same weight as the crown. Knowing that silver weighed less than gold, he reasoned that an ounce of gold would take up less volume than an ounce of silver since more silver would be needed to equal the ounce of gold. He lowered bars of gold equal to the weight of the crown into the water marking the water level as it rose. He then did the same with the crown. He observed the water level had risen higher when the crown had been submerged. Had the crown been made of pure gold, both water levels would have been comparable. Since more water was displaced when the crown was submerged, this indicated that the goldsmith had indeed been deceitful. He had substituted some silver for the gold when making the crown. Archimedes

had discovered the solution. Throughout history, “Eureka!” moment —when fuzzy thoughts suddenly snap into focus—have been responsible for some of our society’s best thinking, from Darwin’s theory of evolution to Edison’s first light bulb. However, here we see that moment of clarity once again is how he can continue to suppress freedom of the press and continue to detain his political opponents. Sophisticated readers can only understand use of such words, as Eureka.

The biblical intertext in this cartoon can be seen in the form in which the Draft constitution is written, that of a Ten Commandment-like tablet. The depiction of the Ten Commandments in the form of the Draft constitution constitutes an elevation of public morals and a summary for important rules for behavior—much like the Ten Commandments. Abacha becomes Moses and the press and the innocent detainee become the children of Israel. The implication of this intertext is far reaching, because it assumes a journey of 40 years to the Promised Land. For a religiously minded country such as Nigeria, this symbolic intertext is easily recognizable.

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Intertexts in Depictions of the Citizens

Depictions of the citizens in the political cartoons may be classified as a romance. Although there is no mention of romance in the cartoons, the citizens depicted are marked by the love for their country. A number of the cartoons stressed the theme of love and sacrifice coupled with the lengths that the citizens will go to in order to have freedom.

Love is only one element that is considered typical of romance. There is also the quest, which the citizens undertake to attain Democracy. This quest is partly a search for freedom; just as they are torn between the “truths” of three types of freedom, so the citizens looks to a triad of freedoms, none of which can calm their anxieties: colonialism, military rule, and civilian rule.

Romance as a narrative form asks for an intertextual capacity on the part of the reader. It can be composed of various elements which can be weighted differently, such as symbols and themes (death, love, repentance [“take this cup from me”]), names and figures, and narrative style. A typical romance feature is the postponing of an end or a solution, as we see in Fig. 12 and Fig. 13, where the end appears to be doom—which is not conveyed but assumed. The questing after some kind of treasure or presence—which can take various forms as a material or spiritual reward—is regarded as the actual romance structure (Parker, 1979, p. 4). This means that romance always happens in between the initial problem, which motivates the quest, and the (happy) ending and is therefore related to the concept of intertextuality. Similarly, romance pursues the goal of a Holy Grail that can satisfy the wish for total love, or total happiness. Both romance and intertextuality articulate the desire for a presence (a meaning, a treasure, a recognition), while at the same time endlessly postponing such a presence.

However, the essence of Nigerians fundamental identity is in fact located in the various constructions we make of it in their interactions and combinations. This process becomes much more complex as we move from the internal to the external. Nigeria's history includes a past that is colonialist. Nigerians are, in their imagination and unconscious, inhabited by cultural products from Europe and America, in particular music, films, soaps operas, and printed material. From a politically correct position, America is seen as the policeman of the world, and a hegemonic power. Perhaps that is why the citizens strive for the type of governance structure of America. However, from a pragmatic point of view, people appropriate in various ways to both European and American cultural products. In fact, Nigerian society is longing for kind of liberal democracy with its consumption, mass culture, advertisements, TV viewing, and the sense of entertainment and spectacle.

Hermeneutic Analysis

Beyond its role in biblical interpretation, hermeneutics offers a solution to a problem that social scientists have struggled with throughout the twentieth century. Seeking a solid vantage point from which to study society, modern social scientists have begun to move towards hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics is concerned with an articulation of the dictum: “there is no understanding without pre-understanding” (Dilthey, 1883/1989). This dictum, originated from Schleiermacher and was popularized by Wilhelm Dilthey, is central to the development of textual or historical accounts. Since its early days the field of study has been maintained and expanded upon to the point this particular meaning—the art of interpretation—has become but one of three spheres of hermeneutics.

While, in the past, hermeneutics has been a method for interpreting sacred and ancient texts, it has also been more than merely an orientation for understanding.

Hermeneutics has often involved assumptions about reality and ethics as well as an appreciation for the complexity and importance of interrelations among all three of its domains or branches: ontology, ethical praxis, and methodology for the human sciences and everyday life.

Gebser’s evolutionary model of consciousness provides a uniquely valuable framework from which to analyze Nigerian political cartoons. This is of critical importance because the politics that are being touted in these cartoons are part of a reader culture in which one can glean an understanding of the human psyche. In essence, the Gebserian notion of consciousness structures can be regarded as modes of awareness through which people interpret what is going on the world. Gebser’s structures of consciousness also can serve as a powerful tool in the explanation of the cultural experience. Reading political

cartoons as a cultural experience appeals to magical, mythical and mental consciousness that are fundamental to the Gebserian analyses.

Overall, Gebser describes four mutations, or evolutionary surges, of consciousness that have occurred in the history of humanity. These mutations are not just changes of perspective; rather they are fundamentally different ways of experiencing reality. These four mutations reflect five separate eras of development that are not distinct and isolated from one another but are, instead, interconnected such that all previous stages are found in subsequent ones.

Each of these stages is associated with a dimensionality, beginning with the numeric origin of zero and progressing to the fourth—the transition that we which we are experiencing at this time. Gebser identifies these five phases as the Archaic, Magical, Mythical, Mental, and Integral stages. For the purposes of this dissertation we only focus on the Magical, Mythical and Mental stages.

An additional important factor of Gebser's (1949/1985) theory encompasses two fundamental concepts: latency and transparency. The former deals with what is concealed. As Gebser describes it, "latency is the demonstrable presence of the future" (p. 6). In this manner the seeds of all subsequent phases of evolution are contained in the current one. It is on the basis of this aspect that integration takes place. The latter term, transparency, deals with what is revealed. According to Gebser, transparency (or diaphaneity) is the form of manifestation (epiphany) of the spiritual (p. 6). This is perhaps the most important statement he makes. The origin, the source from which all springs, is a spiritual one, and all phases of conscious evolution are a testimony to the ever-less latent and ever-more transparent spirituality that is inherent in all that exists.

The Archaic Structure of Consciousness

The Archaic structure of consciousness can be likened to zero-dimensional mentation, a world lacking any perspectivity at all. The holder of consciousness is perhaps only minimally self-aware or aware of his or her relationship to the larger world. On a historical scale, this structure is pre-human. According to Georg Feuerstein (1987), this structure denotes “a consciousness of maximum latency and minimum transparency” (p. 51). The term “archaic” is derived from the Greek *arce*, meaning inception, or origin. Origin is the source from which all springs, but it is that which springs forth itself. It is the essence of any consciousness. As Gebser describes the term, “conscious is neither knowledge nor conscience but must be understood for the time being in the broadest sense as wakeful presence”(Gebser, 1949/1985, p. 42). This presence, or being present, excludes further overpowering by the past (past-orientation) or any future-oriented finality. Gebser writes:

It is our task to presentiate the past in ourselves, not to lose the present to the transient power of the past. This we can achieve by recognizing the balancing power of the latent “future” with its character of the present, which is to say, its potentiality for consciousness (p. 43).

At the origin, there is no past to overwhelm and the future is complete potentiality. Consequently, that which we understand to intuit consciousness to be is qualitatively different from this original structure. What hampers any investigation into it is the fact that we have no records, no written testimony, regarding it. It is a state that is swallowed by the primal shadows of a far-distant past. It is referred to in myths and legends, but these references are of a much later time. All that can be said within the Archaic structure is that consciousness is quite undifferentiated; it is just there, and things just happen. It is the mythological state of purity at the beginning of history, life in the Garden of Eden before the

fall. Man is still part of the whole of the universe in which he finds himself. The process of individuation of consciousness has not taken place. This is not consciousness in any sense that we understand it today. Instead, it can be likened to a state of deep sleep. As such, this structure of consciousness cannot be applied to analysis of Nigerian political cartoons.

The Magic Structure of Consciousness

The Magic phase of consciousness can be referred to as man's second phase of development. Around some unspecified time back in the past, a change took place. Man entered into a second phase of development and gained a new structure of consciousness—the Magical structure. This structure is characterized by five primary characteristics: (1) its egolessness; (2) its spacelessness and timelessness; (3) its point like-unitary world; (4) its interweaving with nature; and (5) its magical reaction to the world (Feuerstein, p. 61). A basic sense of self was emerging. Language was deemed as the end product of this change. Words as agents of power are typical of this time and structure, while incantations as precursors to prayer emerged. Consciousness, in this phase, is characterized by man's intimate association with nature.

This is perhaps the most notable characteristic regarding this structure. Man, at this time, does not really distinguish himself apart from nature. He is a part of all that surrounds him. In the earliest stages it is hard to imagine that he views himself apart from his environment. The plants, animals, and other elements of his surroundings share the same fate as he does they experience in a similar manner. Latency is still dominant, but very little is transparent. The quest for survival are all activities that consume most of his waking hours—the hunting and the gathering. Nevertheless, in the quiet of the evening around the fire, there is time for reflection of sorts. The activities of the day were codified (in speech)

and recounted. Memory was collective, tribal, and all things were shared and experienced by all. The “I” is not a factor; the “We” is dominant in this structure of consciousness.

This is a one-dimensional, pre-perspectival, point-like state occurs in a dream-like. Unlike the dreamlessness of the previous structure, a recognition is developing in man that he is something different from that around him. Not fully awake to who he is or what his role in the world is, man is recognizing himself as an entity. The forms of expression for this structure can be found in the art and other artifacts that have been recovered from this time. Graven images and idols are common to this time. However, ritual should also be considered here, for it is the specific and directed execution of certain actions and gestures that conveys much about this consciousness structure.

Another feature of this structure is its spacelessness and timelessness. The idea that space and time are illusions derives from this stage in our development as human beings. To Magic Man, closely linked as he is with others of like mind, space and time need not concern him. Magic, however, is very much alive today, and there is such a strong interest in magic today. What is more, it is the most vital and emotional of all structures. We live in very decisive times, potentially catastrophic times. This is a time when emotion rises near the surface of our consciousness and it is here that magic manifests itself. The proliferation of stories and films dealing with Voodoo and similar topics further substantiate this claim. Examples of dominantly magical consciousness include African tribespeople or Australian Aboriginal cultures.

In applying the notion of magic consciousness to political cartoons, it appears that they are expressed in the form of totemism. Political cartoons, exhibiting magical consciousness, graphically symbolize issues that are important to the citizens of Nigeria. In the case of a number of Nigerian editorial cartoons, the quest for “democracy” is

demonstrated by iconic representation of the Military and the President-elect, Chief Abiola. Magical consciousness implies a first awakening to a sense of separation from nature, and thus the beginning for the drive for power and control. Much like advertising, these political cartoons are selling a product—political ideology. Through the magical goal of association, the readers are able to link a particular character (for instance Abiola) with a concept of “savior of the nation.” Or linking any graphical representation of the Military administrators to the notion of “Dictator.” These Nigerian political cartoons are essentially linking Abiola to a political ideology that the citizens find attractive. The date, “June 12,” becomes emblematic for the editorial cartoonists and helped in establishing it as date that signifies “move towards democracy.”

Judith Williamson (1982) argues that “magic is not a single unified referent system, as it is not a ‘thing’, like nature, but a process, a mythical means of doing things. Thus unlike ‘nature’ or ‘time’, it does not involve a particular area in reality onto which we may be misplaced by ideology—it represents the misplacement itself, and is an area of transformation rather than an area of time or space in which position may be transformed” (p. 140). She further argues that “magic involves a misrepresentation of time in space or space in time. Time is magically incorporated into space, in such things as the crystal ball—an object which contains the future—and space is magically produced out of time, in conjuring up objects out of nowhere, instantly, by means of spells or alchemy. In the center of these magical processes, the axis of their performance, is the subject: you, the buyer (or in this case the reader) (p. 140).

Essentially, the power of the graphical illustrations depicting “democracy” and “June 12th” becomes an incantation that promises or gives hope to political emancipation from the present Military governing body. In this sense, the political cartoons offer magic,

they assume what Williamson in describing the action in advertisements calls “a system of transformation...” (p. 141). The terms “democracy” and “June 12” encapsulate, condense and are capable of releasing forces that are greater than they are. In another example (Fig. 19), in the first frame of the cartoon, a boy playing with a football declares, “they say that nobody should talk about the mandate of . . .”. Then, from what appears to be the youngster he is playing with outside of the frame, come attempts to silence him. However, the youngster continues, “But Gani says he will shout.” (Note: the man who could not be stopped from talking about June 12 was Mr. Gani Fawehinmi, a Lagos, an attorney who for many years had defended those who had been arrested for character defamation of the Military administrators.) In the top right frame the young boy declares that “People say that even the Oba (King) wrote it down, instead of talking.” This is once again referencing June 12th. In the final frame, we see both youngsters shout the subject matter that people were warned not to talk about—June 12th.

Following the annulment of the June 12, 1993, Presidential election that Chief M.K.O. Abiola had won, the atmosphere in the nation was one of uncertainty and fear of an inevitable catastrophe that might befall the nation. The solution that the federal government proposed, as a way to prevent a breakdown of law and order, was to pass word around to Nigerians to stop talking about June 12 and Chief Abiola's victory in the election. But Nigerians found a way to talk about it anyway.

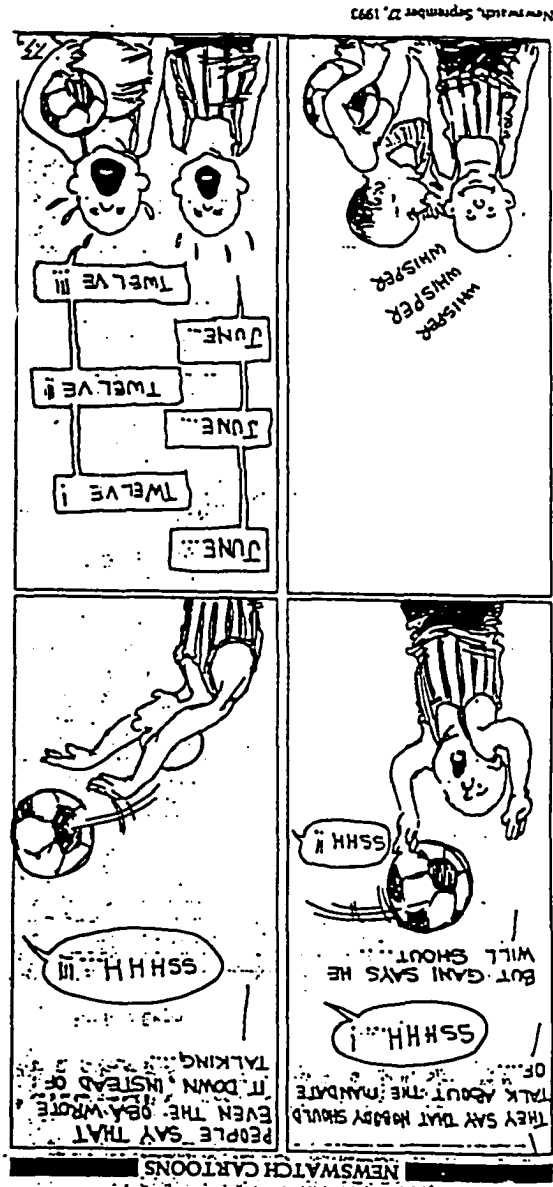


Figure 19

Political cartoons in this context also serve as a modern form of shamanism. When the readers allow themselves to be fully taken in by a political cartoon, they experience all of the emotions the primitive goes through during his or her ceremony with the witch doctor. The witch doctor in this case is the cartoonist, under whose spell they surrender. In their modern trance state, they may feel elated, scared, threatened, or even horrified. They anticipate a form of psychic healing through laughter that the cartoon brings about. In essence, they allow themselves to be taken over by a spell that is as real and potent as the trance state of the primitive. The primitive and naive participate in the witch doctor's magic wholeheartedly, and the modern sophisticates participate with guarded minds and denial.

Gebser noted that the dominant magic structure of consciousness expressed a tribal or group identity rather than the personal or individual one characteristic of the mental and especially perspectival consciousness. This suggests that cooperation in the dominantly magical human was a matter of immersion in the ethos of the group or the tribe.

Perhaps Williamson describes it best when she states that "magic is a transformational system which can incorporate many different elements of ideology: it is a meta-system where all the mis-relations and elisions of other systems take place, a point of translation and exchange" (p. 144).

The Mythical Structure of Consciousness

With the advent of the Cro-Magnons, man became a tool-making individual, also one who formed into larger social structures. This structure can be considered two-dimensional since it is characterized by fundamental polarities. Word was the reflector of

inner silence; myth was the reflector of the soul (Feuerstein, 1987, p. 79). Religion appears as the interaction between memory and feeling.

In this structure, man is beginning to recognize himself as opposed to others. Language is becoming ever more important. The mouth is important in making transparent what is involved in being and life. The mouth now becomes the spiritual organ. The mythic consciousness is characterized by storytelling. We witness, as well, the initial concretization of the "I" of man.

Many myths deal explicitly with man's (unperspectival) separation from nature. For instance, the story of man's Fall in Genesis and the myth of Prometheus and the giving of fire to man. These both indicate a strong awareness of man's perceived difference from nature. Man is coming into his own, although he is not independent of it. One could characterize this as a two-dimensional understanding of the world. Myth, then, is the primary form of expression of this period. Subsets of this basic form would be the gods, symbols, and mysteries. These figures provide the emerging consciousness with imaginative images around which to center man's knowledge and understanding of the world. If the Magic structure of consciousness is the emotional aspect, then the Mythical structure is the imaginative one.

Mouths begin to play a more important role. Not only is the shaman and wise person of the tribe a repository of wisdom, but others, the poets, such as Homer, begin to play a more important role in the culture. However, this does not really begin to happen until the Mythical structure of consciousness.

The "I" of man is not yet fully developed, to be sure, but it has developed to the point that it recognizes and demands a separation from nature, from its environment. We can

take this as evidence of an increasing crystallization of the ego. Man is on his way to selfhood.

As satiric modern worshippers we read and analyze political cartoons. Throughout this non-linear narrative, we identify with the heroes (for example, Abiola, Saro-Wiwa) and vilify the antihero (Military administrators). We vicariously exult in the victories depicted in the cartoons. And we may be spiritually inspired by the moral of the cartoon. Political cartoons become in the modern world the collective cathedral of primitive participation mystique—the tribal dream house of modern civilization.

Our participation and reading of political cartoons is our participation in myth. Myth is not, as popularly conceived, something that is not true. Ananda Coomaraswamy argues that myth is actually “the nearest to absolute truth that can be expressed in words” (Dooling, 1982, p. 2-3) or in this case, as political cartoons. Raffaele Pettazoni (1948) says that “myth is not fable, but history, ‘true history’ and not ‘false history’ (p. v). Mircea Eliade, Bronislaw Malinowski, and others suggest that myth, as something held to be sacred by the believers thereof, is considered true (Eliade, 1949, p. 174; Malinowski, 1926, p. 21).

However we may feel about myth or however we may define it, myth is a collective cultural expression of the sacred mass consciousness. As used herein, the term signifies a traditional tribal numinous story, usually with significant spiritual import.

All cultures have myth. Myth can be described as a religious cultural expression, religion being defined here as a collective set of beliefs, attitudes, practices, ritual, and behaviors that are held passionately and from which a feeling of transcendence is derived by the members of a particular culture. In a secular society, the function of religion may be fulfilled by something other than what is traditionally thought to be religious or sacred. The phenomenon of political rallies, for example, can be described as a sacred institution.

Zealous devotees congregate to passionately roar and support their mythic heroes for the common good of their respective community tribes. Here, true believers spend inordinate amounts of time, money, and energy in an activity that enriches a priestly caste and religiously inspires the devotees to passionate fervor—sometimes even to zealous violence.

While the political cartoons in this study have been picked particularly for their mythic content, it must be acknowledged that most political cartoons have some mythic import. The myths of any country is created and re-created perpetually throughout the history of all civilization. When myths are manifested in political cartoons we see the emergence and continuation of particular genres that promote mass participation in each respective myth. One such mythic genre is of western democracy, which has done well to promote the mythic ideals and justifications for such cultural ideologies as rugged individualism and puritanical capitalism. Political cartoons that are the subject of this study are usually not intentionally mythical at all, and are not obviously mythic to most viewers. They are mythicized at the subconscious and cultural level.

As Roland Barthes explained in his 1957 work *Mythologies*, myth “is a second-order semiological system. That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second” (p. 114). Myths exist on two levels: one level which is immediately present to perception but often fairly trivial, and another which is frequently, and dangerously, neither perceptible nor trivial.

The examples Barthes himself uses are perhaps the most illuminating. First, it is important to note that anything may be put to mythic signification: a bunch of roses, a photograph, spoken language, a building, a gesture, et cetera. To illustrate the double-ordered signification of “mythical speech” (p. 115), Barthes discusses a cover photo on a copy of *Paris-Match*, showing a smiling young black man in uniform saluting the French

flag. On the first level it signifies a smiling young black man in uniform saluting the French flag and on its mythic level approbation of the French Empire, expressed by someone who might be suspected of having reservations on the matter. As Barthes puts it, in looking at this picture, “I see very well what it signifies to me: that France is a great Empire, that all her sons, without any color discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal shown by this Negro in serving his so-called oppressors” (p. 116). In this case, it is the second meaning which is more potent, but here it is also more suspect. The danger inheres in the uses to which myth may be put, since, as Barthes says, “myth is a type of speech defined by its intention...much more than by its literal sense” (p. 124). It is inescapably motivated (p. 126).

These motivations, however, can be recognized and in a sense defused. Barthes perceives that once a myth is demystified, is seen as myth, its power dissipates. This is accomplished through a recognition of the arbitrary linkage of signified and signifier in the myth, a recognition within the scope of the mythologist. But for the “myth-reader” still in the grip of myth, “everything happens as if the picture naturally conjured up the concept, as if the signifier gave a foundation to the signified” (p. 129-30). This “natural connection” is then seen to reflect a frozen and impervious reality, to signify how things have always been and always should be, and the “semiological system” of myth hardens into a “system of values” (p. 131). Within this system, historical contingency masks itself as eternal, natural, unremarkable, and ideologically pure—in other words, incontestable and immobile. The mythic world is a world in blissful if blind stasis, because, says Barthes, “revolution excludes myth” (p. 146).

The date June 12th becomes a myth useful for military, political, and ideological purposes. What accounts for the persistence and constant reference to June 12th in a select

group of these cartoons is that as the pursuit of democracy dragged on, it became important to maintain public morale and to create a renewed sense of community especially in an ethnically diverse country. It recreated a national resolve that had emerged at the beginning of the struggle for democracy. This resolve eventually led to Abiola winning in the election, since Nigeria has been ruled for several decades by Military administrators and politicians from the Northern region of Nigeria. The fact that Abiola won the election suggests that there was cohesion among Nigeria's ethnic groups. June 12th portrayed as a solidarity movement became the road to independence, democracy, and capitalism. Political cartoonists in their depictions and their references to June 12th helped perpetuate the myth and keep it on the public's radar.

Political cartoons are one of the primary ways in which contemporary myths are told. They express a culture's paradigms, those assumptions about reality that a culture holds to be true. Many political cartoonists unconsciously express their culture's paradigm in the cartoons they draw. In which case, the audience and the cartoonists both subconsciously assume that the political cartoons' mythic elements are actually true.

The Myth of the "Politician as Hero" or "Savior" is also one of the several powerful cultural images that the Nigeria culture holds as true (as depicted in Fig. 17). In this paradigm, the politician (Abiola as the politician) is a person who heroically lays his life on the line to protect the public from the oppressive rule of the military rulers. The enhancement of the Military as an actual villain enhances the notion of the "mythic hero" and so draws the mythic story heavily enough to satisfy both the reader and the cartoonists. Another example of this in Fig. 13 is portrayed in this cartoon as a "savior" much in the image of Jesus, who died for the salvation of the citizens of Nigeria.

But often political cartoonists create cartoons that challenge the truth of existing cultural paradigms by graphically producing cartoons in which the myth does not go the way the audience expects. This is best described as dissonance between expectation and the way the cartoon is drawn, but basically what these cartoons give is the kind of power to educate, illuminate, and possibly inspire. Abiola's plight could be likened to that of the mythic hero, Robin Hood. Robin is exiled from civilized culture and as an outlaw must live in the woods during the time of his mythic-heroic ordeal. Abiola in this case is not exiled into the woods, but he is jailed. Banishment and exile are common features of hero myths and the resolution of such story involves restoration of the hero to his "rightful place"—often through actions of his own that bring about changes permitting his triumphant return.

In another example of the myth of the "politician as hero" (Fig. 20), Abiola is portrayed anticipating keeping his date with destiny. August 27, 1993, was an important date in the political history of Nigeria. That was the day when many Nigerians expected that the former President of Nigeria, retired I.B. Babangida, would hand over power to Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the presumed winner of the June 12, 1993, Presidential election. But Chief Abiola's hope was dashed to the ground. Instead, that was the day General Babangida retired himself from the Nigerian Army and stepped aside from continuing as Nigeria's Head of State. That day, August 27, 1993, was also the day when Chief Ernest Shonekan was sworn in as Head of the Interim National Government. This chain of events on the same day pushed Nigeria into a new political environment.

In the top left frame, Abiola—who is portrayed in a pensive mood—awaits what would happen on August 27, 1993. He is quoted as saying that he would "keep a date with destiny." By this statement, he was certainly expecting that his ambition would be realized, that is, that he would be installed the President of Nigeria. But in the top right frame, Chief

Abiola, knowing that his ambition has been blighted and fearing some political turmoil on that day, exclaimed with an attitude of self surrender “Who wants to be a dead Hero anyway?”

President Mandela of South Africa had on May 10, 1994, called on General Abacha to respect the democratic wishes of the Nigerian people by transferring power to Chief Abiola. The picture on the bottom left shows President Mandela making the appeal while Chief Abiola is portrayed in a mood of dejection and despair. Shortly after President Mandela's appeal, Chief Abiola is aroused to action. In the last frame, Abiola is awakened by what appears to be a phone call. Abiola asks the caller, presumably the individual who has taken away his mandate as President-elect (possibly General Abacha), to give him back “MY MANDATE” which out of his emotional imbalance he mistakenly referred to as “MY MANDELA.”

Indeed mythic stories are always based in a community—a particular community of culture.

Figure 20



NewsWatch, May 30, 1994

The Mental Structure of Consciousness

The next shift in consciousness took place between 10,000 B.C. and 500 B.C. This was the transition to the Mental structure of consciousness. It was at this time that man stepped out of the mythical circle (two-dimensional) into three-dimensional space (Gebser, 1949/1985). Mythology had become so deficient that man needed a clean break with the past. The plethora of gods and contradictory stories of creation, and formation of institutions, threatened to overwhelm the consciousness of man; he practically stood on the brink of drowning in a deluge of mythological mentation. In reaction to this, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and, of course, Pythagoras stepped forth to counteract this trend. The Mental structure was inaugurated and this coincides with the “discovery” of “causality.” Abstraction becomes a key word to describe mental activity and we find man using his mind to overcome and “master” the world around him. With abstraction comes philosophizing, hence the philosopheme is the primary form of expression. Monotheism almost universally replaces the plethora of gods of bygone days; dogma, in both allegory and creed, replaces the symbols of previous times; method replaces the mysteries as man develops an ever-increasing desire to penetrate and, of course, master nature. This has given rise to the idea of science as the dominant religion of today. Also at this time, time itself was conceptualized (spatialized) as an “arrow” that points from the past to the future by way of the present (Feuerstein, p. 98).

About the time of the Renaissance, man came into his own and truly mastered space. It was at this time that perspective was actually introduced into art. Since that time, perspective has come to be a major part and aspect of our mental functioning. Perspective is the lifeblood of reasoning and the Rational structure of consciousness, which Gebser

considers to be only a deficient form of the Mental structure. What we have is the full development of the ego and its related centeredness. Our language, our entire imagery and dominant metaphor takes on visual, spatial character. Space is finally overcome, in the true sense of the word. With the supercession of space, man finally accomplishes his egoistic, individual separation from nature. In this concretization of the "I," we become very aware of our existence, of our beingness, of our individuality. And so it should be. But in a deficient mode, the outcomes, of course, are loneliness, isolation, and alienation, which are characteristic of American culture. In fact, Americans' current materialistic approach to understanding reality is perhaps the final stage of this structure.

On this level, cartoonists seek to demythologize the political and economic establishments. In fact, they are exploiting the myths and are often hitting what Tony Schwartz calls "the responsive chord" (Schwartz, 1973). The cartoonists use rich symbols to demythologize the cartoons and counteract what is often the official version of reality. It should be noted that the Mental –Perspectival structure of consciousness is also important here because the cartoons are critiques of social and political conditions of Nigeria.

There is also much everyday evidence to indicate that we are moving through a great change at this time. This is also the time of philosophy. The mental ordering and systematization of thought becomes the real dominant mode of expression. The myths have lost their vibrancy and existential connection to reality. Greek thought, followed later by the Scholastics and finally the Enlightenment are all periods in which this particular structure of consciousness flourishes and strongly manifests. It is not without its opposition, of course, since any change will bring about the requisite opposition to its own development. By the time of the Renaissance, though, this structure had firmly established itself and was prepared to move into the next phase of its development. At this time, as was pointed out earlier, a

very profound and significant event occurred: man incorporated space into his thought. We cannot underestimate, or overstate, the importance of this development. It is literally at this time that the world begins to shrink. The seeds of our one-world community are planted at this time. The ripples begun during the Magical structure are widening significantly: first spirit, then soul, now space have become constituents of man's consciousness. Three dimensions have been established and we are prepared for the next significant step we are taking now.

The Integral Structure of Consciousness

Gebser (1949/1985) contends that we are on the threshold of a new structure of consciousness, namely the Integral. For Gebser, this structure integrates those that have come before and enable the human mind to transcend the limitations of three-dimensionality. A fourth dimension, time, is added. This integration is not simply a union of seemingly disparate opposites, rather it is the "irruption of qualitative time into our consciousness" (Feuerstein, p. 309). The supercession of time is a theme that will play an extremely important role in this structure. In fact, the ideas of a rationality (as opposed to the rationality of the current structure), aperspectivity (as opposed to the perspective, spatially determined mentation of the current structure), and diaphaneity (the transparent recognition of the whole, not just parts) are significant characteristics of this new structure. It will be this structure of consciousness that will enable us to overcome the dualism of the Mental structure and actually participate in the transparency of self and life.

This fourth structure toward which we are moving is one of minimum latency and maximum transparency; diaphaneity is one of its hallmarks. In this mode of transparency,

one sees through things and perceives their true nature. Intensity is a key characteristic of this mode of consciousness.

Not being bound by merely past or future Magic and Mythic structures of consciousness permeate political cartoons. Although this analysis has excluded discussion of Mental and Integral structures of consciousness that does not mean that, they do not exist in some form in political cartoons of other countries. What is apparent and useful here is that Gebser's structures of consciousness provide another method of evaluating political cartoons.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

Summary of Finding

As a unique creation, political cartoons have combined both pictorial editorial with artistic social commentary beyond the boundaries of the written word. Nigerian political cartoons have provided a glimpse of the political debate and perhaps public opinion surrounding events that occurred during Nigeria's most recent tenuous political history. Relying on the cartoons' nonlinear narrative structures, semiotic and hermeneutic analysis is applied to illuminate the structure and content of these political cartoons. Furthermore, the study analyzed how cartoonists are able to help challenge and question authority.

First, this research addressed how satire is blended with criticism, aimed particularly at political leaders and institutions. The satirist in words or art mocks a politician, government, or social institution on a scale from gentle teasing to sharp invective, with a goal of not only entertainment, but also change (Whitby, 1992). For the political cartoonists, their cartoons are designed to be humorous in tone, but include political and social criticism. Furthermore, satire is discussed as term defined by context, purpose, tone, and era. That Nigerian cartoonists were "rebellious" seems obvious, and it is likely that the rebellion was against the censorship regime itself, and more generally against a world defined by military officials. Nigerian journalists were thrust into a world of dictatorship and lack of press freedom in a nation beset by coups and annulled elections. Editors and journalists suffered under the military regime. Fractious Nigerian press humor perhaps mirrored a fractured Nigerian political climate.

The narrative structure of cartoons also was discussed with an emphasis on the non-linear qualities of political cartoons that oppose the linear organization of events in a normal story. It was argued that the political cartoon as a narrative organizes events with key parts of the story missing. The reader hardly escapes the notions of discontinuity. Therefore true understanding or reading of a political cartoon is only achieved with adequate socio-cultural historical knowledge.

The first research question sought to identify the themes and issues in the political cartoons. This provided interesting results. In examining the contents of the political cartoons, it was discovered that the political cartoonists devoted a greater number of cartoons to substantive issues than they did to non-substantial issues. These substantial issues were posited to be “hot button” issues on the minds of the public. The cartoonists tended to focus on a variety of issues, but they differed across magazines in the issues they depicted. This claim cannot be further substantiated since readers were not polled to determine whether these issues were in fact “hot button.” What is certain is that Nigerian cartoonists devoted more cartoons to the following substantive issues/themes: Economy, Domestic Policy, Human Rights, Press Freedom, Foreign Policy, and Democratic Governance. Non-substantive themes that focused on electoral strategies and military and political characters accounted for 19% of the coverage. This suggests that non-substantive issues/themes such as politicians and military officials were far less important and irrelevant to Nigerian politics.

The second research question asked the following question: What are the recurring themes in the period 1993-1996 in Nigerian political cartoons?

In order to answer this question, the themes and the semiotic means by which they were depicted were discussed. This discussion was informed by the history and politics of

Nigeria. In addition to providing a litany of themes, political cartoons also framed several of these issues/themes in the form of binary oppositions. The rendering of a politically fragmented country in terms of oppositions reflects and enables the subjugation and oppression of those located on one side of the spectrum. Originally a structuralist, metaphysical concept used to describe the way we use language to think about the world (e.g., we can only think about “hot” in relation to its opposite, “cold,” “high” to “low,” etc.) binary opposition has been applied to post-structuralist thought as well.

The following outlines the layers of duality that have structured the discussion of these themes: Time versus Timelessness, Powerful versus Powerless, Truth versus Lies.

Examining the issues depicted in these political cartoons enables us to uncover a historical plot and begin to understand it. As an interpretive strategy, foregrounding the binary plots let us examine their manifestations over time and despite historical (situational) change.

The last research question was the following: How is June 12, 1993, depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?

1. How is democracy depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?
2. How is the military depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?
3. How are the citizens of Nigeria depicted in Nigerian political cartoons?

Using intertextual analysis as a tool and hermeneutics as a method, the structure of how these issues were depicted was analyzed. When all the intertextual references within these cartoons are examined, it is evident that they serve a higher purpose. The intertextual references raise the intellectual level of the cartoon and present an active mental challenge to the reader. Those who possess the necessary background and cultural knowledge will perceive many references to religion, culture, politics, history, and popular culture within the

cartoons. The intertextual references in the cartoons are steeped in biblical and historical mythology, and they often have the effect desired. The drawings become an action that goes very deep into people psychologically. In rituals, once the deity is invoked the body of the ceremony begins. Certain cartoons are designed to trigger altered states, although it depends on the reader as to whether this happens or not.

While the cartoons can be read at any level, it is particularly stimulating when the influences of other texts are recognized and understood. Clearly the variety of cues lead to greater understanding for the intelligent reader, thus revealing the tremendous talent employed in illustrating cartoons.

Overall, this analysis underscores several key elements of political cartoons. First, cartoons are clearly oriented toward the four main structural elements: sign (denotative and connotative), binary opposition, intertextuality, and hermeneutic analysis. These were all found to be present in political cartoons. Second, these were the strategies that helped foster understanding in the cartoons. Recognizing the depiction of issues and understanding the cartoons pre-supposes knowledge of the iconic, symbolic, and indexical referents used by the cartoonists.

However, what clearly distinguishes Nigerian political cartoons from other types of journalistic ventures is their singular attention to what is negative about those in power in a humorous manner. This notion of the negativity of political cartoons has been supported by previous research (Koetzle and Bruneil (1996) Free from the norms of objectivity, political cartoonists are free to judge political leaders in any manner they wish. The political cartoons in this instance highlighted exclusively the personal scandals of the military rulers—their shortcomings and flaws. Thus, a cartoonist can be judge and jury but stops short of being an executioner. They only take it so far. Cartoonists in this instance appear to be interested in

policy changes, although they lampoon the Military rulers and their inconsistency and corruption, but the tone of the cartoons, as abstract as it may be, echoes the sentiment of the public at large.

Political cartoons are one of the primary ways in which contemporary myths are told. They express a culture's paradigms, those assumptions about reality that a culture holds to be true. Many political cartoonists unconsciously express their culture's paradigm in the cartoons they draw. In which case, the audience and the cartoonists both subconsciously assume that the political cartoon's mythic elements are actually true. Indeed culture is a useful tool in understanding the way meaning is constructed in cartoons. Both the cartoonist and the readers' cultures play an important role in the way they activate meaning in the cartoons. Culture serves as a means by which "self-defined groups within or across social classes express themselves in a unique way or locate themselves within an identifiable 'field of signification'" (Tomaselli, 1988, p. 39).

Future Research

These findings in particular suggest some avenues for future research into ways those cartoonists' depictions of politicians and military officials may differ. First, there may be important differences among politicians and military officials. Future research, then, may wish to examine how these two differ in the issues that each are portrayed supporting.

Second, the focus of this study is narrow and it calls for future research that assesses a wider range of political cartoons over a broader span of time. Yet in its narrowness, it freeze-frames a particularly turbulent time in Nigeria. As a case study, it argues that political cartoons is a powerful lens through which we may continue to zero in on moments of change in Nigerian history that are simultaneously social, economic, political and cultural.

Third, future research should assess whether there is a correspondence between the editorial agenda and the cartoon. There is a need to analyze and compare cartoon content to editorial content in order to determine whether there is a pattern of differences or similarities. Fourth, testing this framework of analysis (Denotation, Connotation, Binary Opposition and Hermeneutics) in different countries and diverse culture is important for identifying the common ground in communication research. The consistent applicability of this framework in many places at many points in time will establish its general plausibility as a framework.

Furthermore, future research may examine the potential linkage between the issues/themes portrayed in political cartoons and actual public opinion. Adding cartoons from Newspapers effects a much wider scope to compare, which was a limitation of the present study. Whether or not it is intentional, political cartoons have the ability to affect us deeply and on many psychological levels. From the simplest cartoons to the most complex and ritualized construction, cartoons have a power over us which we are probably only beginning to understand.

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Onwudinjo, C. (1994, July 4) Graffiti. Tell.

Onwudinjo, C. (1995, April 13) Graffiti. Tell.

Onwudinjo, C. (1995, May 1) Graffiti. Tell.

Onwudinjo, C. (1995, November 27). Graffiti. Tell.

Onwudinjo, C. (1994, September 2) Graffiti. Tell.

Onwudinjo, C. (1994, September 9) Graffiti. Tell.

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Oyekusibe, F. (1994, April 18) Graffiti . Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, April 25) Graffiti . Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, May 2) Graffiti . Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, June 13) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, June 27). Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, September 19) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1995, January 30) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1995, February 13) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1995, April 25) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1995, September 4) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1995, September 11) Graffiti. Tell.

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Oyekusibe, F. (1995, October 30). Graffiti. Tell.

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Oyekusibe, F. (1996, February 12). Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1996, February 19). Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1996, March 18) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1996, April 15) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1996, April 26) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1996, May 6) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, May 20) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, May 27) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, June 3) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, June 16) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, July 1) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, July 15) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, July 29) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, August 12) Graffiti. Tell.

Oyekusibe, F. (1994, September 16) Graffiti. Tell.

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Schulz, T. (1994, May 30). Newswatch Cartoor. Newswatch.

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Schulz, T. (1994, October 17). Newswatch Cartoon. Newswatch.

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Schulz, T. (1994, December 19). Newswatch Cartoon. Newswatch.

Schulz, T. (1994, December 26). Newswatch Cartoon. Newswatch.

Schulz, T. (1995, April 24). Newswatch Cartoon. Newswatch.

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- Schulz, T. (1995, September 25). Newswatch Cartoon. Newswatch.
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- Schulz, T. (1996, April 8). Newswatch Cartoon. Newswatch.
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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Figure A1. African Guardian - June 14, 1993

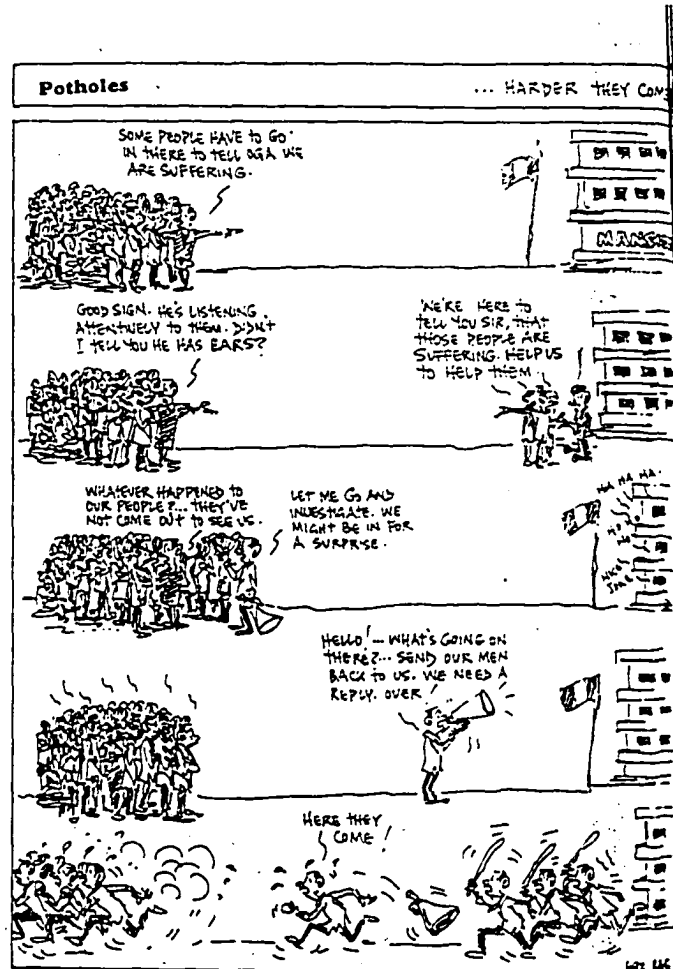


Figure A2. African Guardian –June 28, 1993

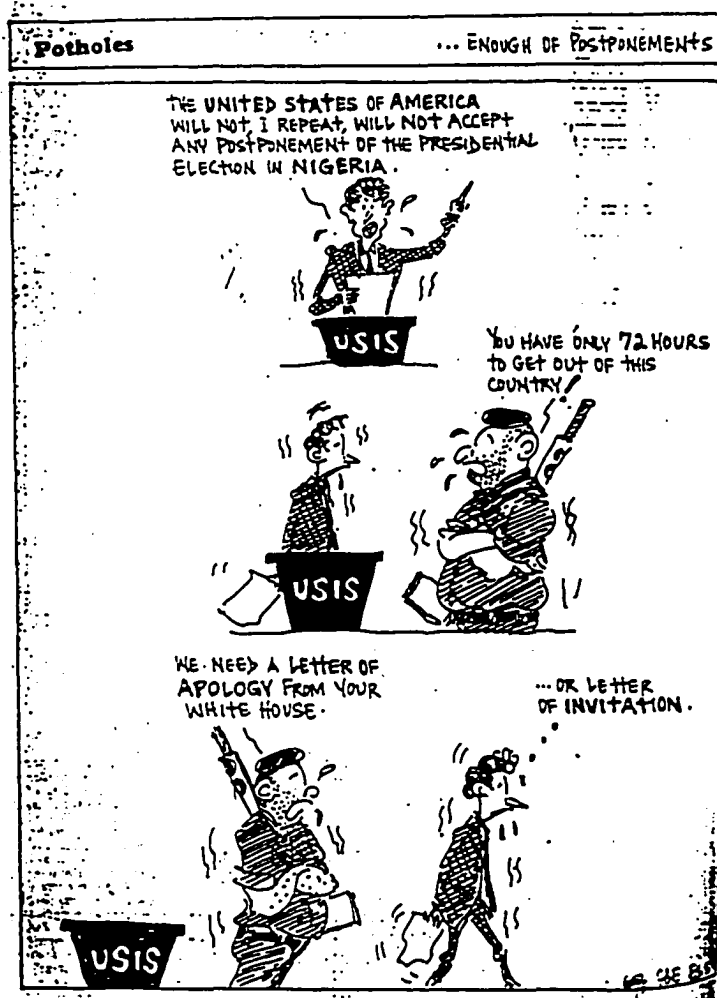


Figure A3. African Guardian - July 12, 1993

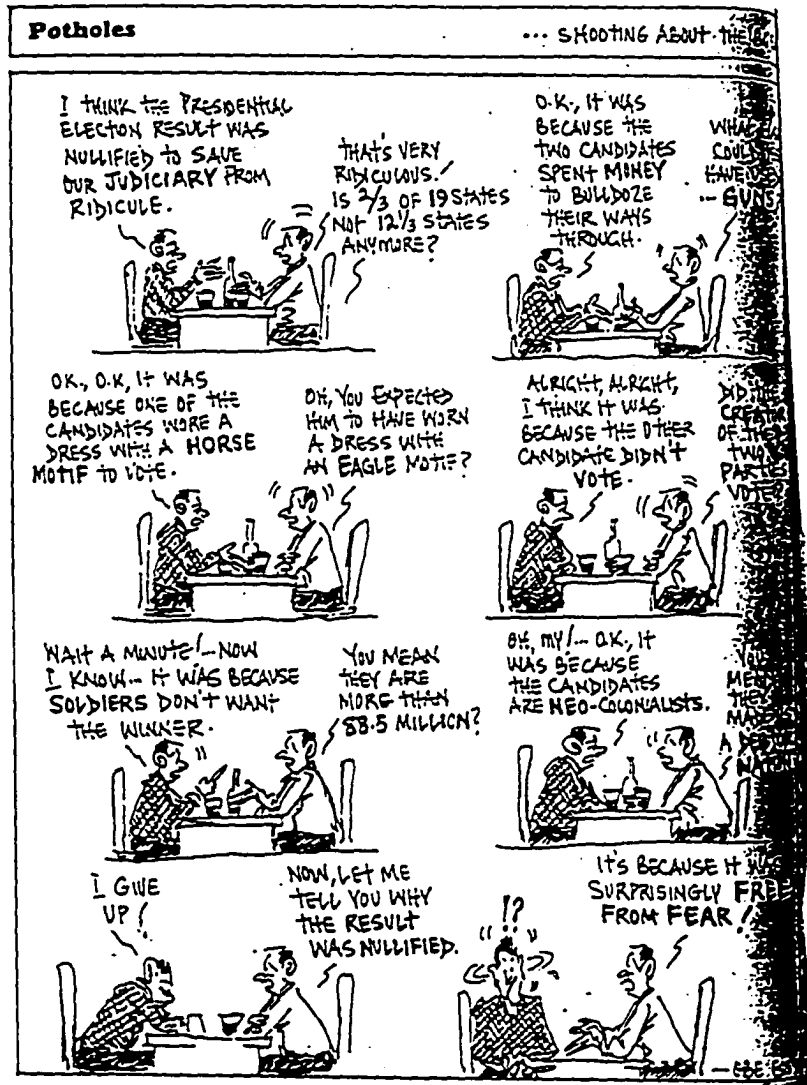


Figure A4. African Guardian – August 16, 1993

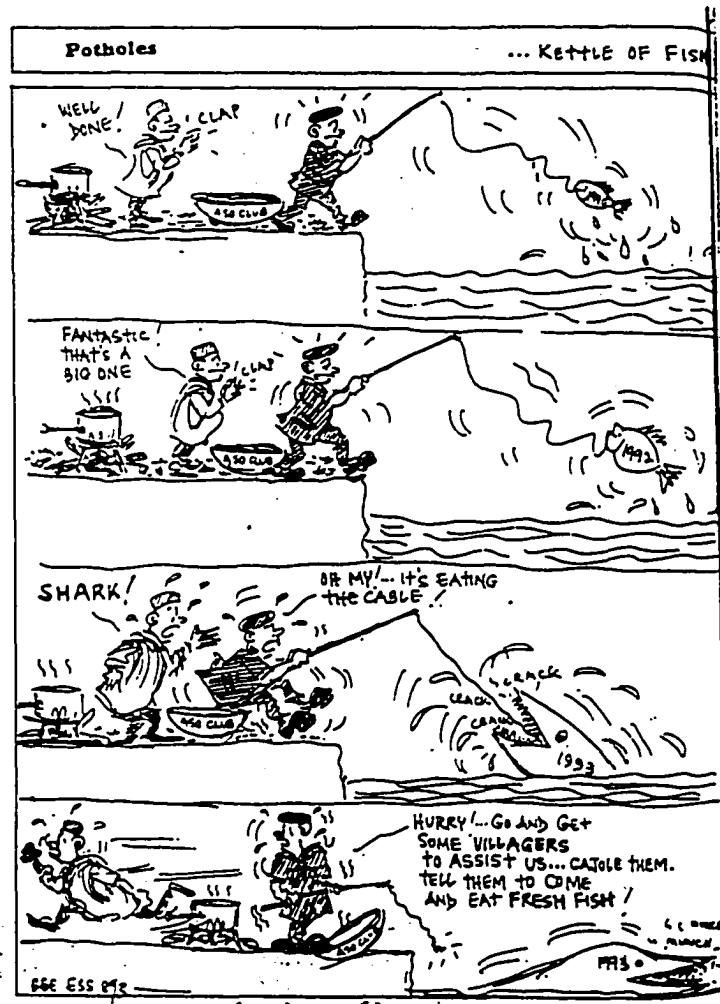


Figure A5. African Guardian – August 23, 1993

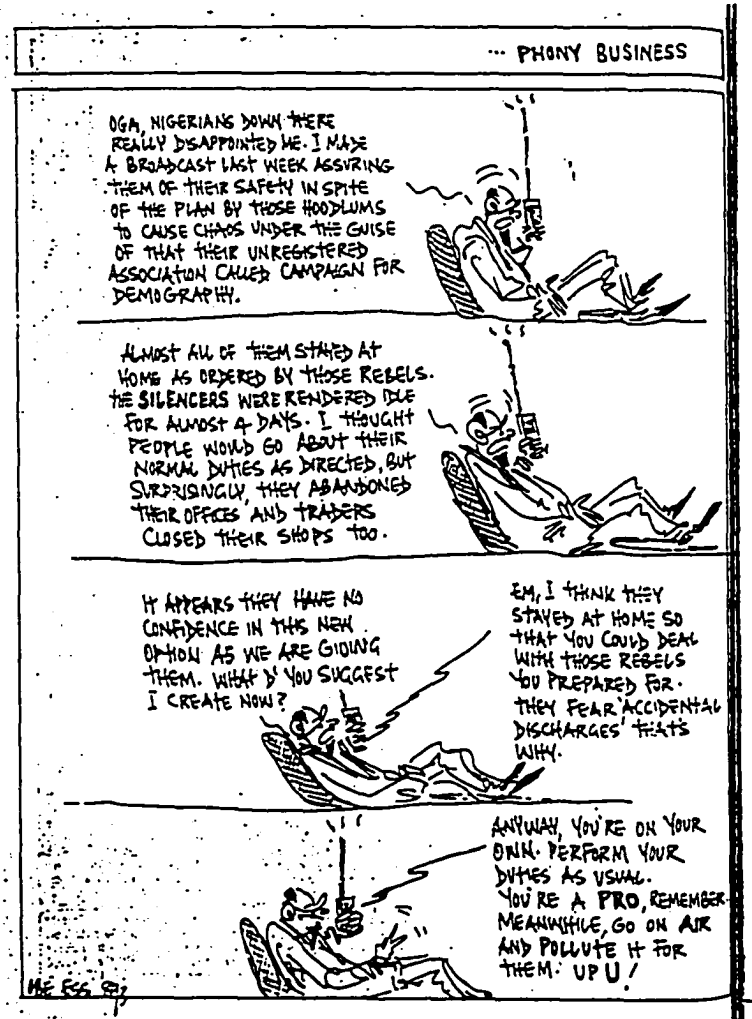


Figure A6. African Guardian—September 8, 1993



Figure A7. African Guardian – November 8, 1993

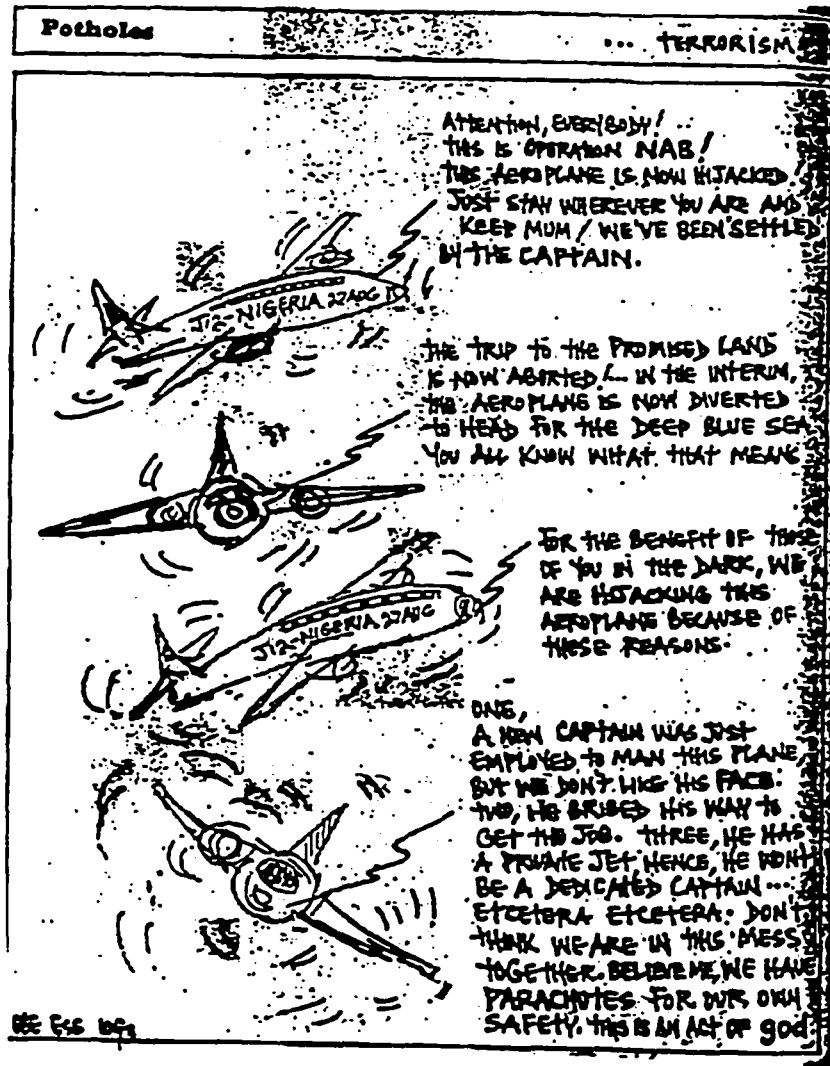


Figure A8. African Guardian—December 13, 1993

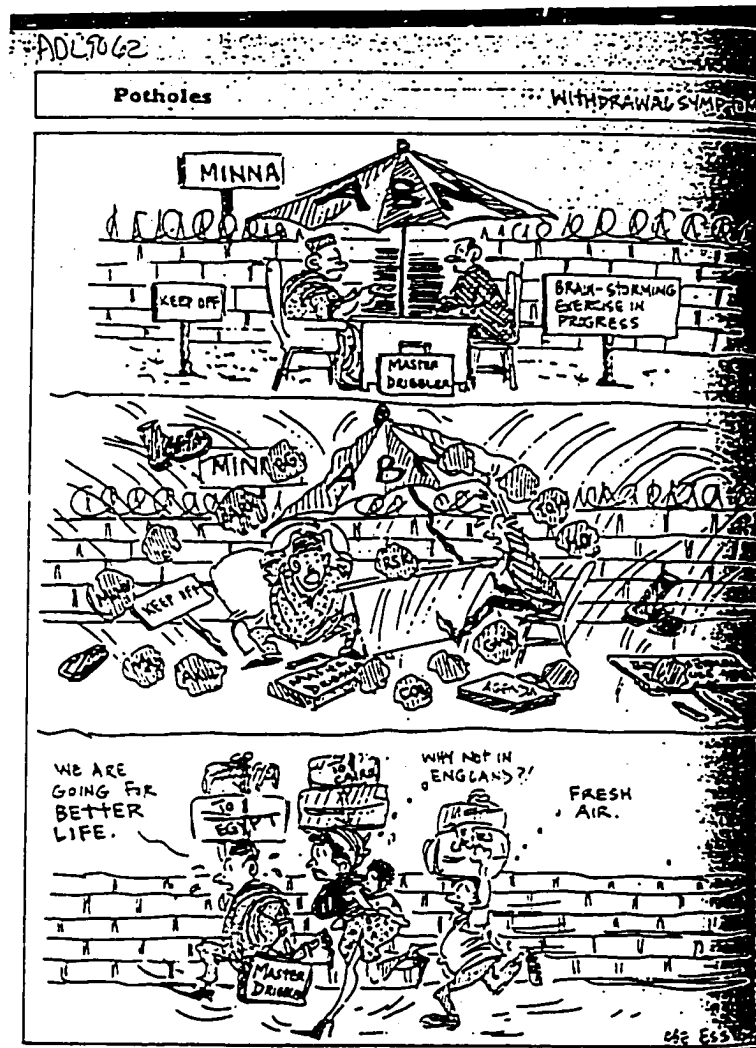


Figure A9. African Guardian—January 3, 1994

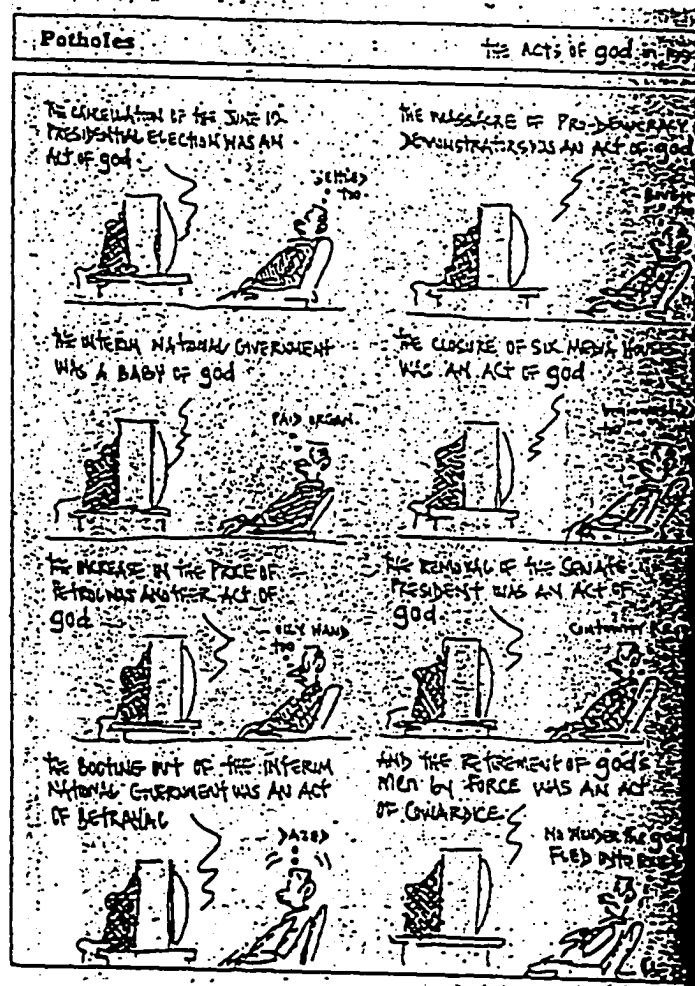


Figure A10. African Guardian – January 10, 1994

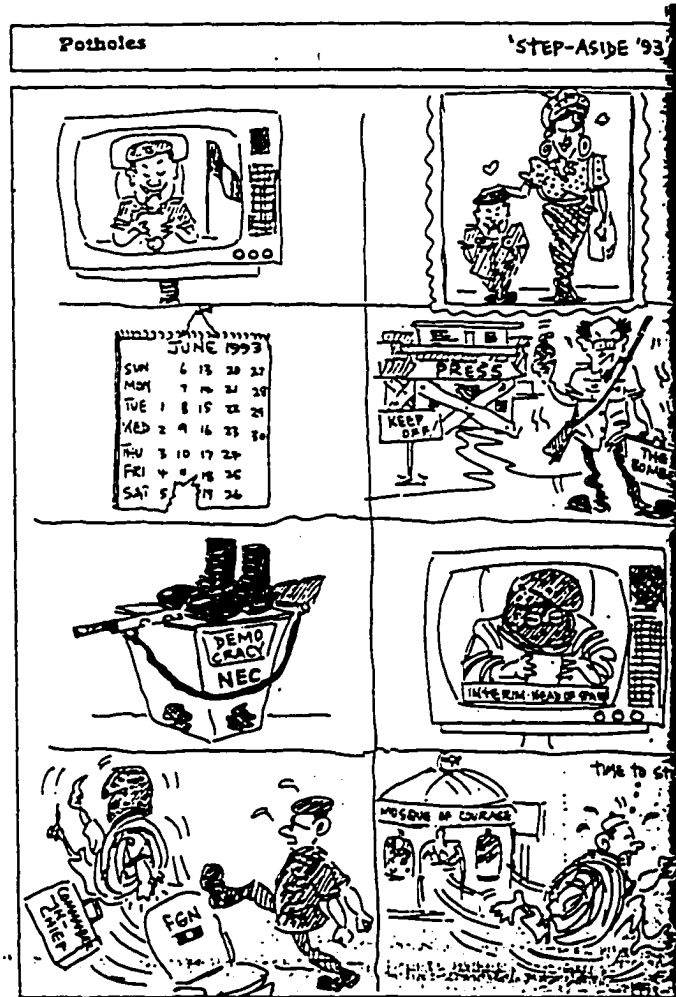


Figure A11. African Guardian – April 3, 1994

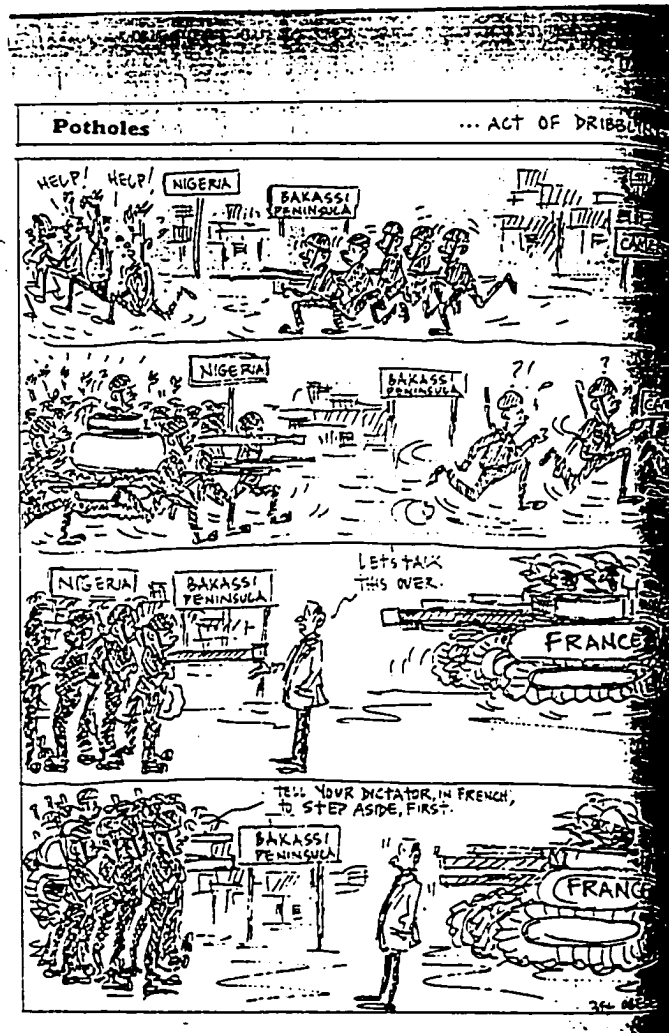


Figure A12. African Guardian – April 11, 1994

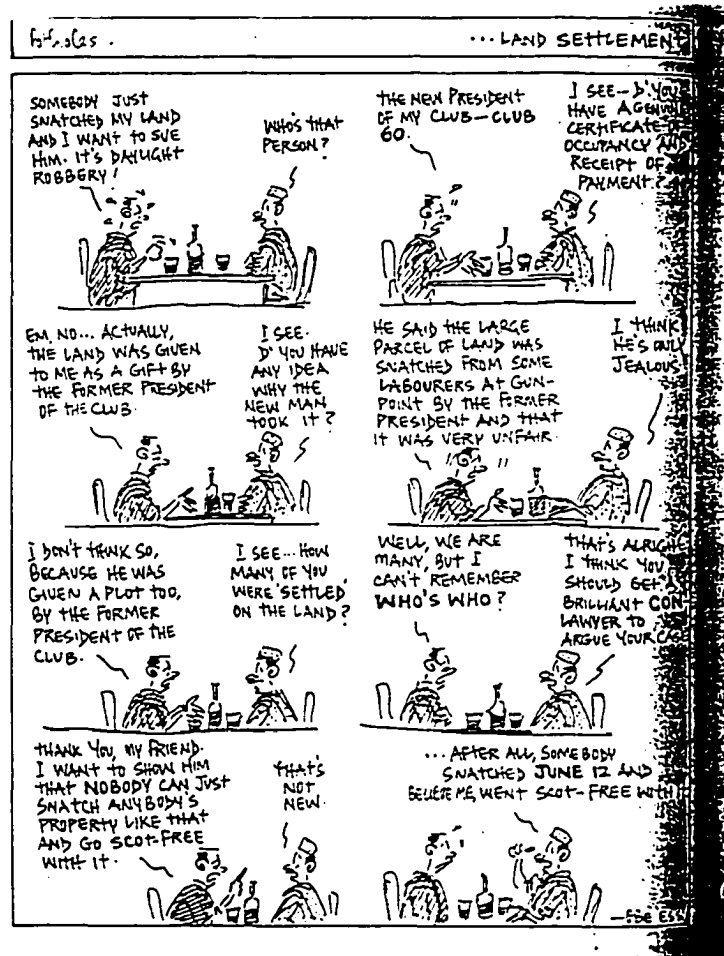
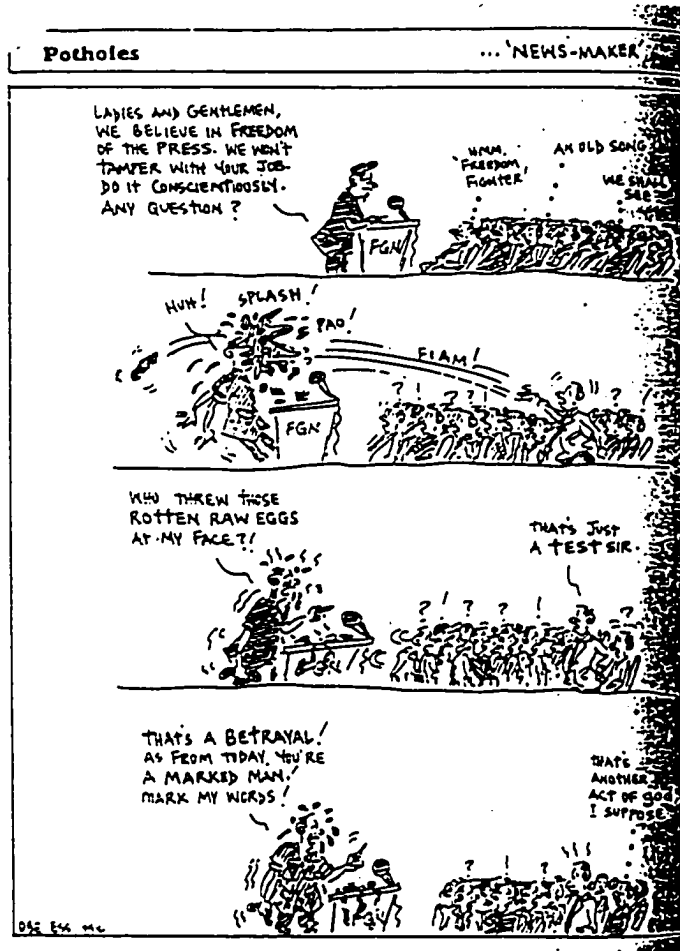


Figure A13. African Guardian – April 24, 1994



APPENDIX B

Figure B1. Newswatch – June 28, 1993

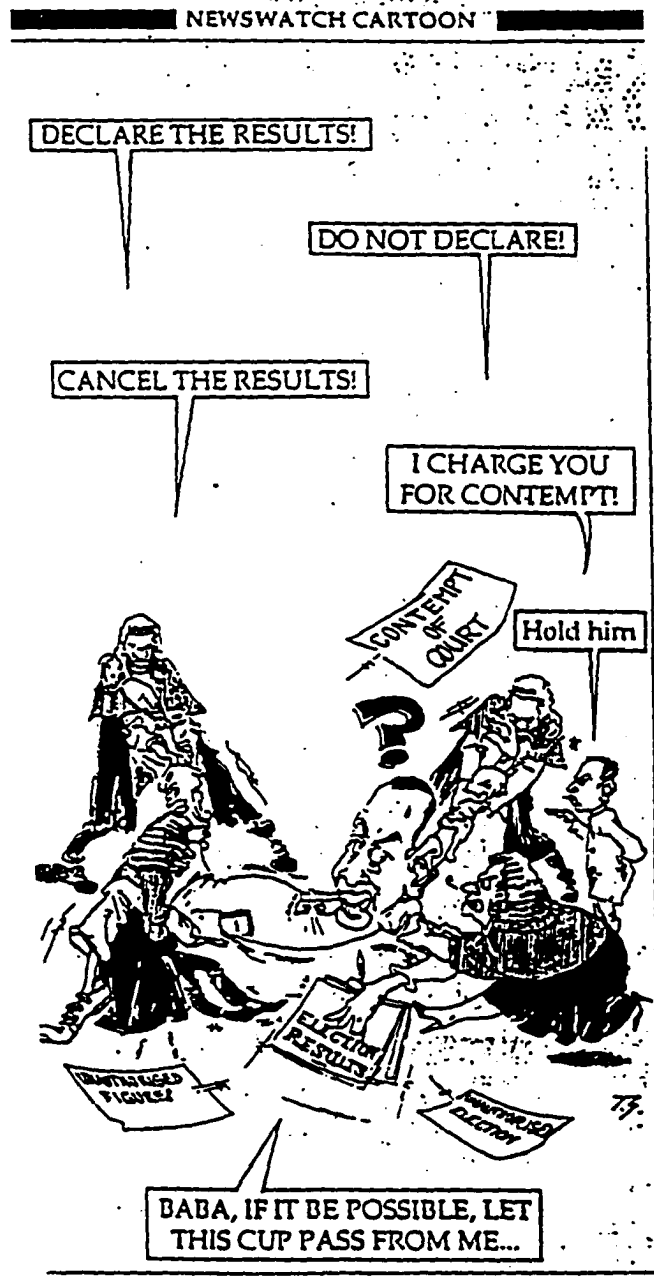


Figure B2. Newswatch –July 5, 1993

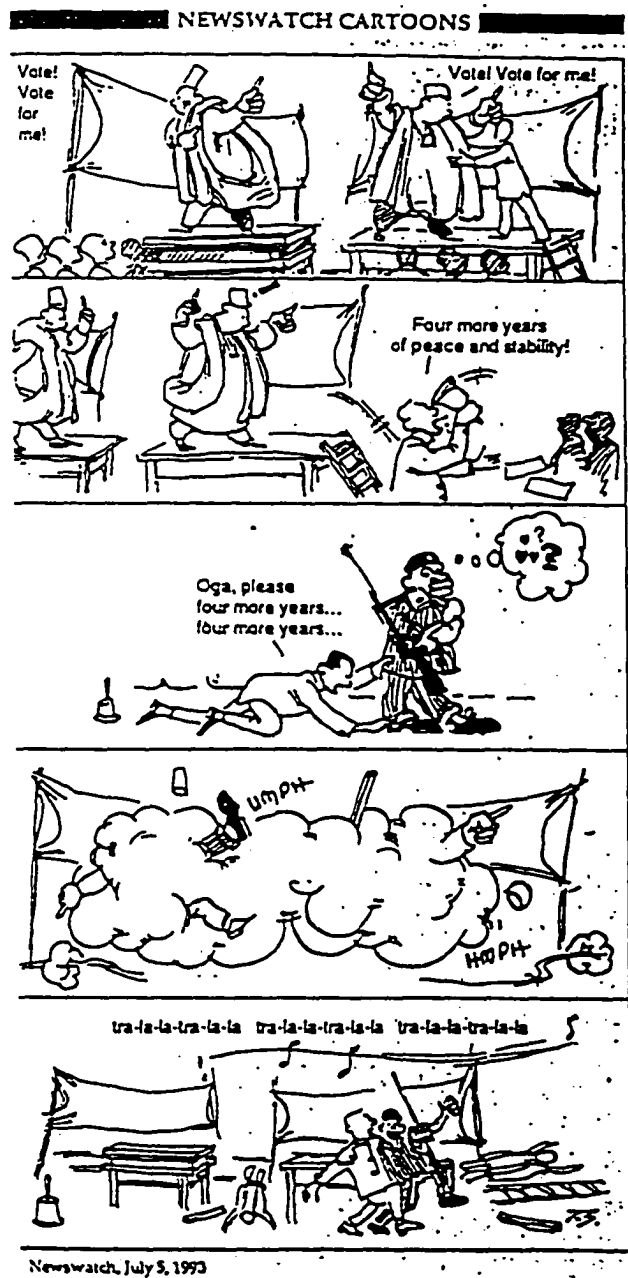


Figure B3. Newswatch – July 19, 1993

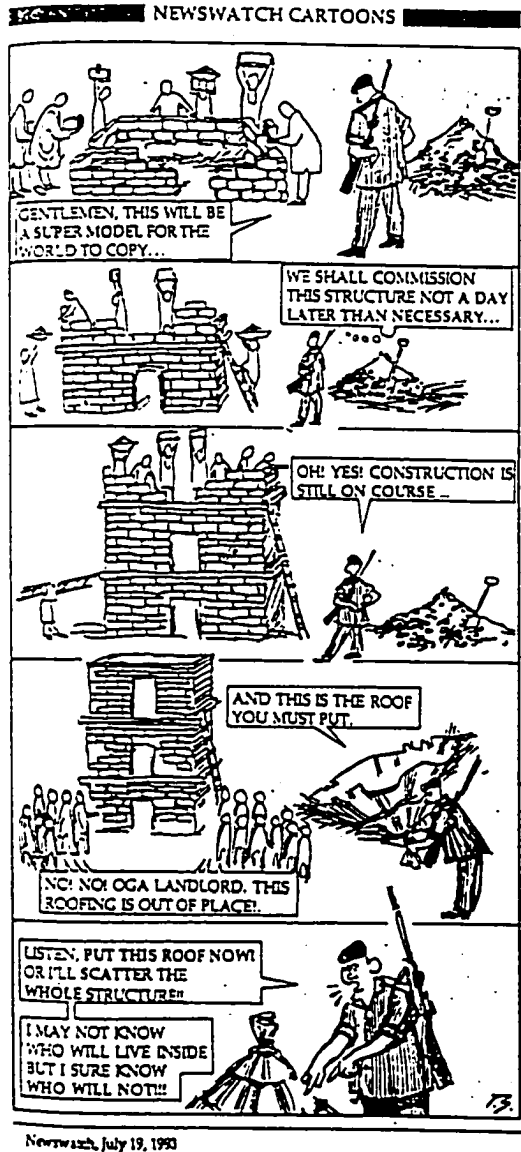
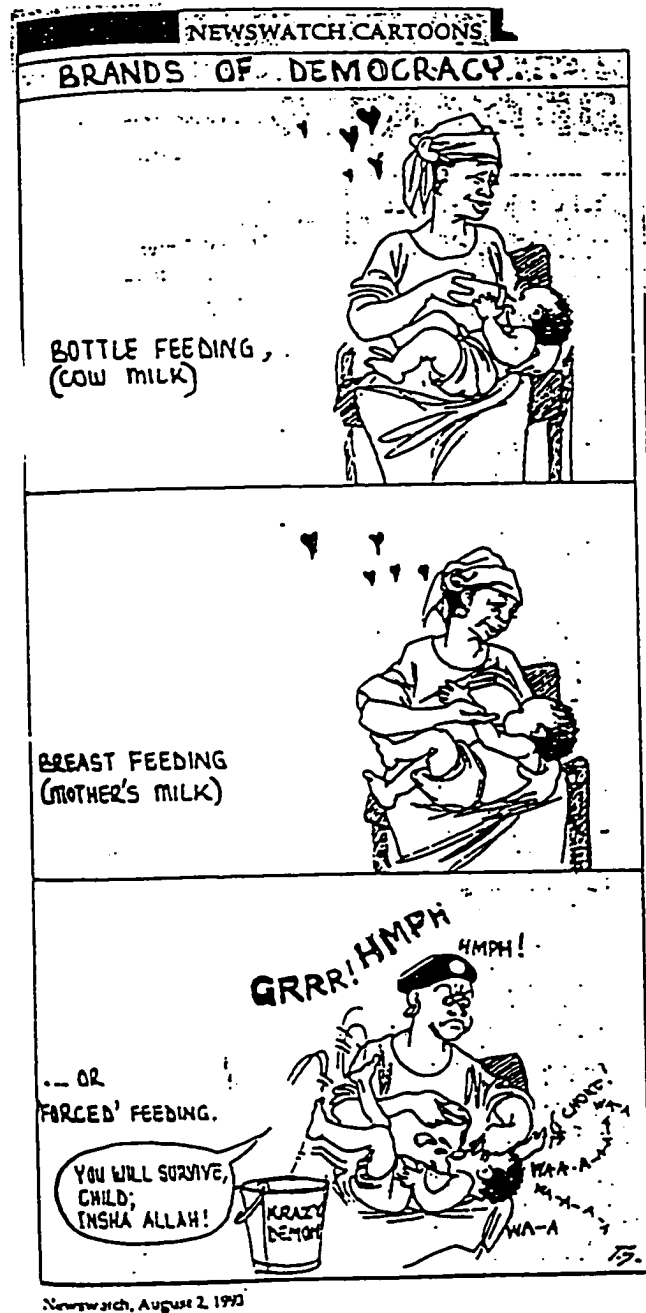


Figure B4. Newswatch – August 2, 1993



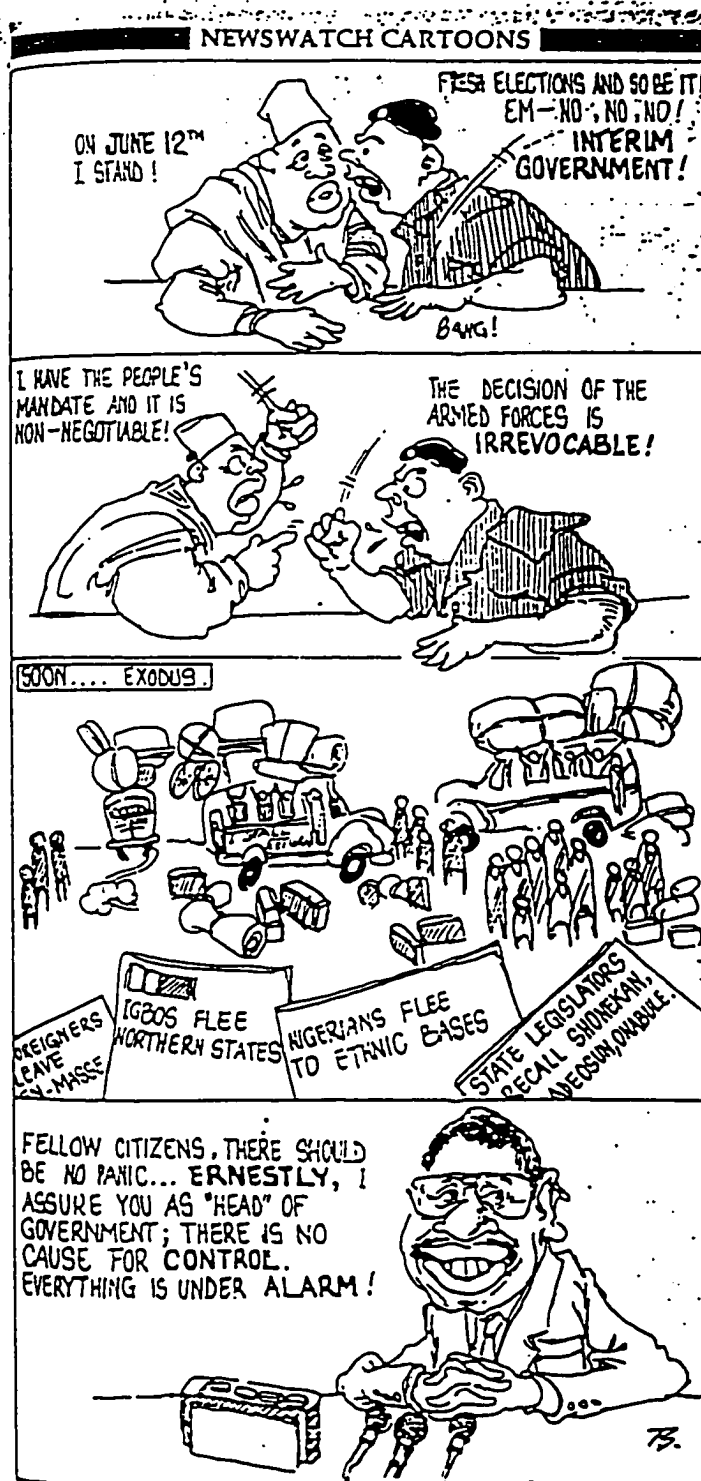
Newswatch, August 2, 1993

Figure B5. Newswatch – August 9, 1993



Newswatch, August 9, 1993

Figure B6. Newswatch – August 16, 1993



Newswatch, August 16, 1993

Figure B7. Newswatch – August 23, 1993



Newswatch, August 23, 1993

Figure B8. Newswatch – August 30, 1993



Figure B9. Newswatch – September 20, 1993



Newswatch, September 20, 1993

Figure B10. Newswatch – September 27, 1993

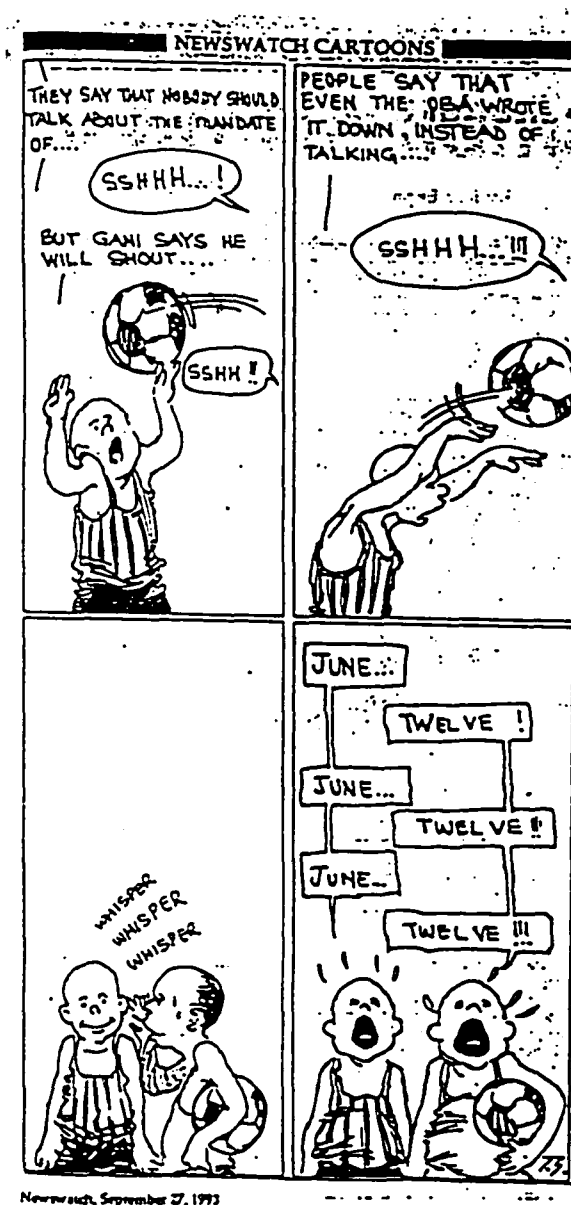


Figure B11. Newswatch – October 4, 1993

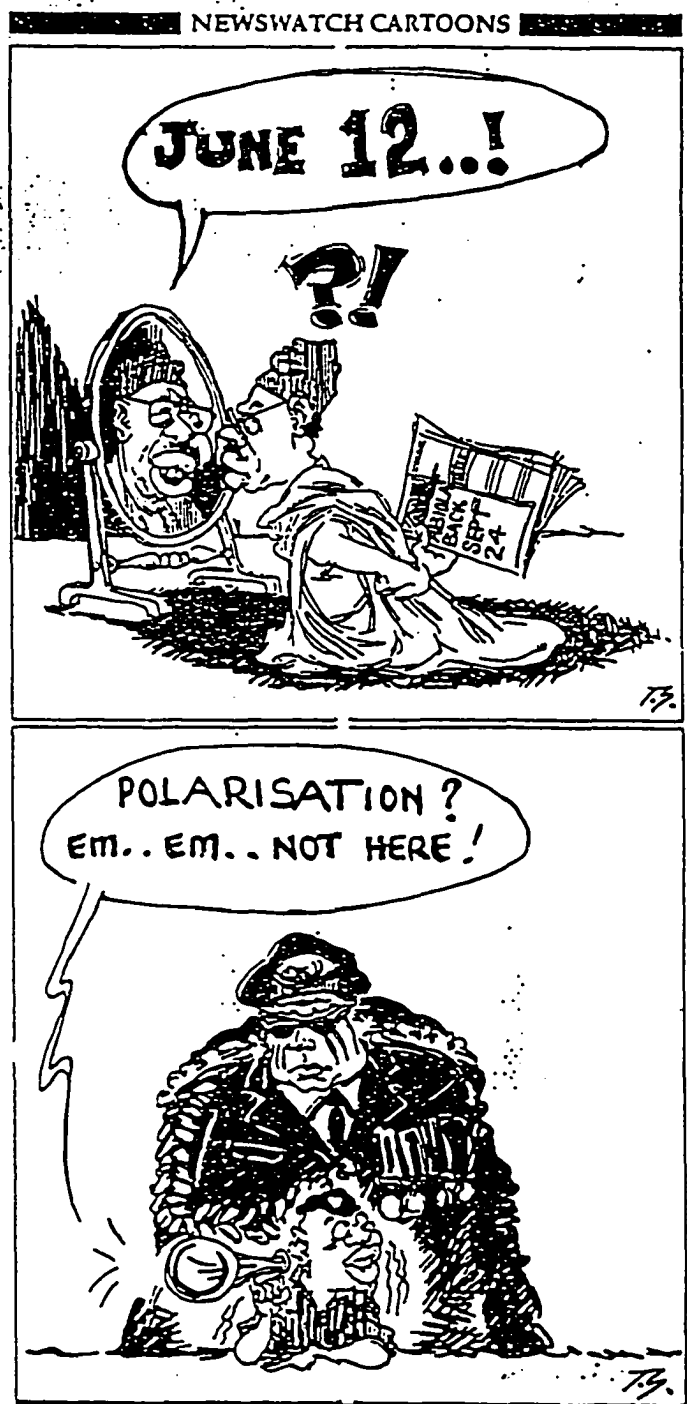
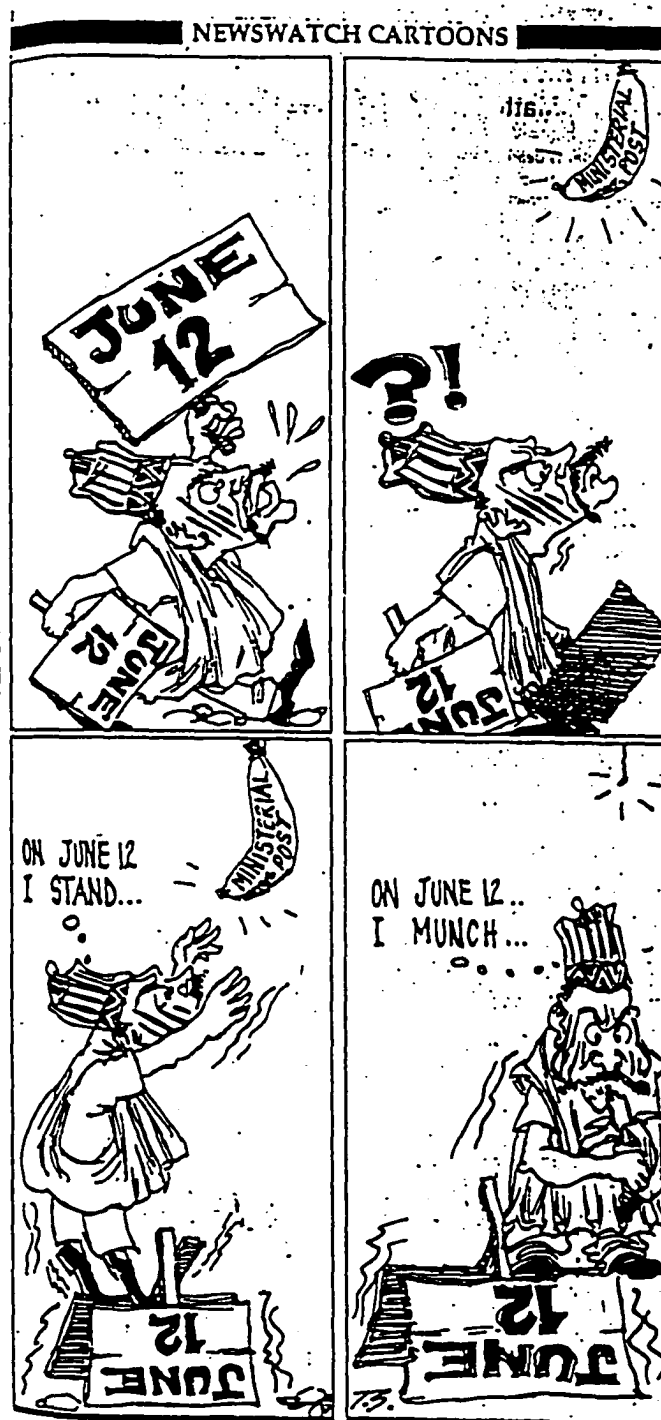


Figure B12. Newswatch – October 25, 1993



Newswatch, October 25, 1993

Figure B13. Newswatch – December 6, 1993



Newswatch, December 6, 1993

Figure B14. Newswatch – December 30, 1993

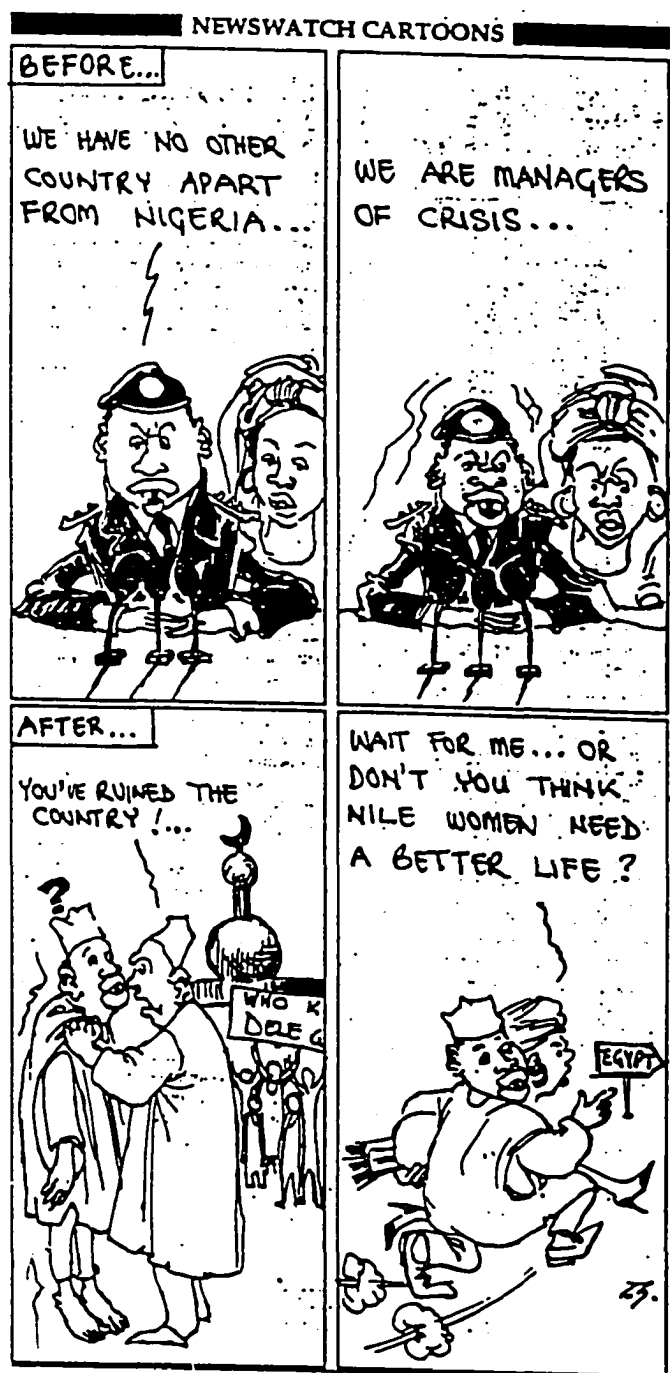
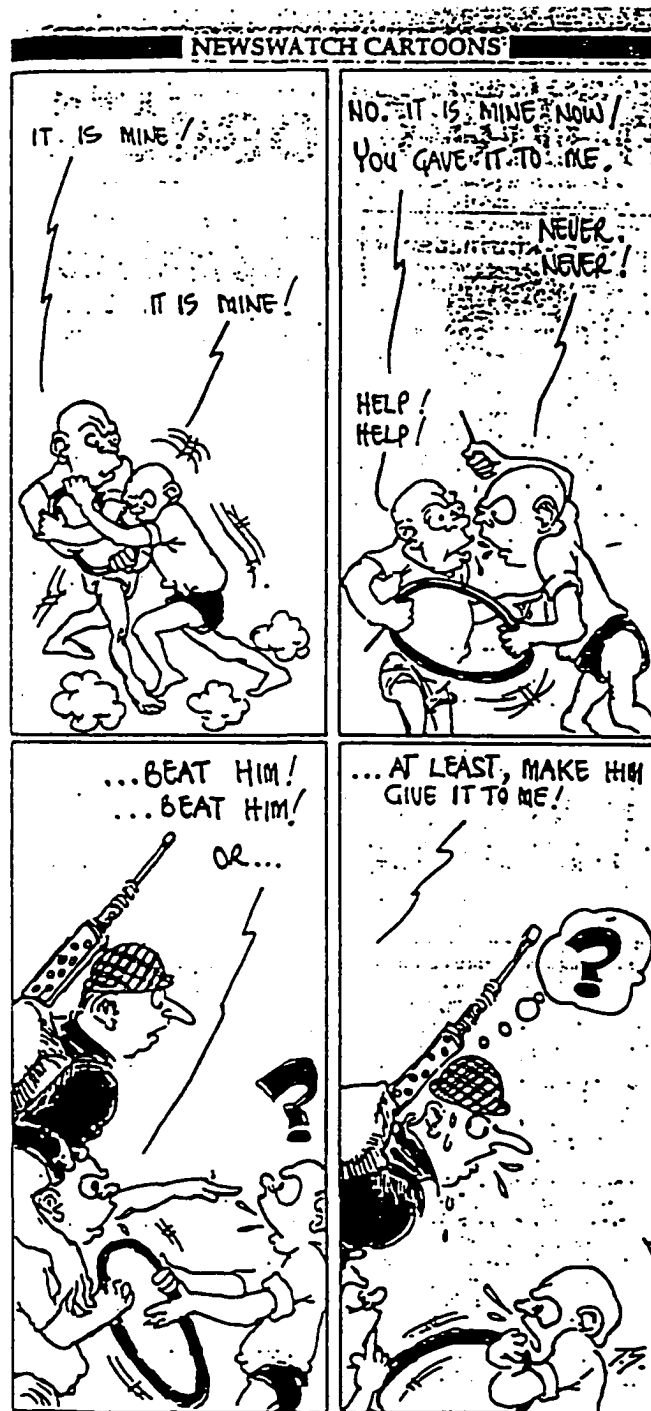


Figure B15. Newswatch – March 21, 1994



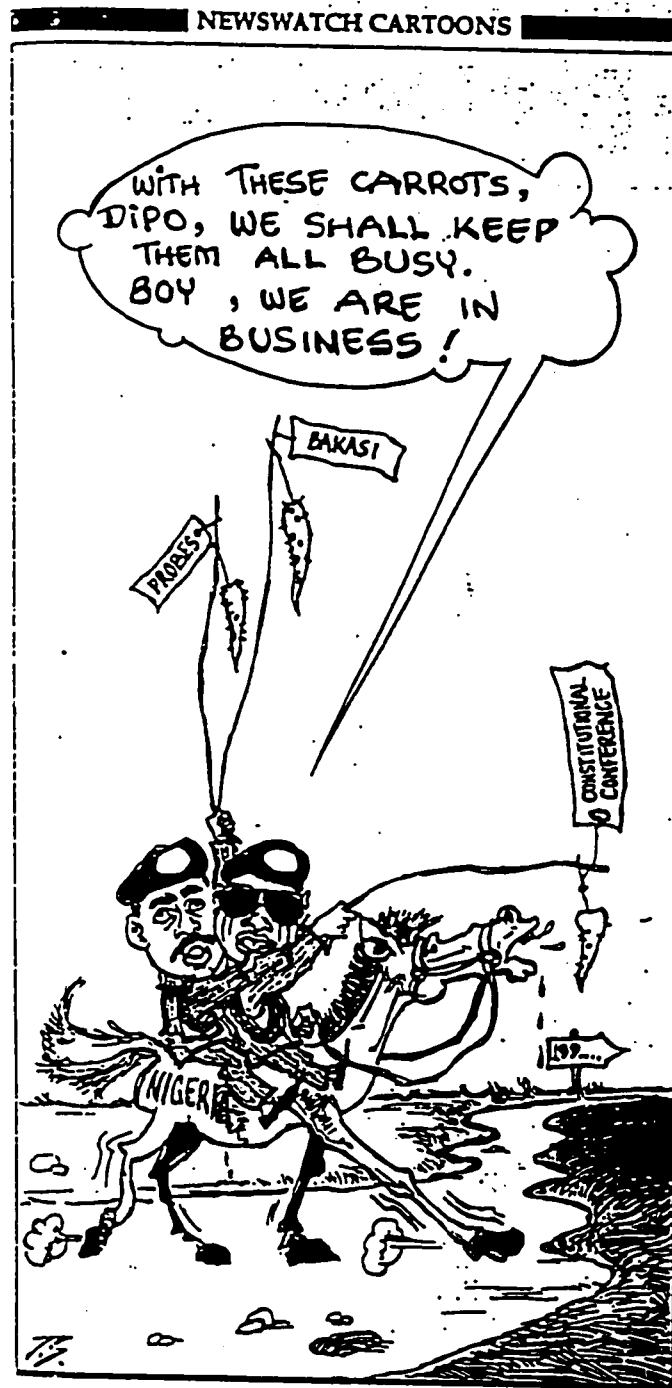
Newswatch, March 21, 1994

Figure B16. Newswatch – April 4, 1994



Newswatch. April 4, 1994

Figure B17. Newswatch – April 18, 1994



Newswatch, April 18, 1994

Figure B18. Newswatch – May 30, 1994



Newswatch, May 30, 1994

Figure B19. Newswatch – June 13, 1994



Figure B20. Newswatch – June 20, 1994



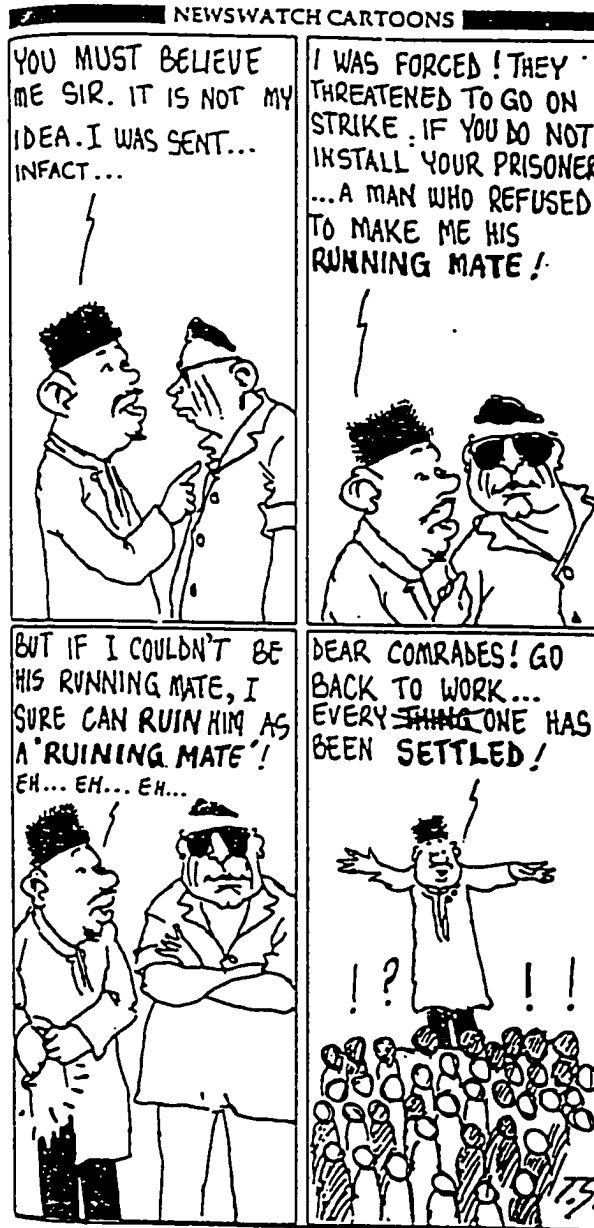
Newswatch, June 20, 1994

Figure B21. Newswatch – July 18, 1994



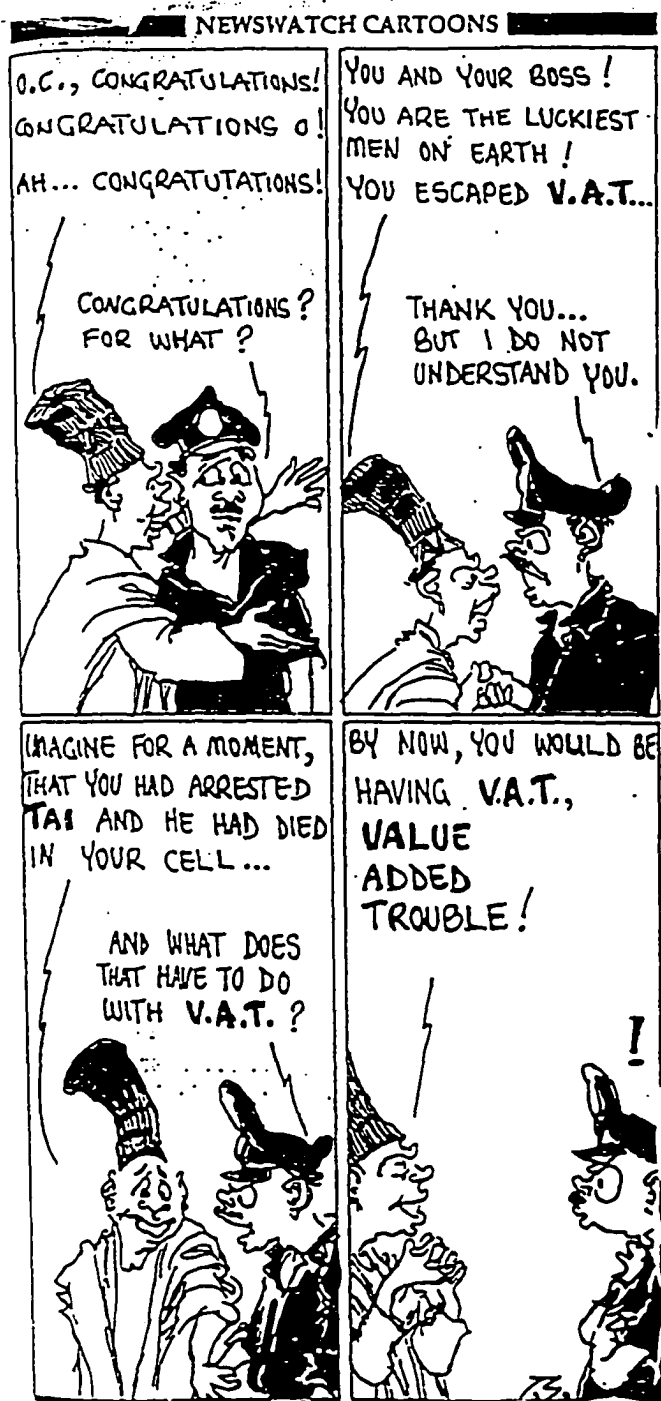
Newswatch, July 18, 1994

Figure B22. Newswatch – August 1, 1994



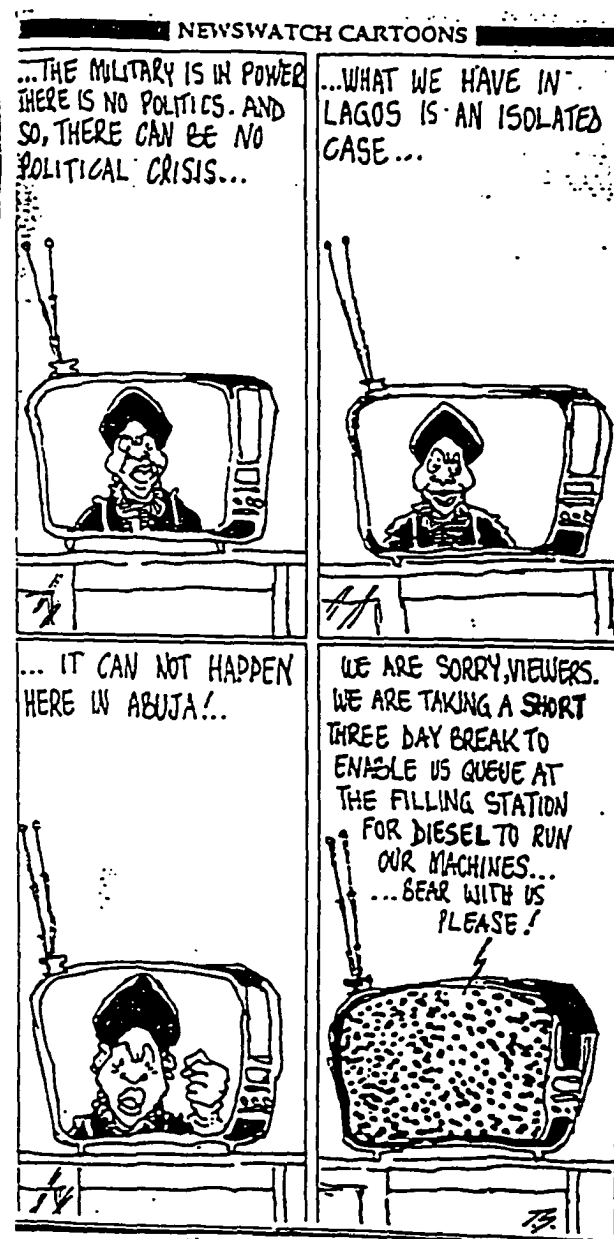
Newswatch, August 1, 1994

Figure B23. Newswatch – August 8, 1994



Newswatch, August 8, 1994

Figure B24. Newswatch – August 15, 1994



Newswatch – August 15, 1994

Figure B25. Newswatch – September 19, 1994

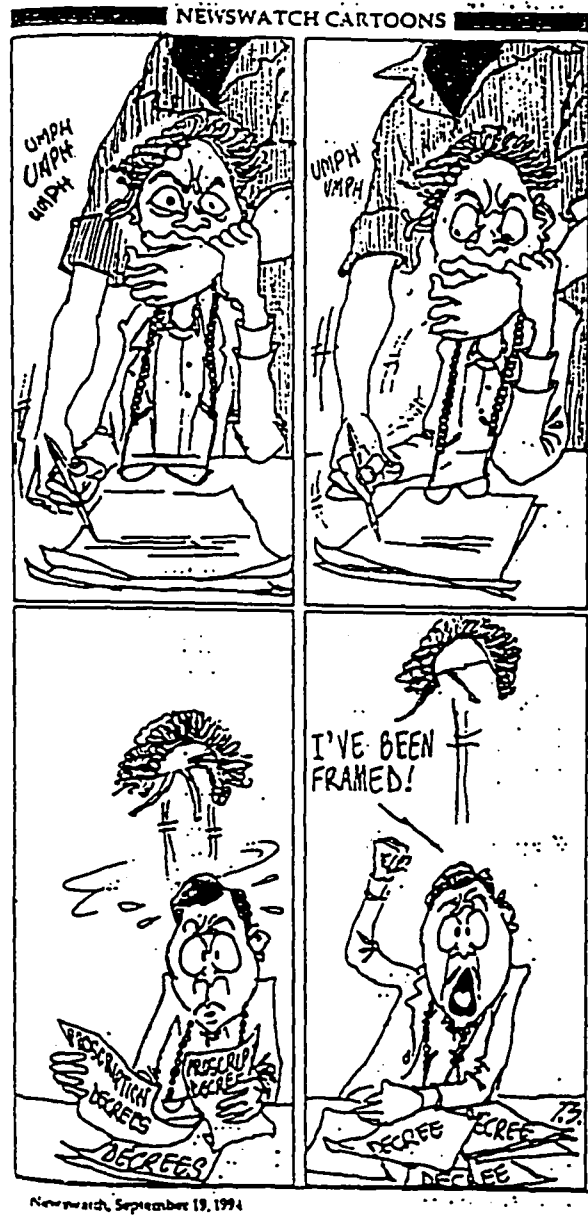
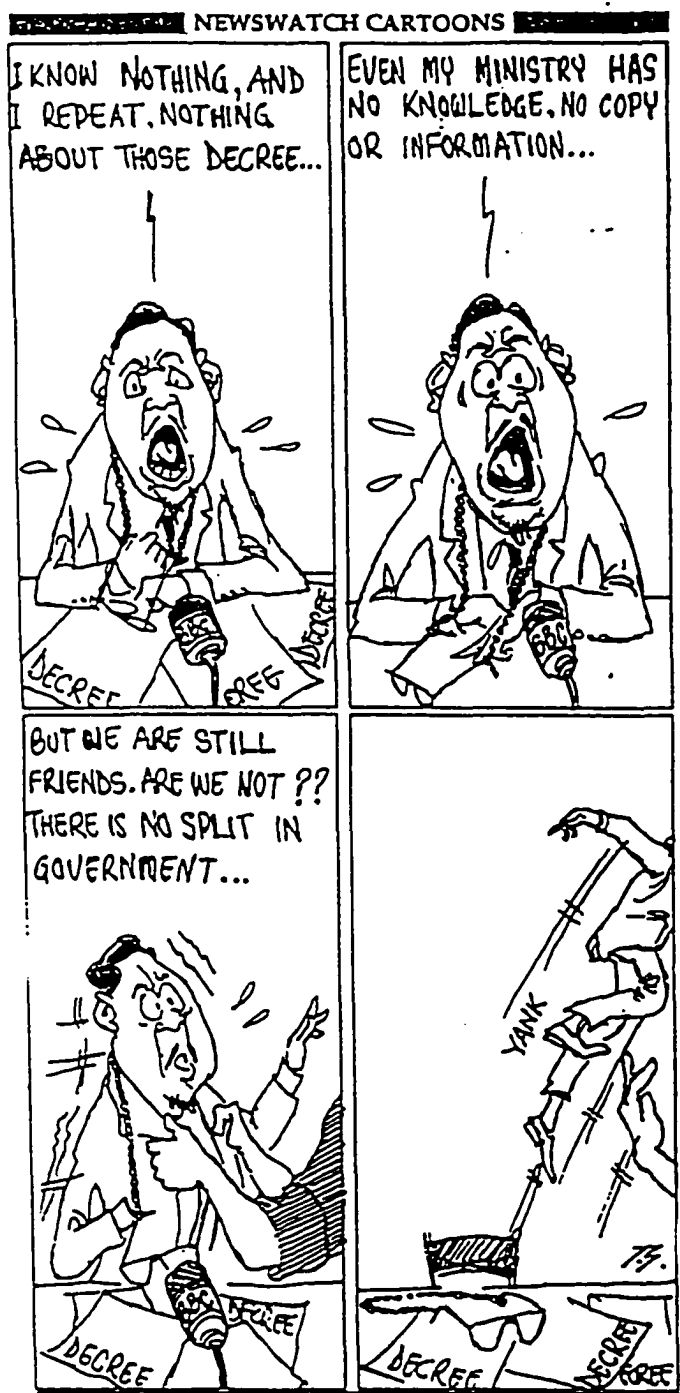


Figure B26. Newswatch – September 26, 1994



Newswatch, September 26, 1994

Figure B27. Newswatch – October 17, 1994

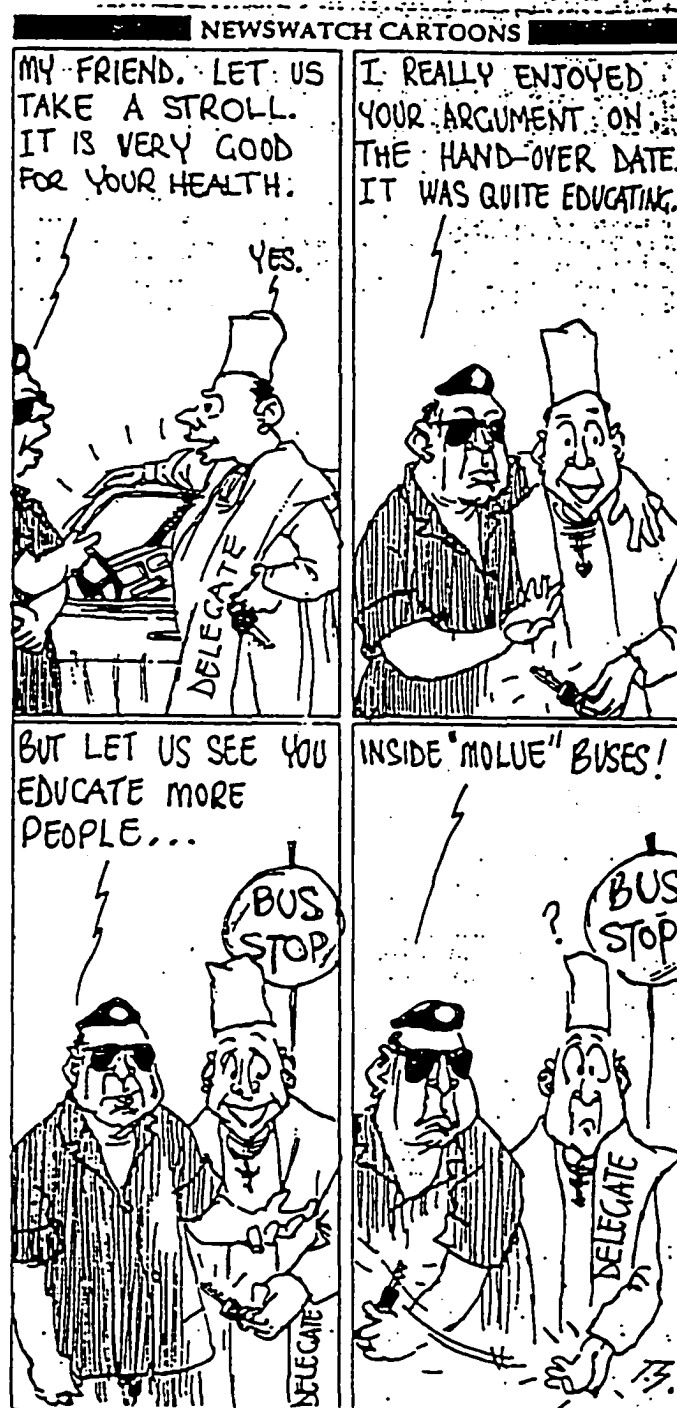


Newswatch, October 17, 1994

Figure B28. Newswatch – November 28, 1994



Figure B29. Newswatch – December 19, 1994



Newswatch, December 19, 1994

Figure B30. Newswatch – December 26, 1994



Newswatch, December 26, 1994

Figure B31. Newswatch – April 24, 1995



Figure B32. Newswatch – May 22, 1995

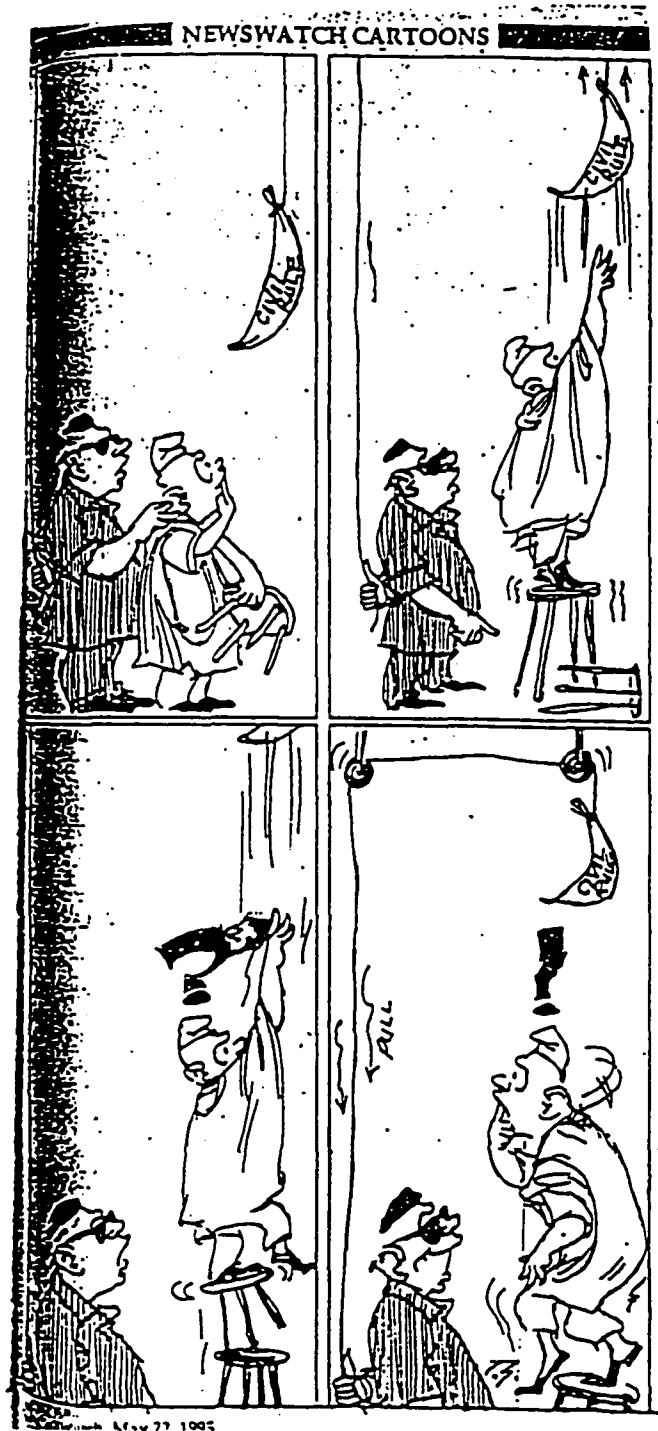


Figure B33. Newswatch – June 12, 1995

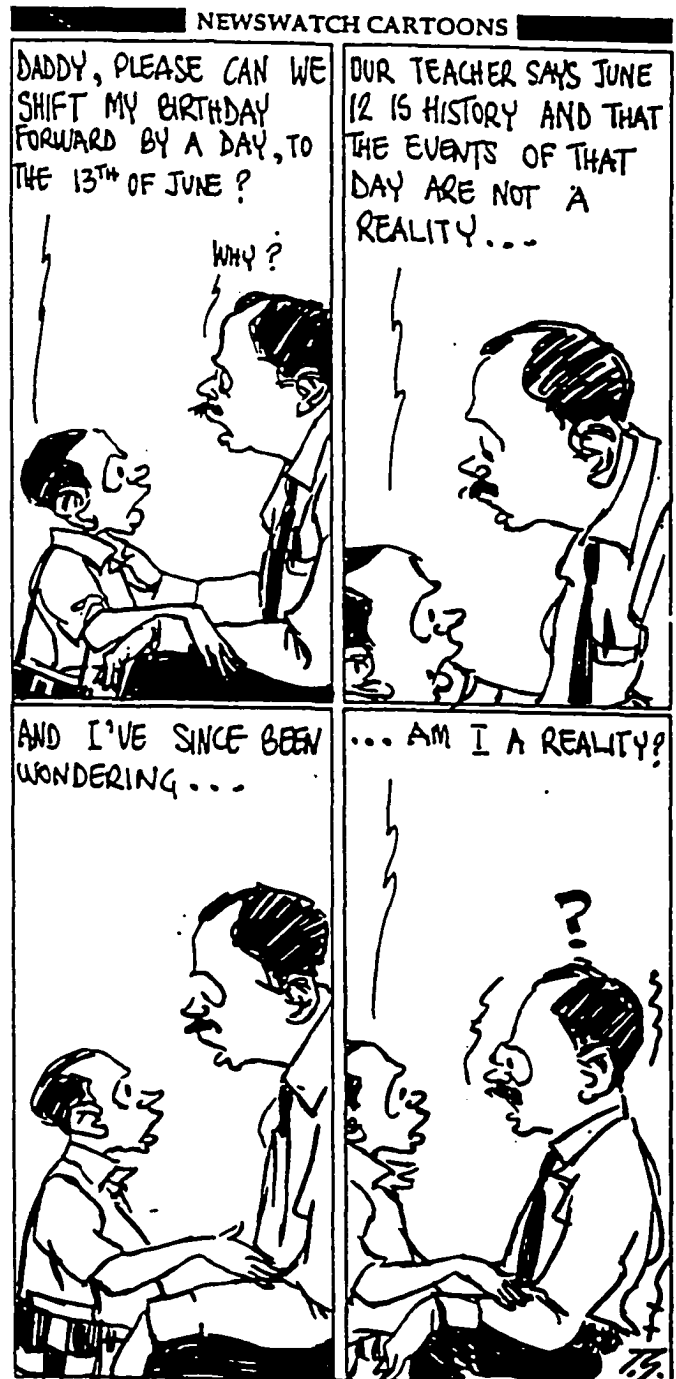
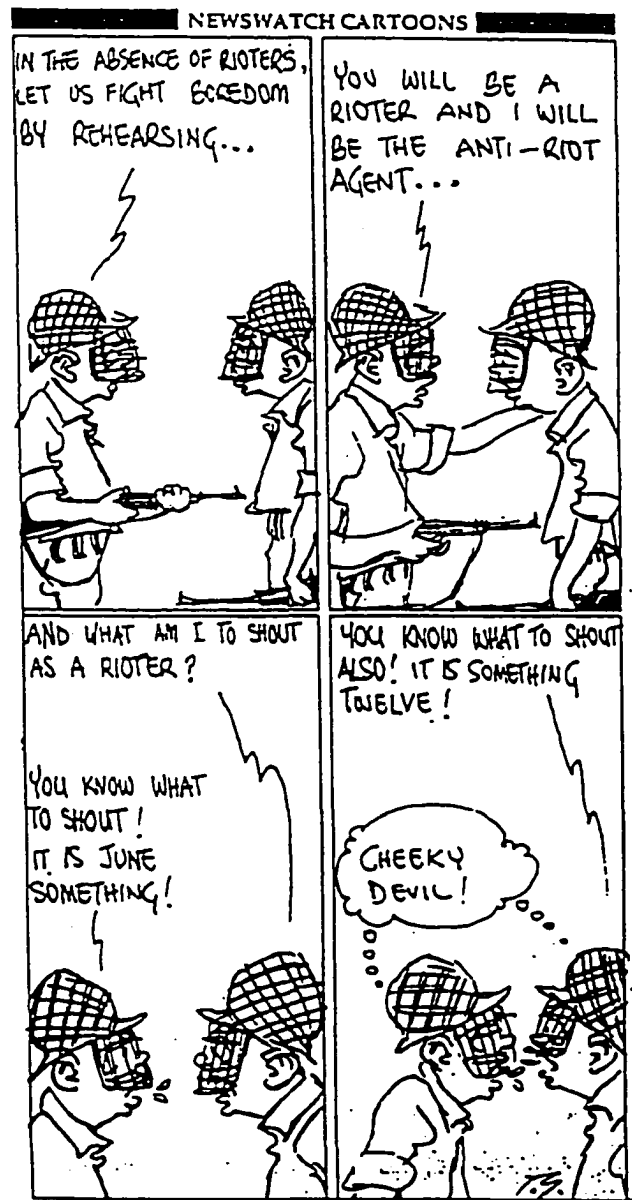


Figure B34. Newswatch – July 3, 1995



July 3, 1995

Figure B35. Newswatch – July 10, 1995

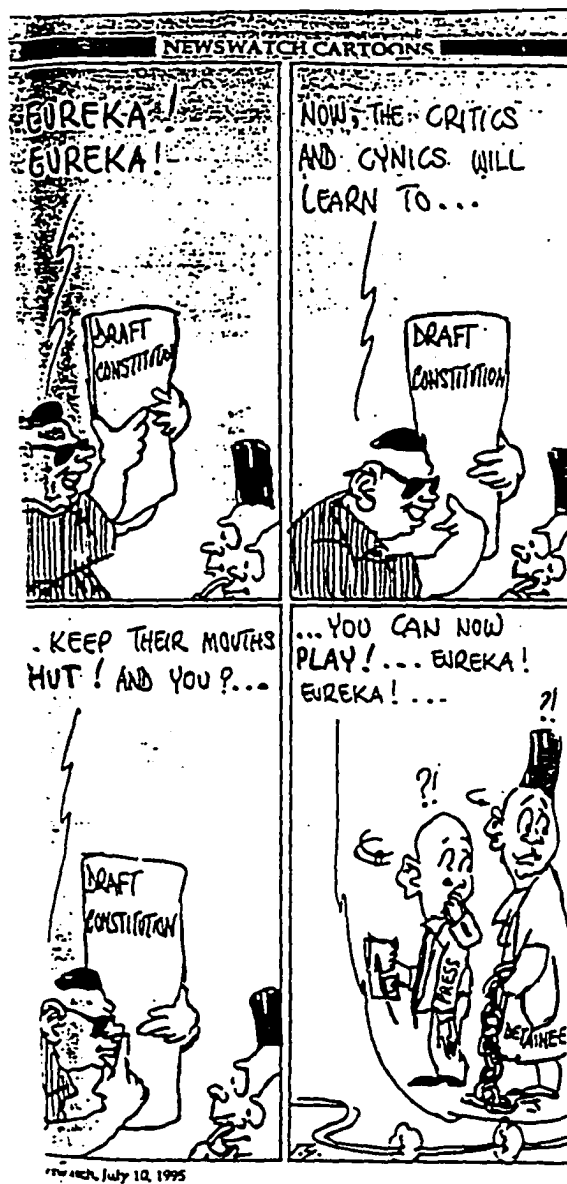
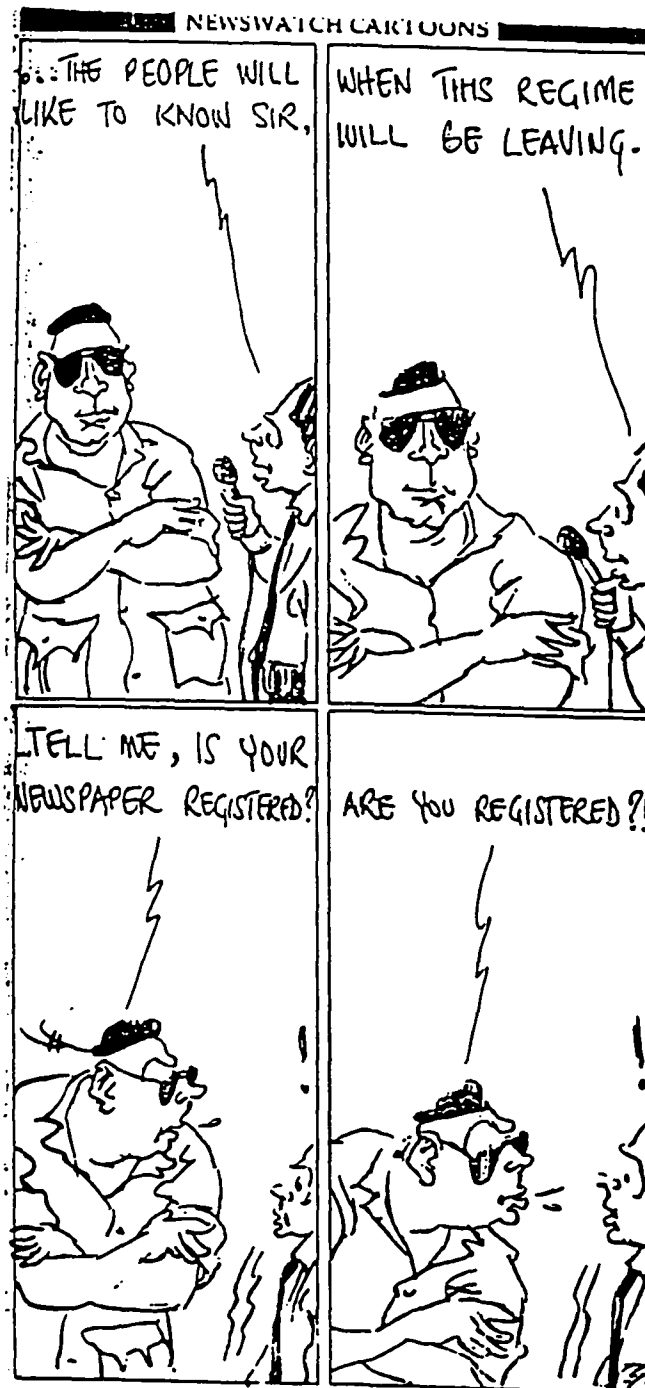


Figure B36. Newswatch – July 17, 1995



Newswatch, July 17, 1995

Figure B37. Newswatch – July 31, 1995



Figure B38. Newswatch – September 25, 1995



Newswatch, September 25, 1995

Figure B39. Newswatch – January 8, 1996

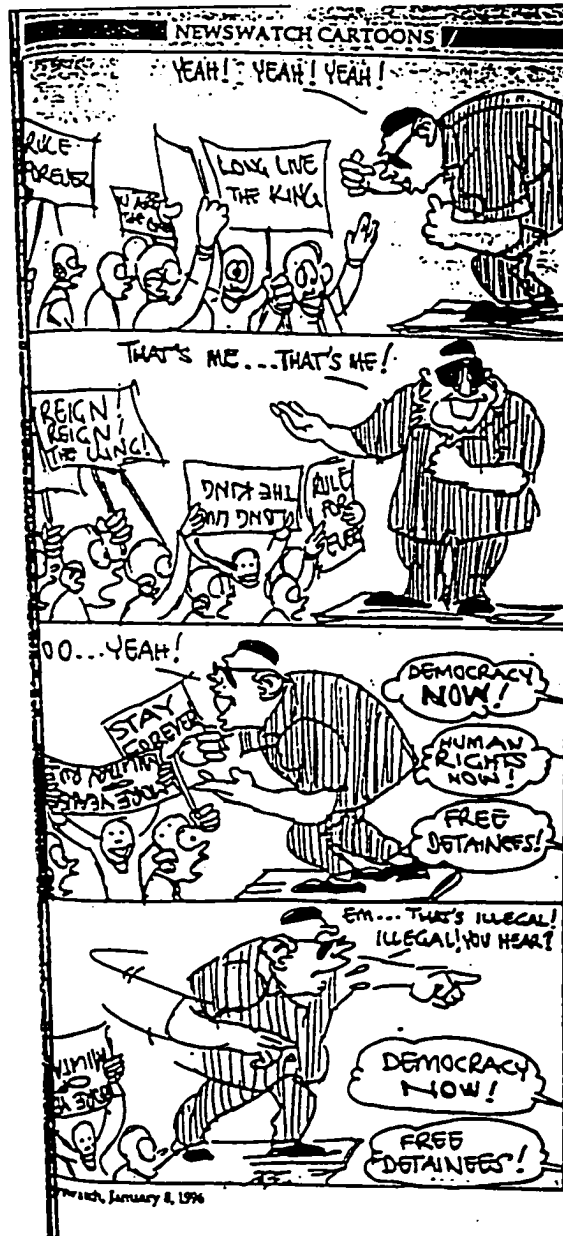


Figure B40. Newswatch – January 29, 1996

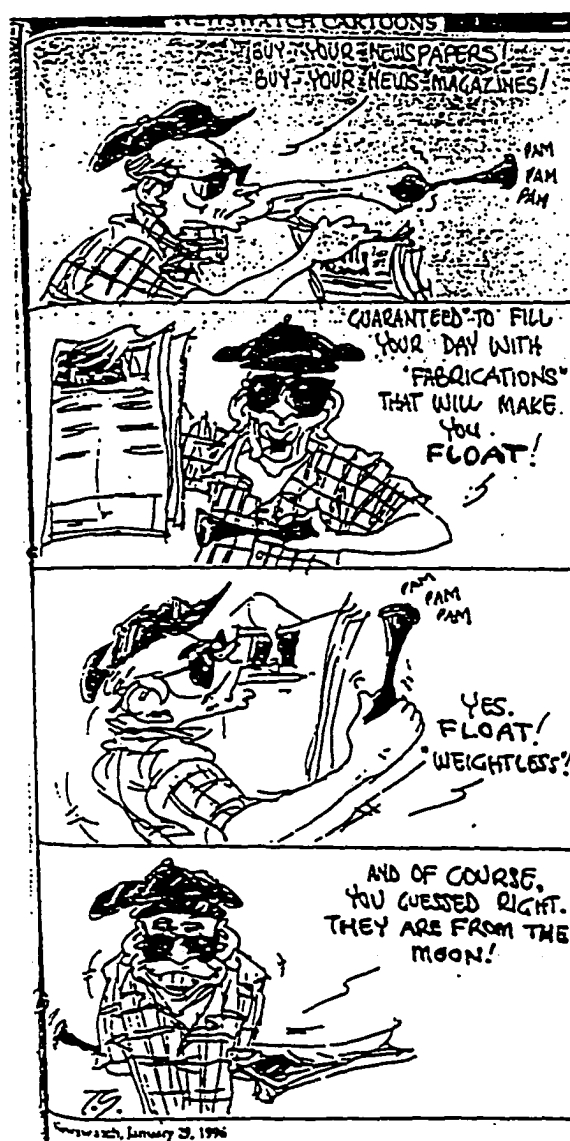
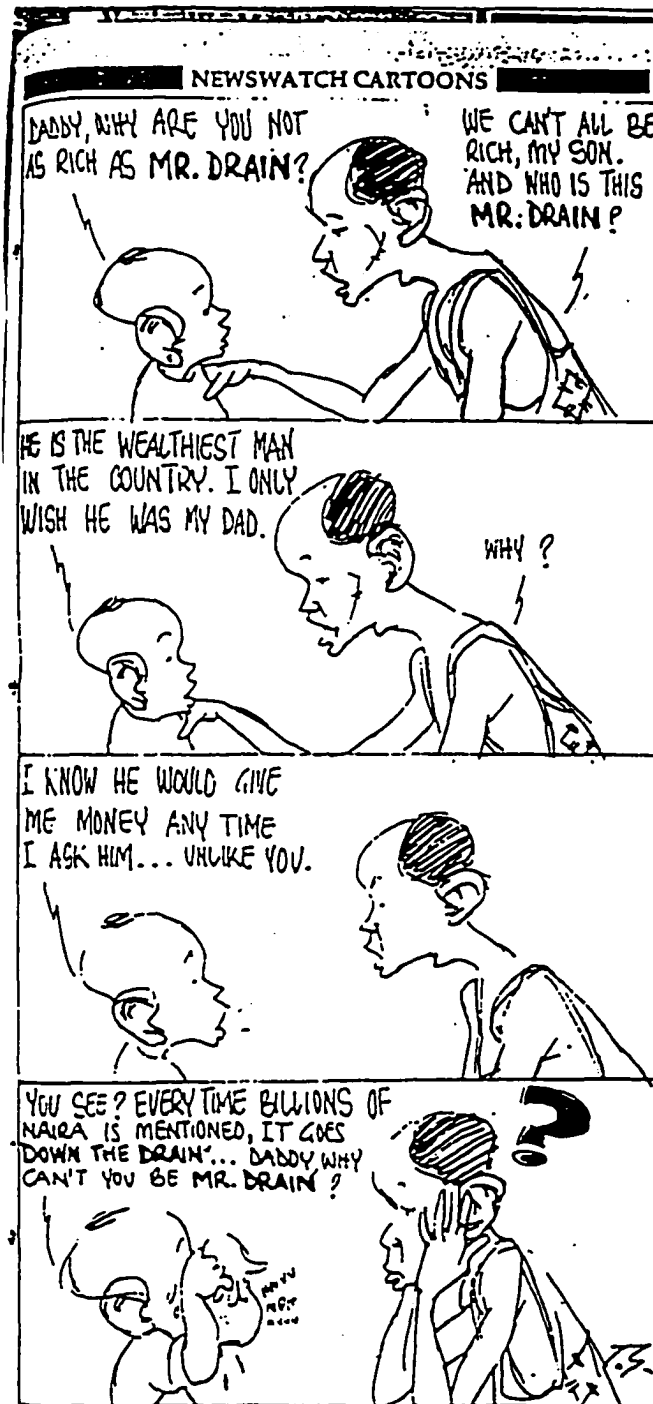


Figure B41. Newswatch—March 4, 1996



Newswatch, March 4, 1996

Figure B42. Newswatch – April 8, 1996



Figure B43. Newswatch – April 22, 1996



Figure B44. Newswatch – October 28, 1996



APPENDIX C

Figure C1. Tell – April 4, 1994



Figure C2. Tell – April 18, 1994



Figure C3. Tell – April 25, 1994

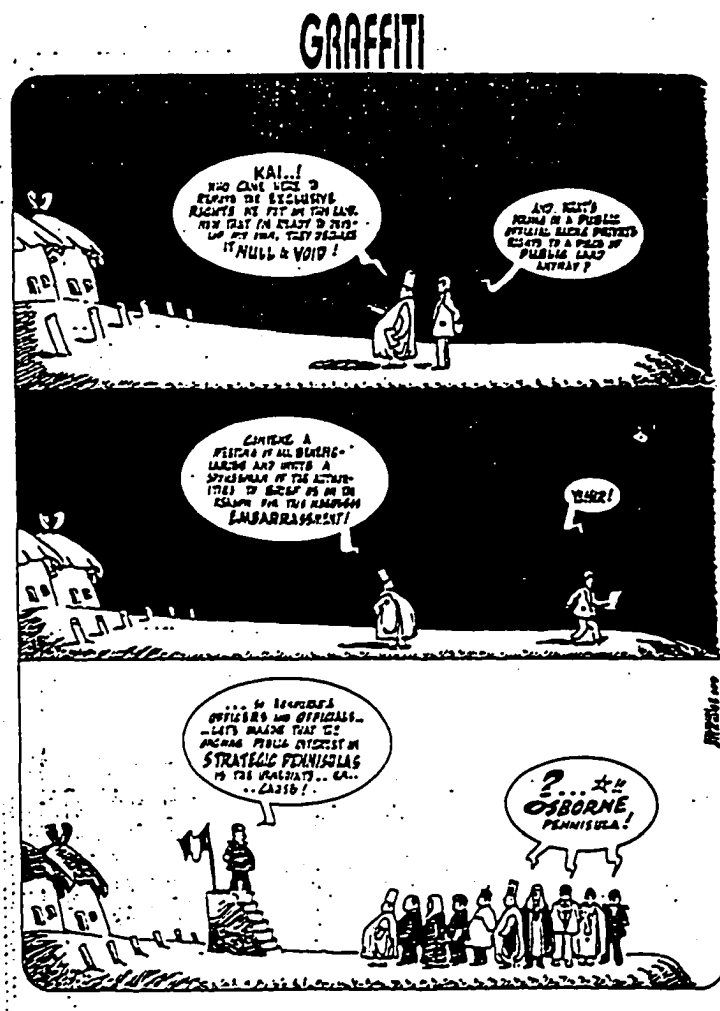


Figure C4. Tell - May 2, 1994



Figure C5. Tell – May 30, 1994



Figure C6. Tell – June 13, 1994

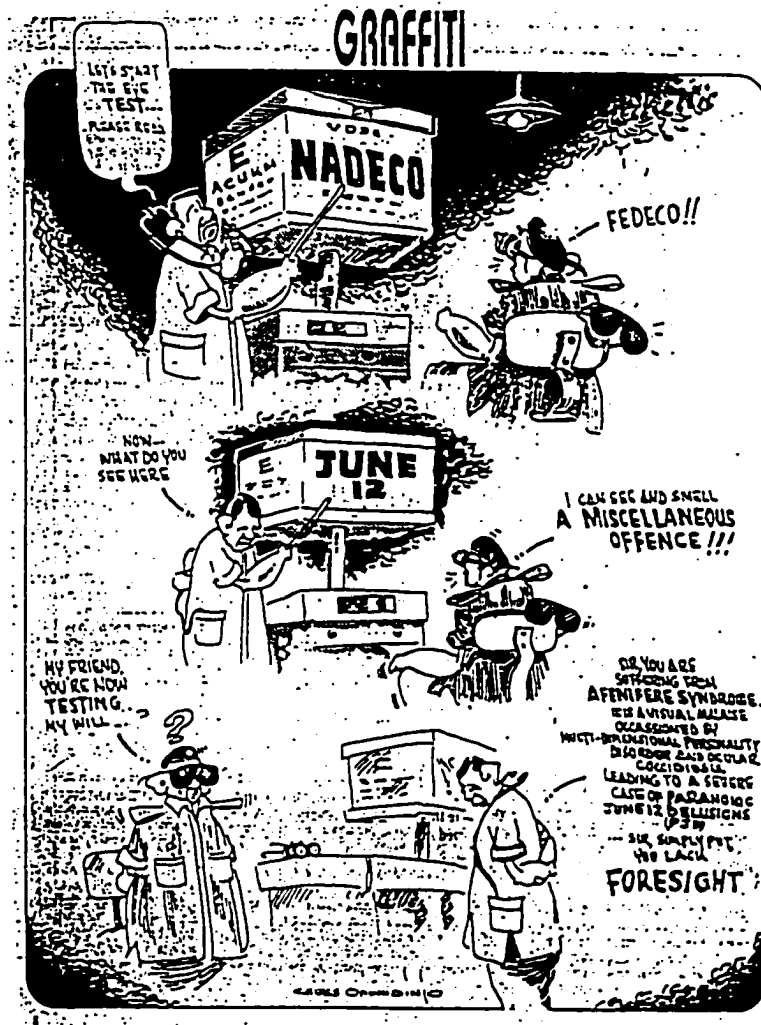


Figure C7. Tell – June 20, 1994

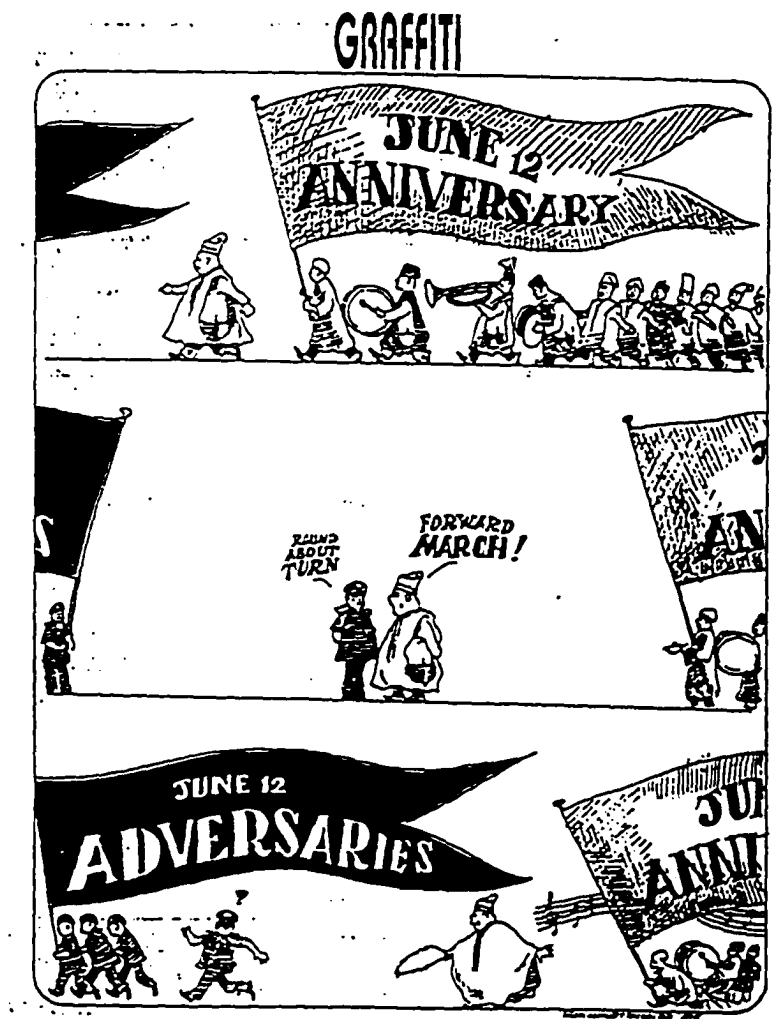


Figure C8. Tell – June 27, 1994

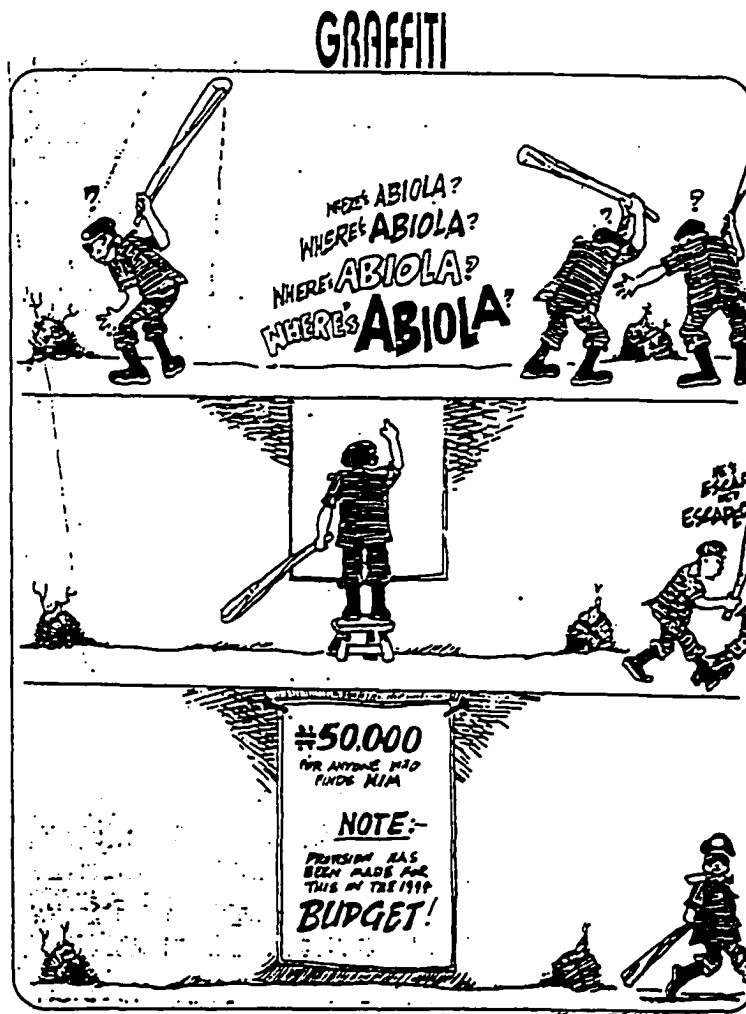


Figure C9. Tell – July 4, 1994

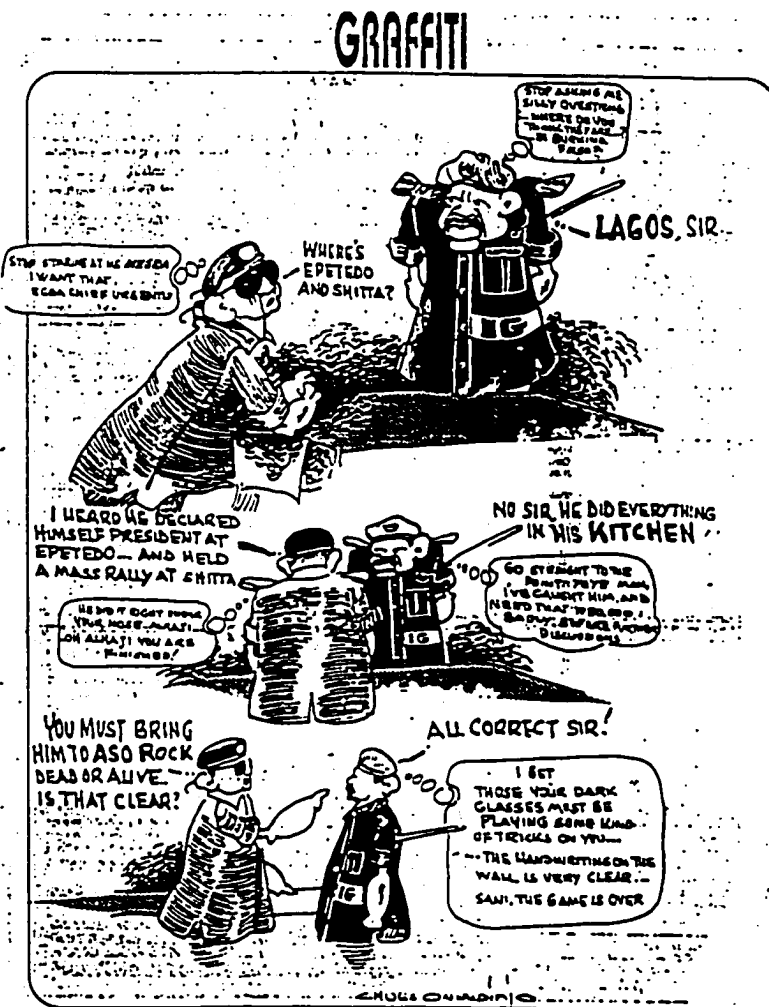


Figure C10. Tell – September 19, 1994



Figure C11. Tell – January 30, 1995

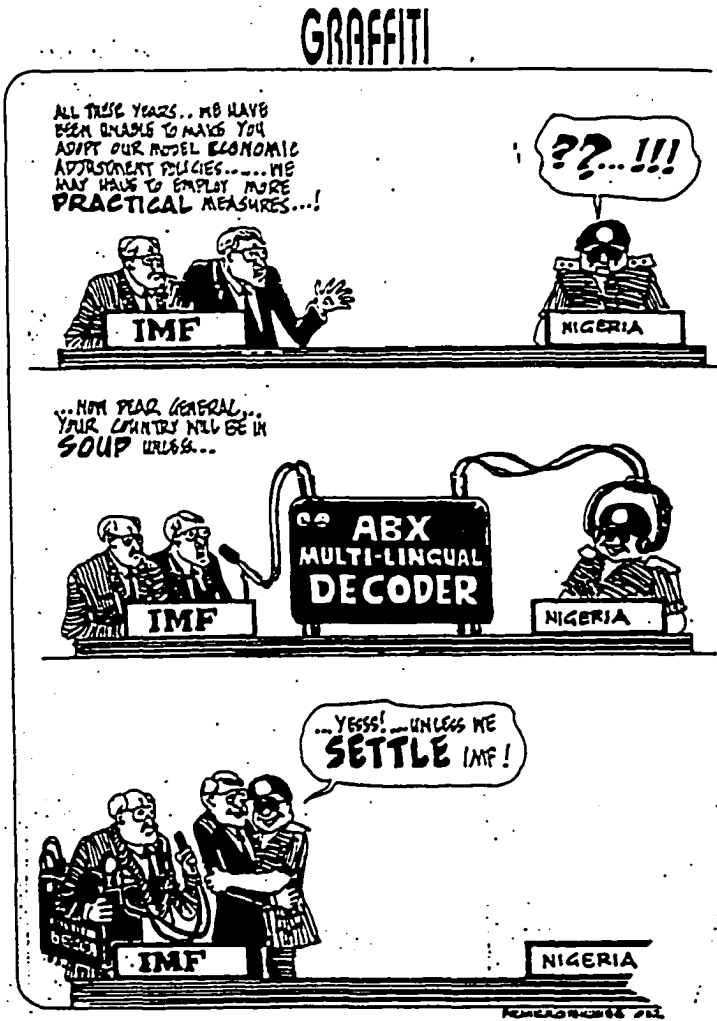


Figure C12. Tell – February 13, 1995

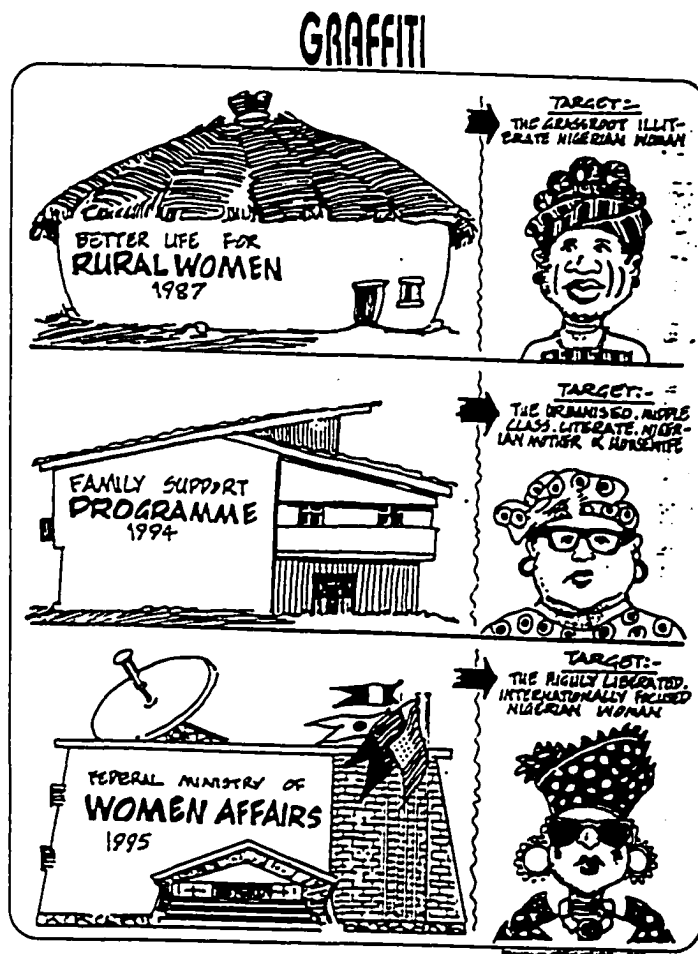


Figure C13. Tell – February 27, 1995

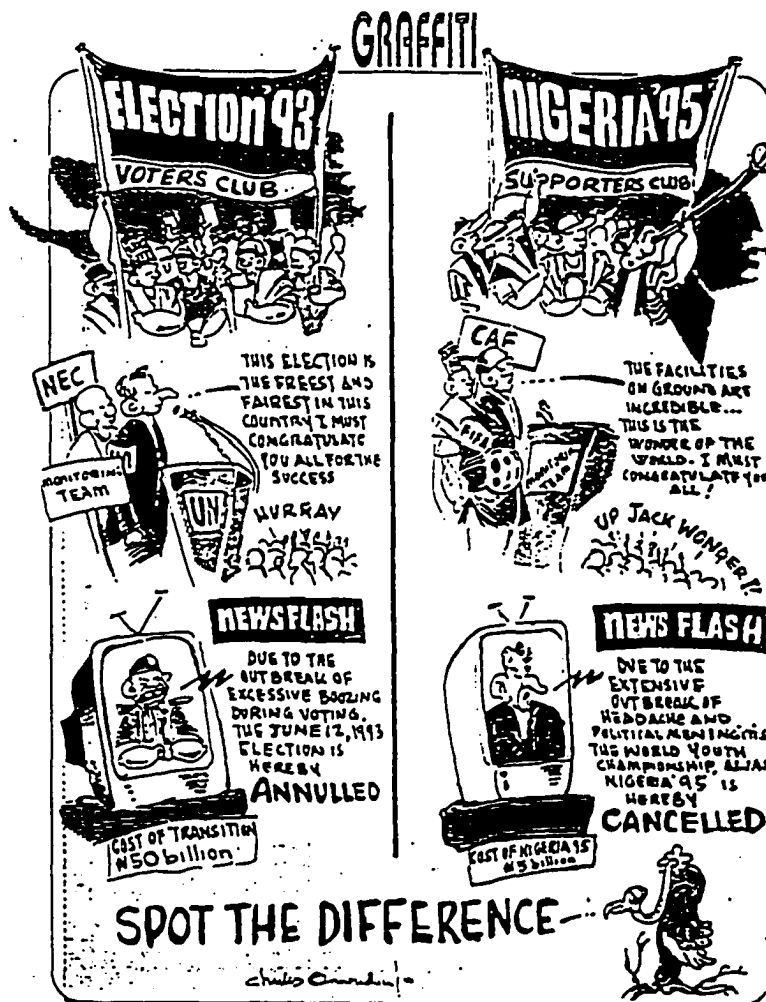


Figure C14. Tell – April 13, 1995

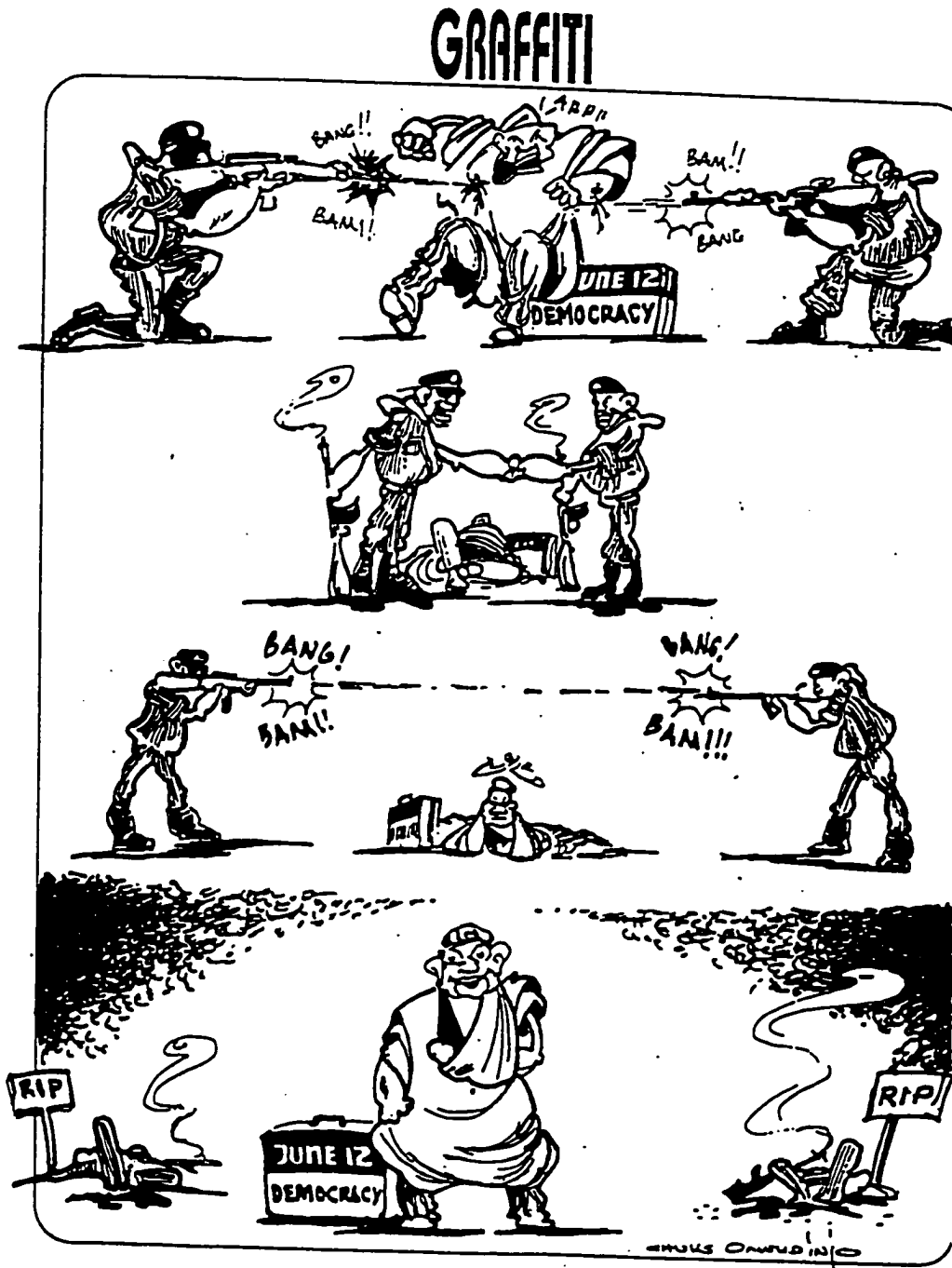


Figure C15. Tell – April 25, 1995

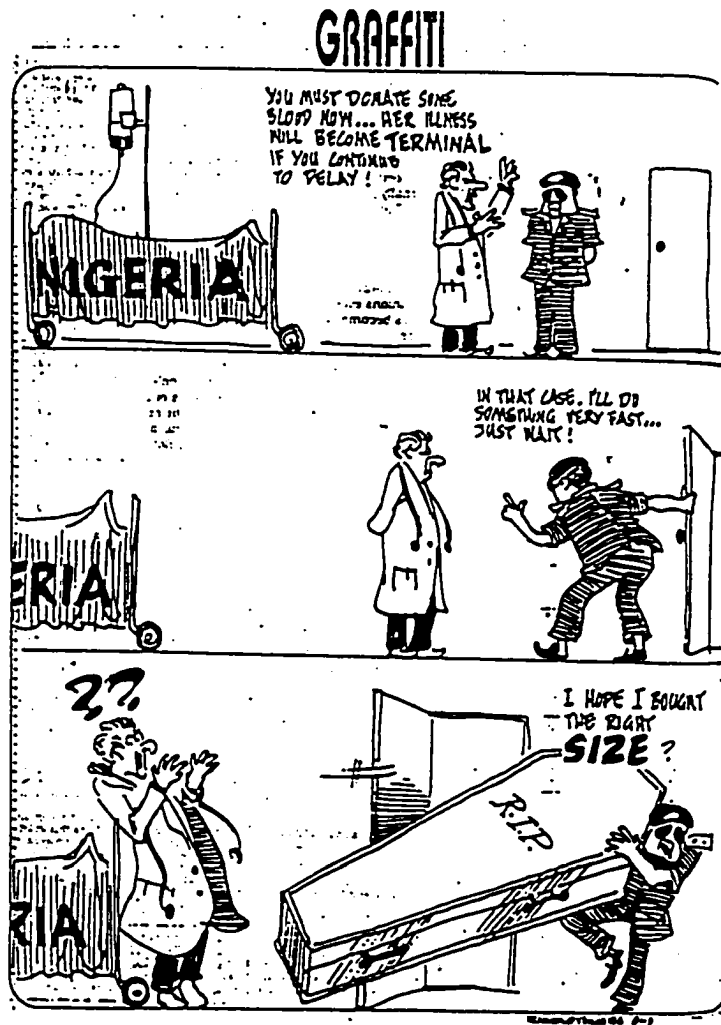


Figure C16. Tell – May 1, 1995

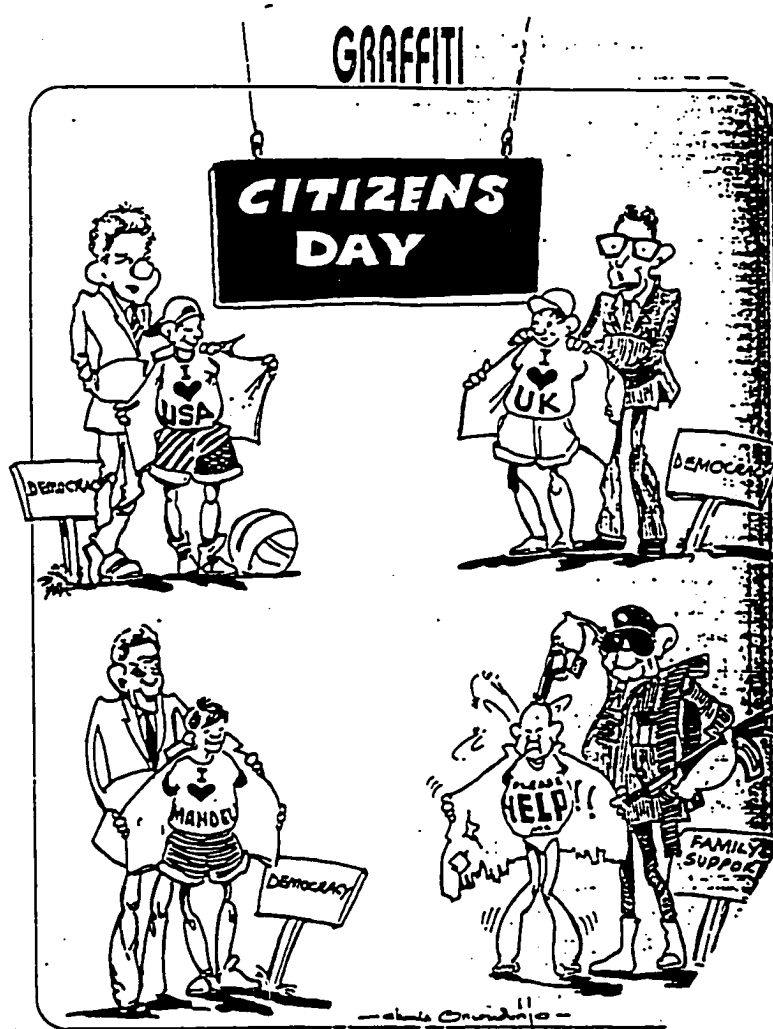


Figure C17. Tell – September 4, 1995

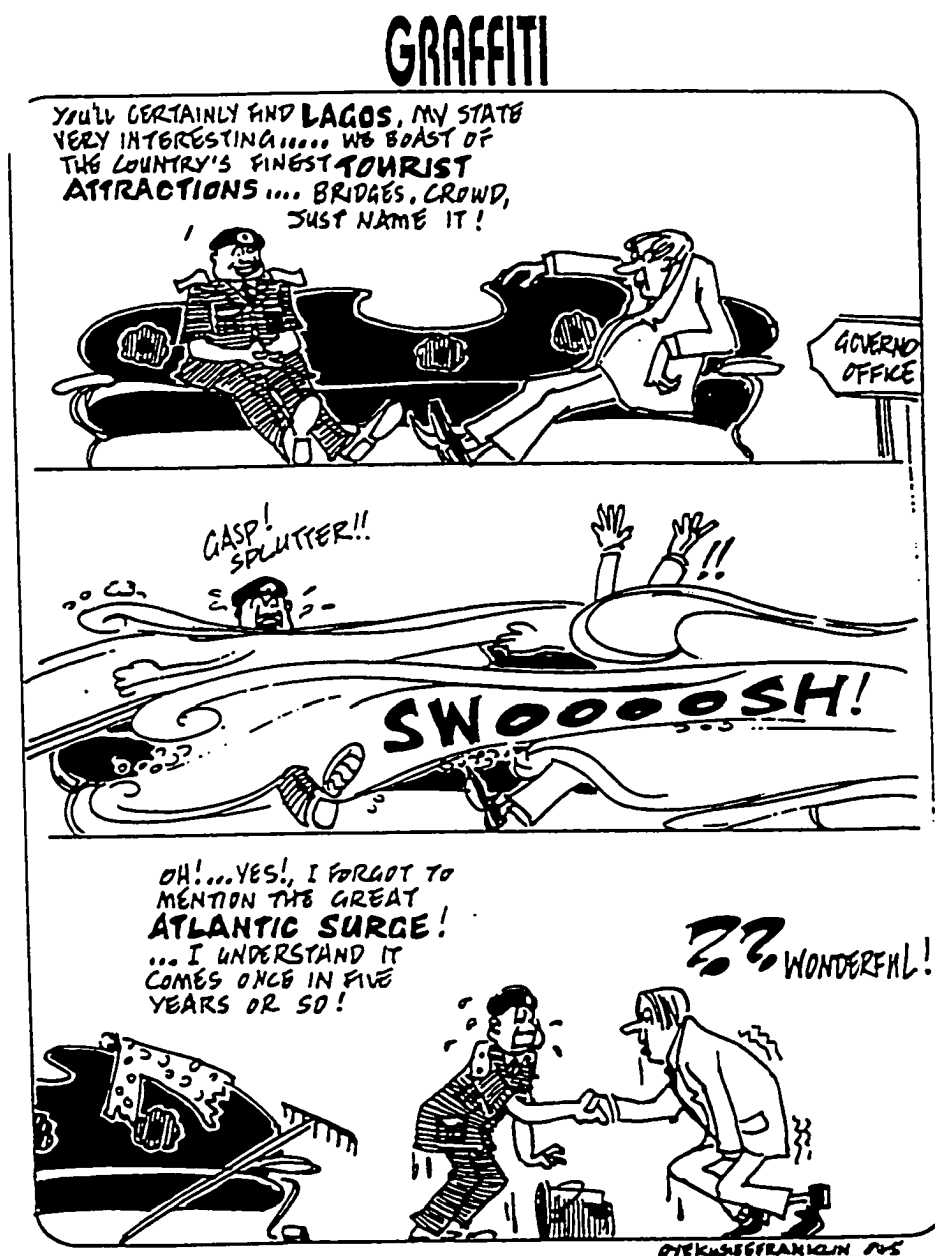


Figure C18. Tell – September 11, 1995



Figure C19. Tell – October 16, 1995

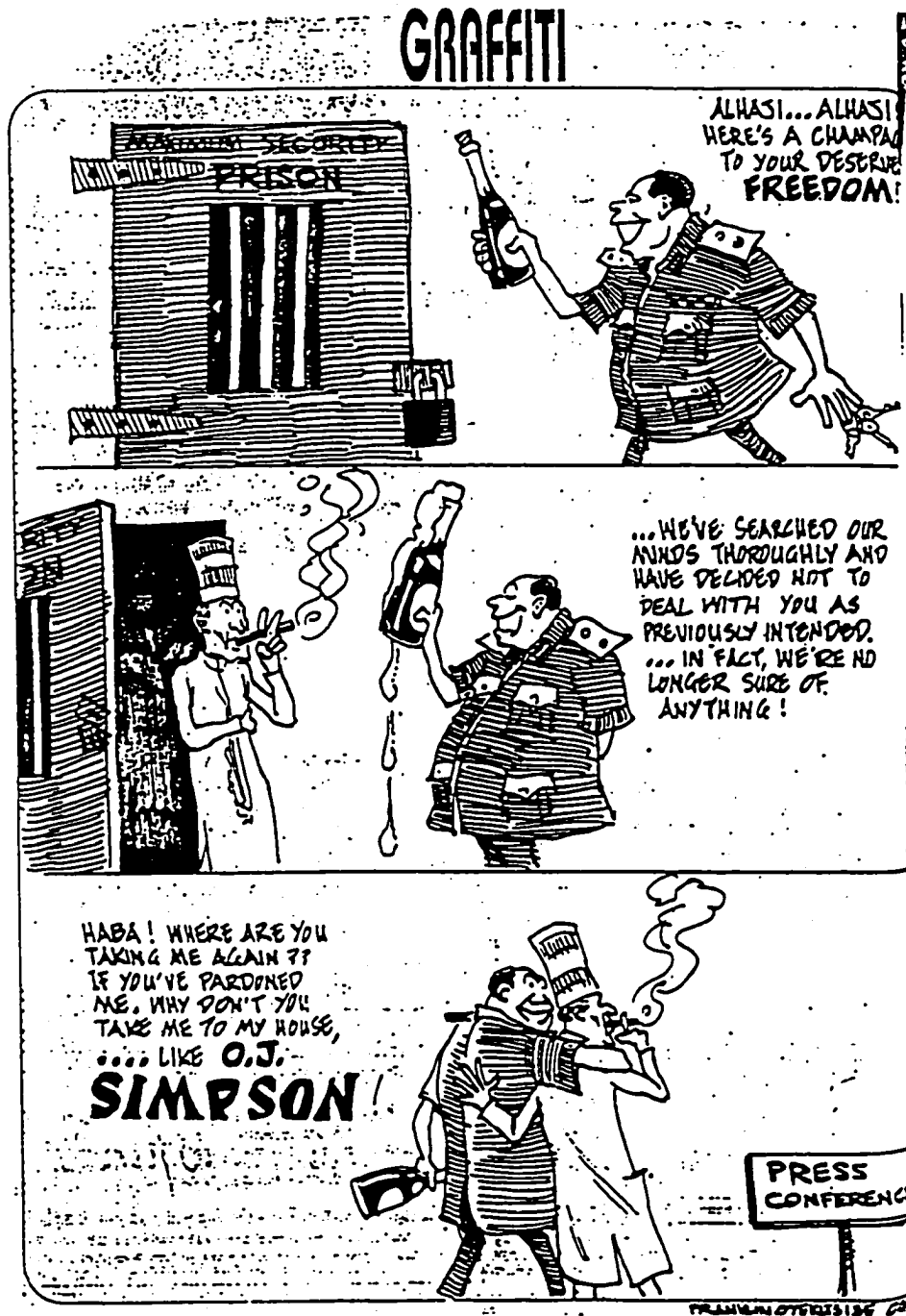


Figure C20. Tell – October 30, 1995



Figure C21. Tell – November 27, 1995

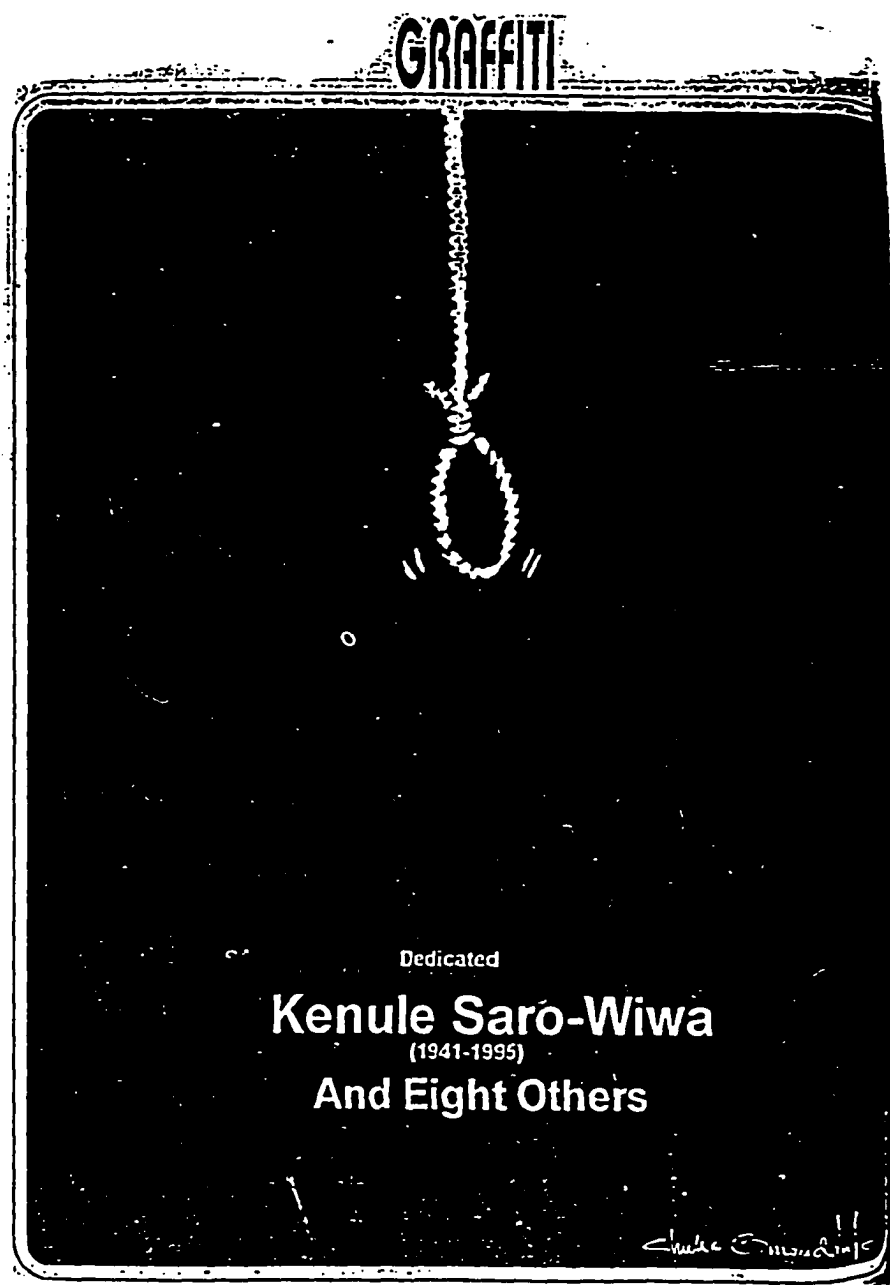


Figure C22. Tell – January 1, 1996

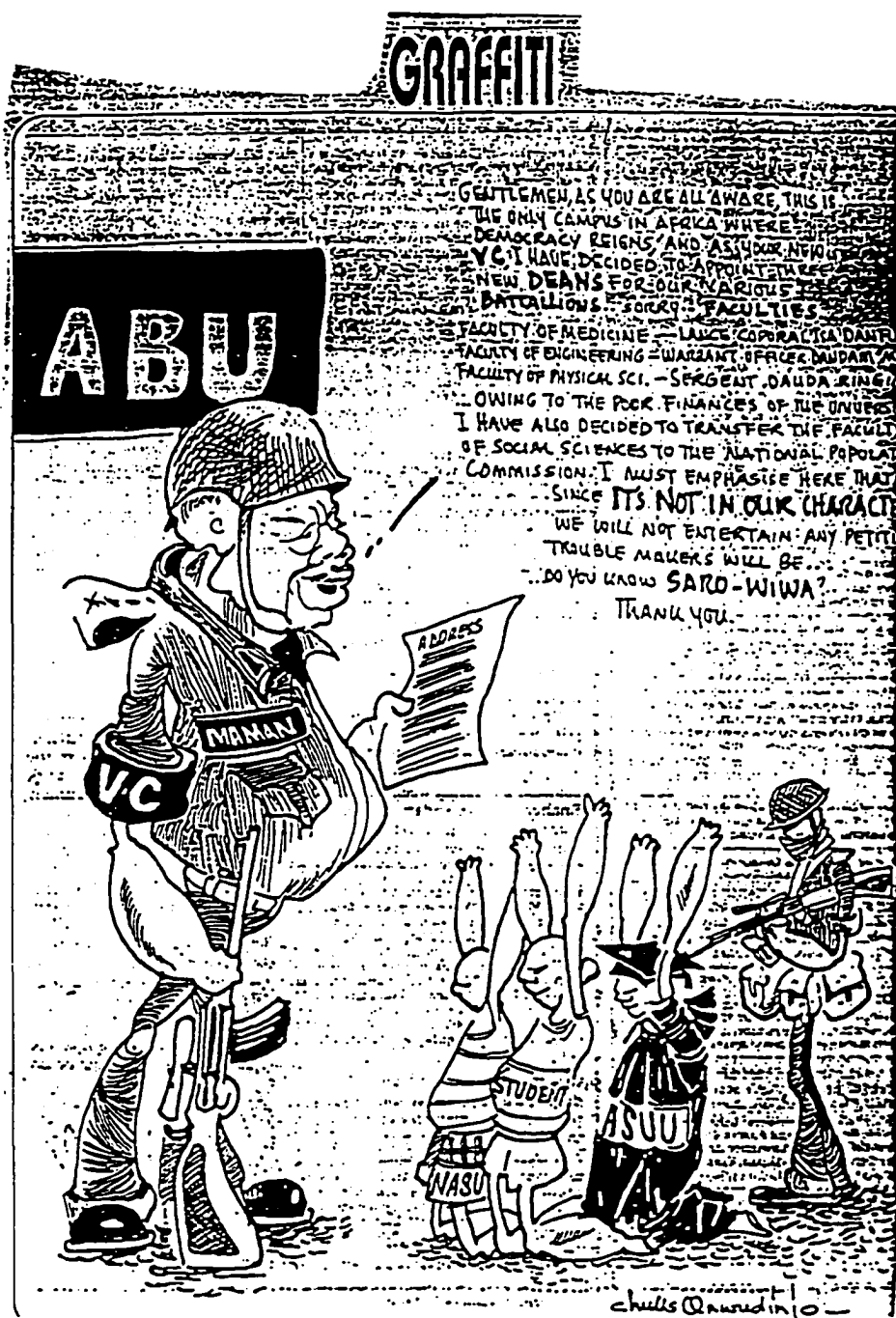


Figure C23. Tell – February 12, 1996

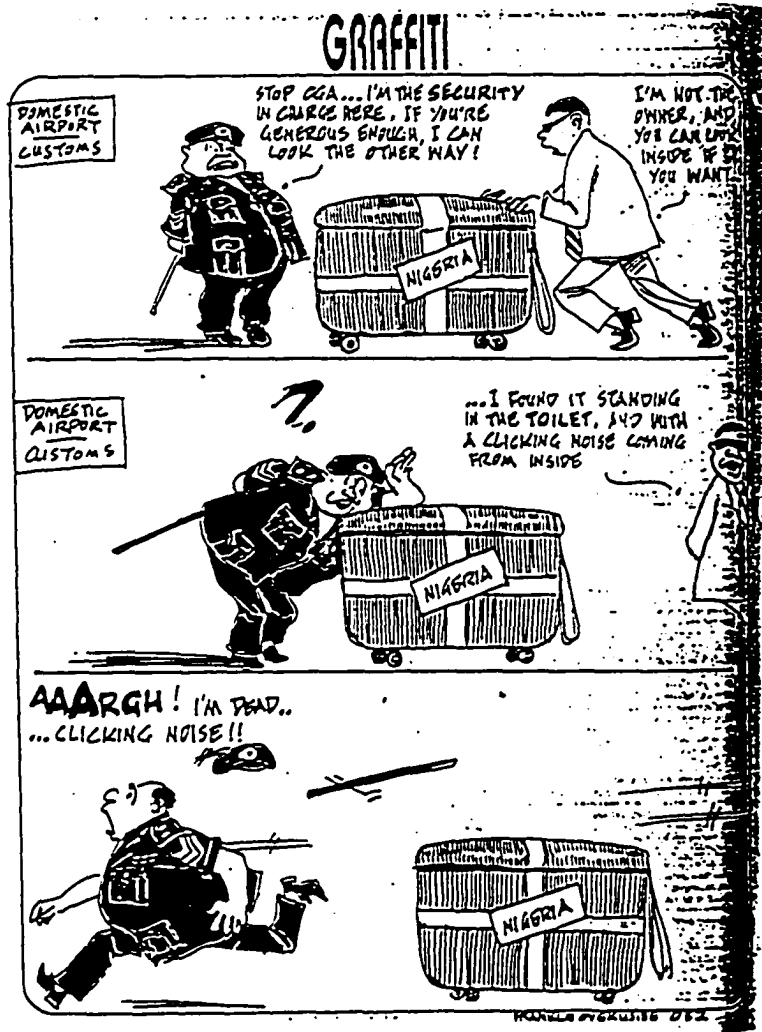


Figure C24. Tell – February 19, 1996

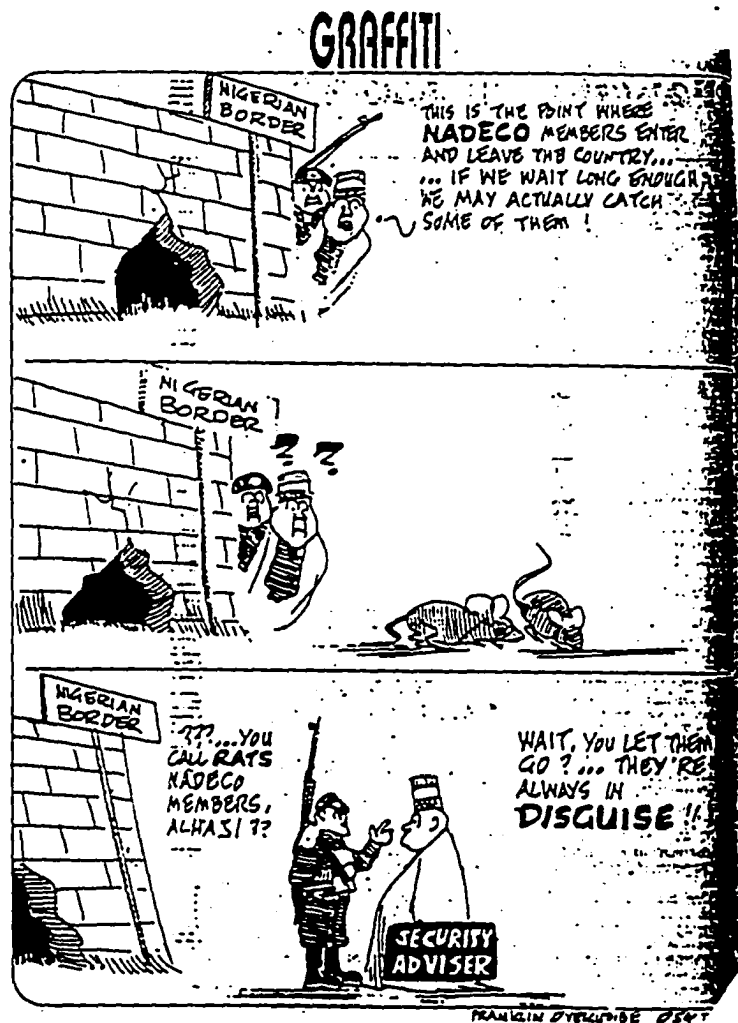


Figure C25. Tell – March 18, 1996

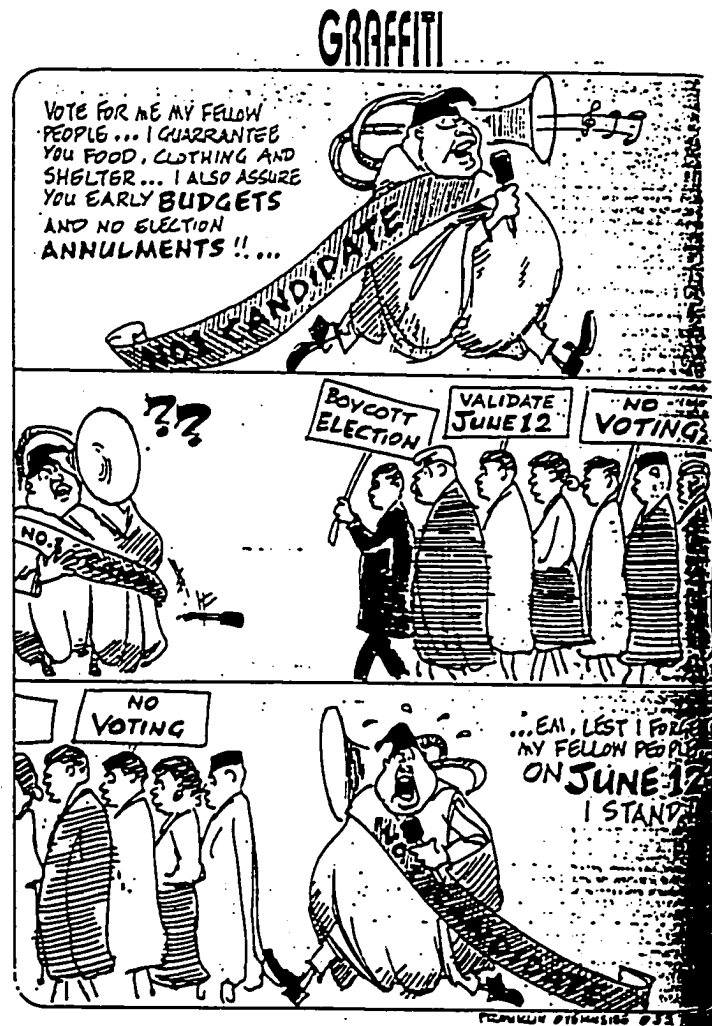


Figure C26. Tell – April 15, 1996

GRAFFITI

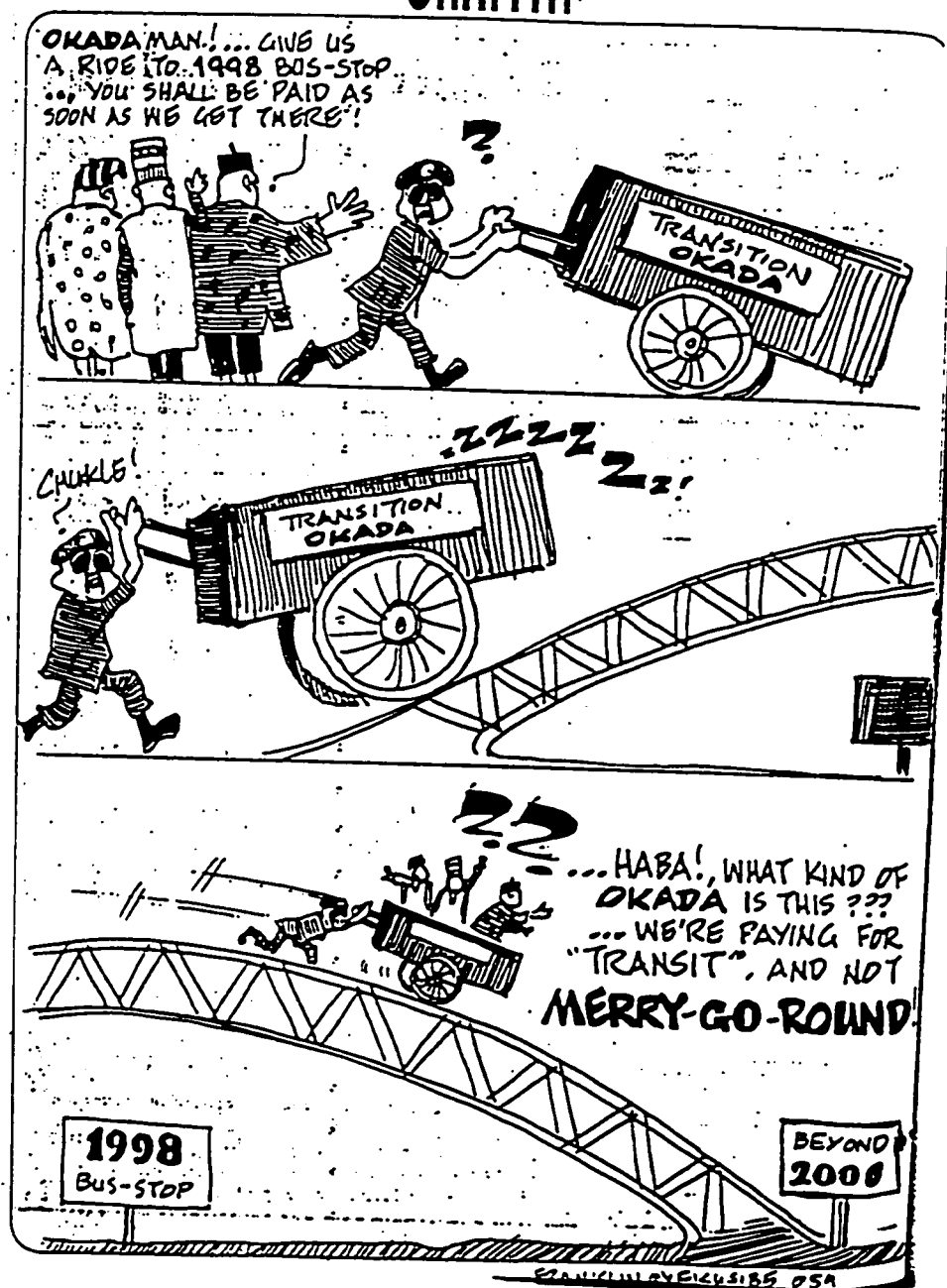


Figure C27. Tell – April 26, 1996

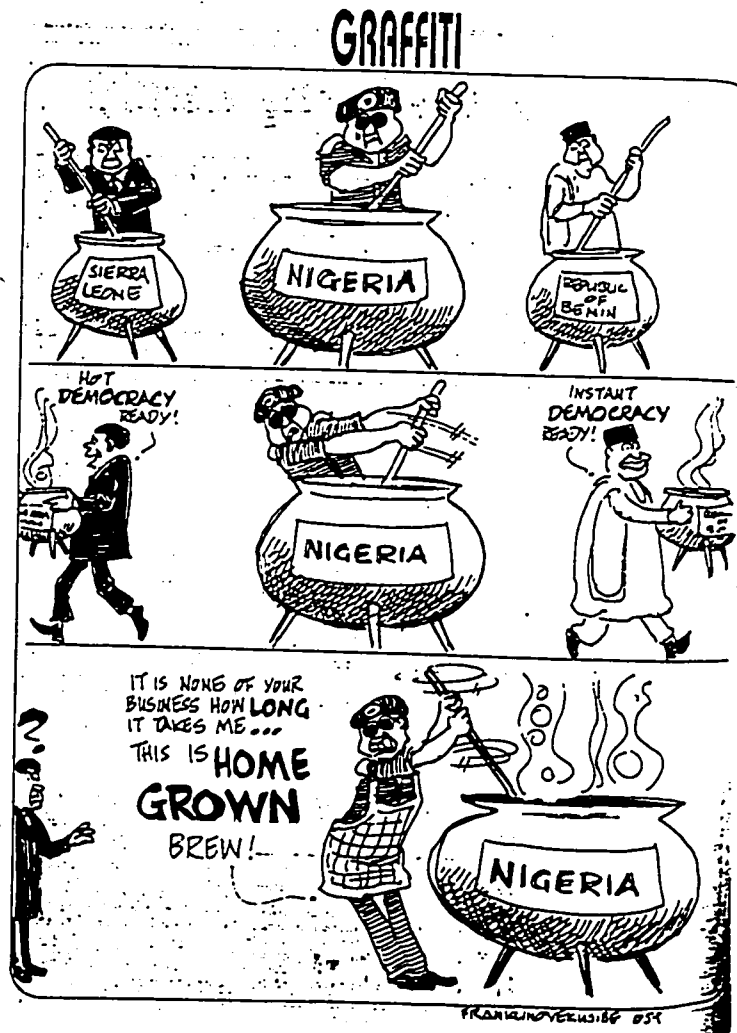


Figure C28. Tell – May 6, 1996



Figure C29. Tell – May 20, 1996



Figure C30. Tell – May 27, 1996



Figure C31. Tell – June 3, 1996

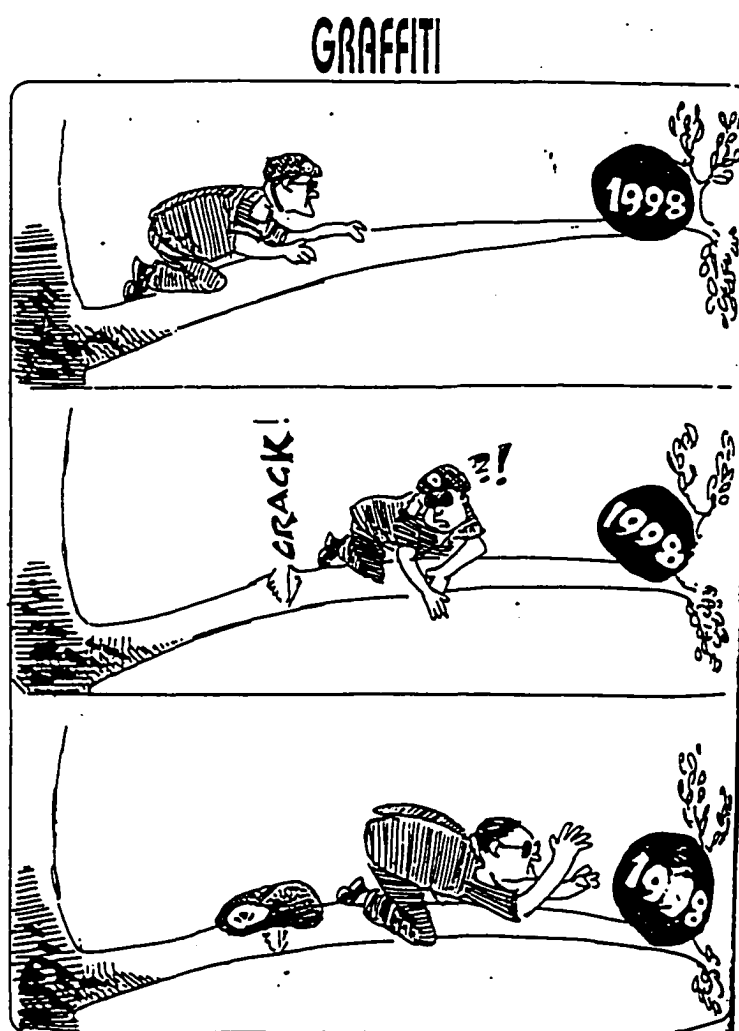


Figure C32. Tell – June 16, 1996

GRAFFITI

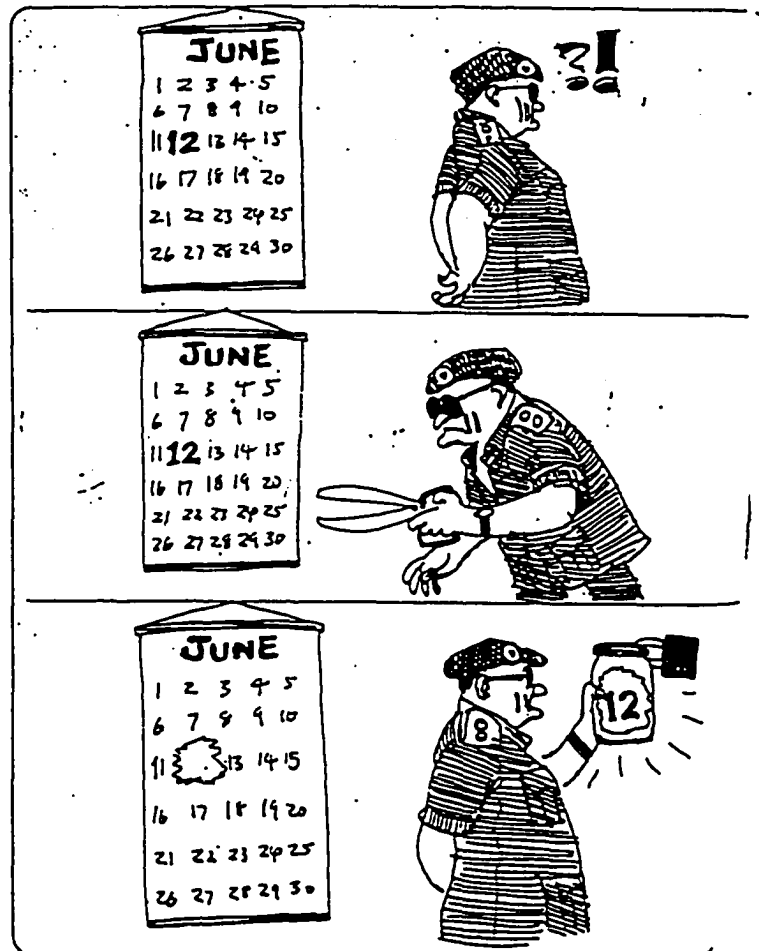


Figure C33. Tell – July 1, 1996

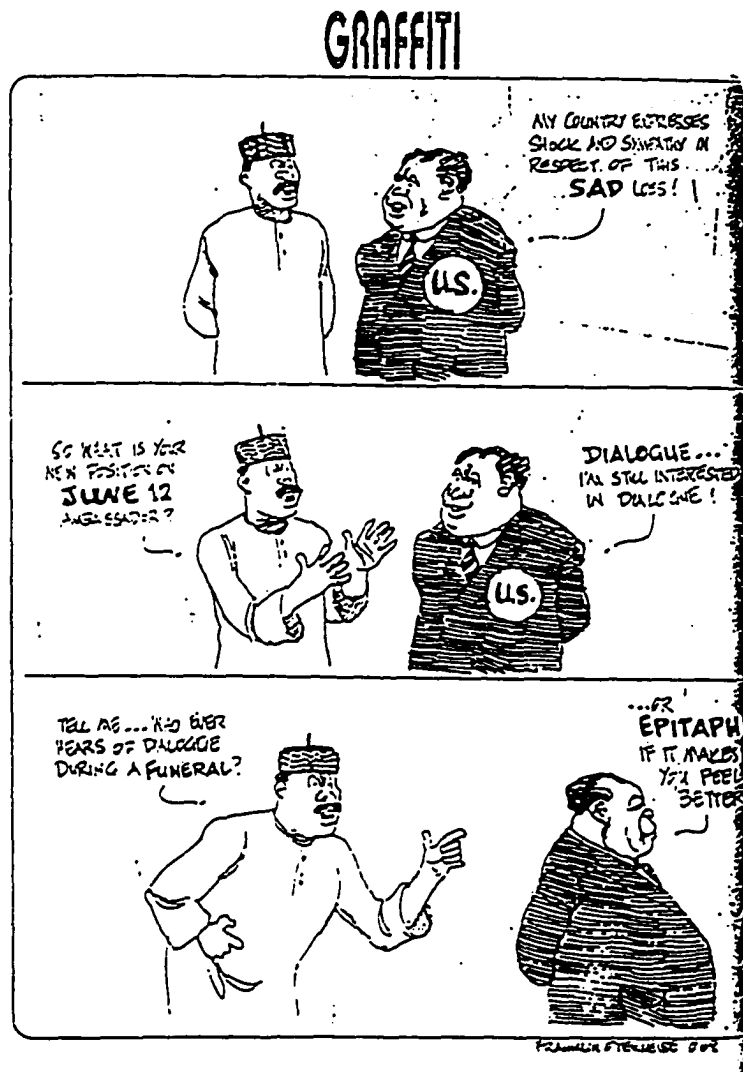


Figure C34. Tell – July 15, 1996



Figure C35. Tell – July 29, 1996

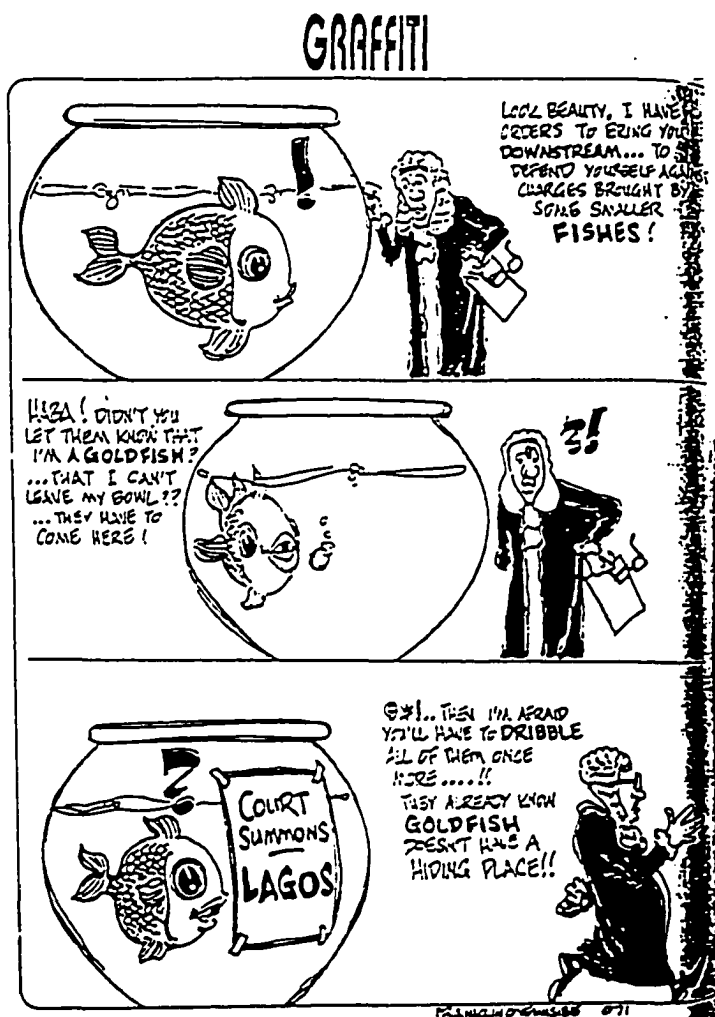


Figure C36. Tell – August 12, 1996

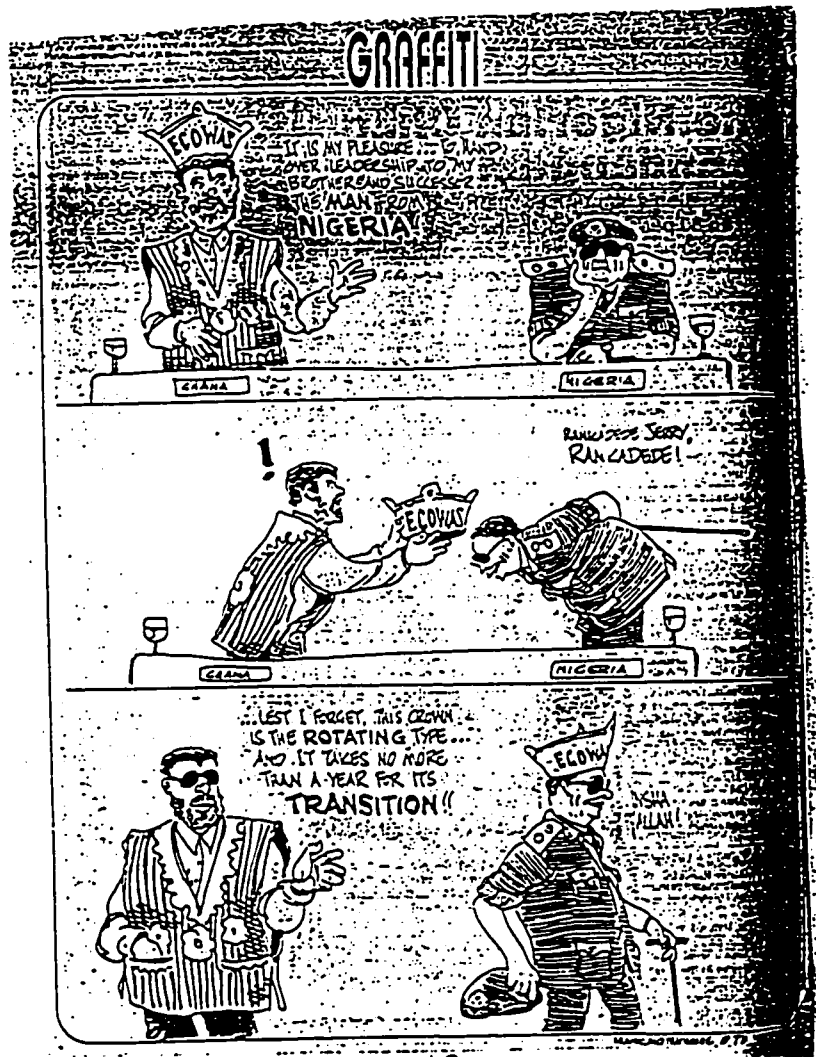


Figure C37. Tell – September 2, 1996



Figure C38. Tell – September 9, 1996



Figure C39. Tell – September 16, 1996



Figure C40. Tell – October 28, 1996

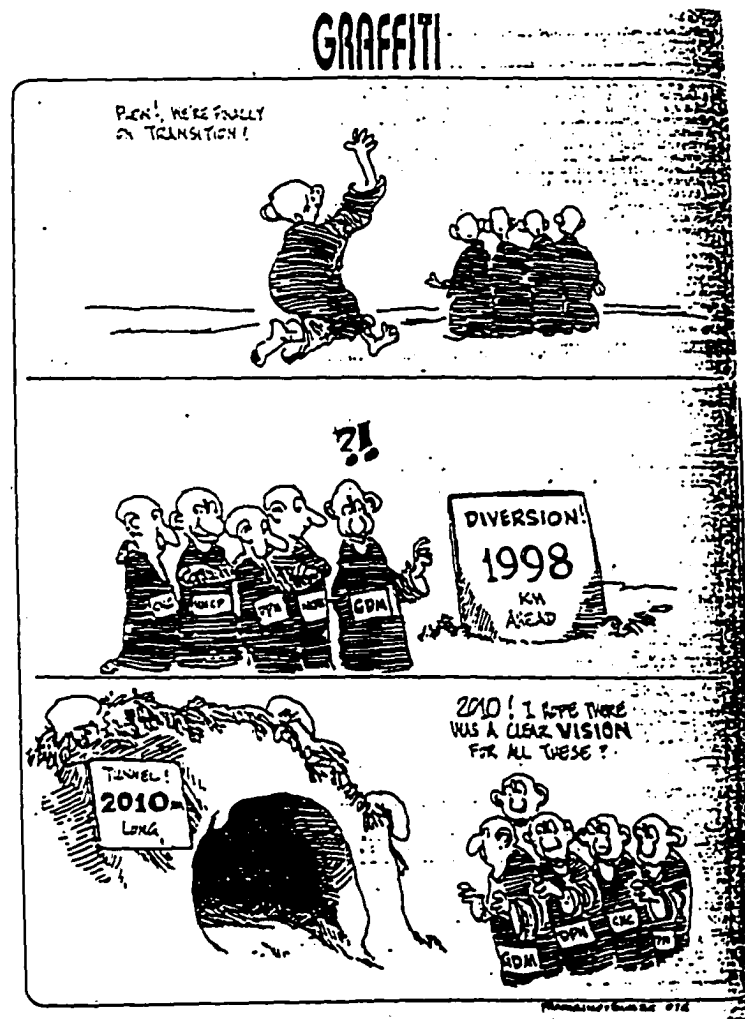


Figure C41. Tell – November 25, 1996

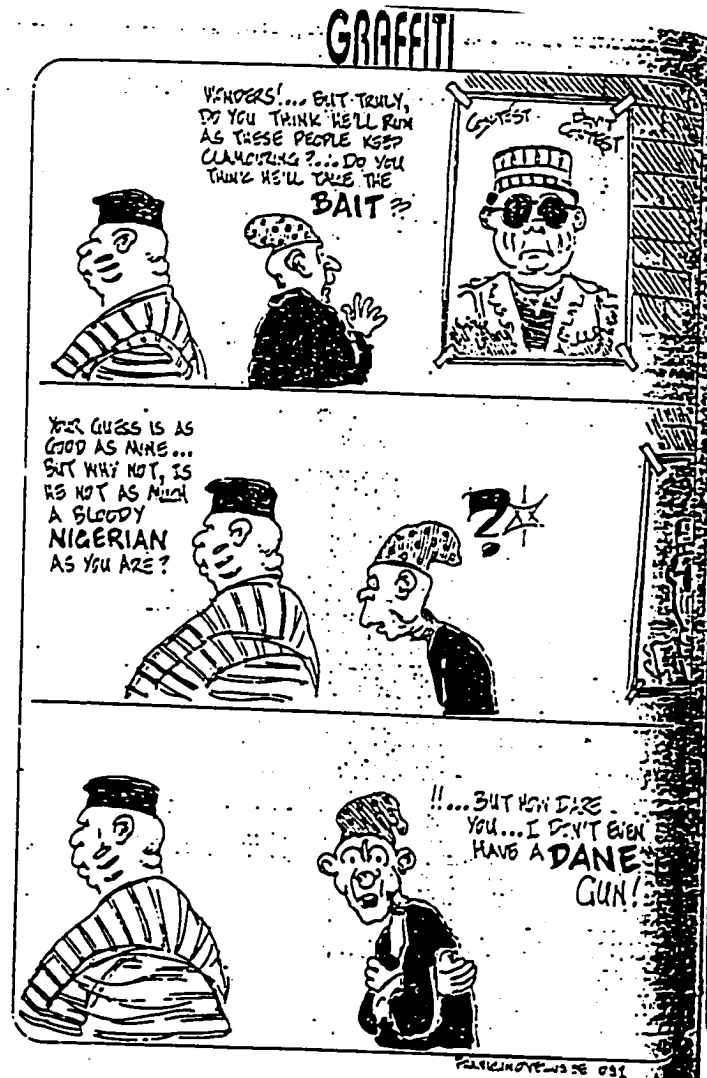


Figure C42. Tell – December 2, 1996

