

Political Elites and Anticorruption Campaigns as “Deep” Politics of Democracy A Comparative Study of Nigeria and South Africa

Olugbemiga Samuel Afolabi

Abstract

Studies of elite corruption and anticorruption have provided insight into their embeddedness in political and democratic processes. Since the return to democracy in 1999 in Nigeria, and independence in 1994 in South Africa, there has been growing interest in the relationship among corruption, anticorruption, and democracy. Despite these early advances of the study of elite corruption, the many ways that elite corruption and efforts against it have become part of the “hidden transcripts” of power and democracy in Africa remain unexamined. Using secondary data, this research examines corruption and the need for its reduction as a crucial ingredient in the politics of democracy in contemporary Africa. From a comparative perspective, the study focuses on the relationship between democracy and its antithesis, corruption, as one of mutual entanglement and co-constitutive aspects of politics in two African states: Nigeria in Anglophone West Africa and South Africa in Southern Africa. The entangled, yet antithetical relationship between corruption and democracy in these two countries means that for the political elite in Nigeria and South Africa, the quest for democracy calls for an embattlement against corruption through sustained rhetoric and practice of anticorruption politics. The essay explains how the interplay between corruption and anticorruption has become the deep realm of democratic politics in Africa.

Keywords: Anticorruption, deep politics, elite corruption, Nigeria, political settlement, South Africa.

Corruption is generally associated with decay or perversion, and in human relations and within societies, it speaks to the illegal acts that flout laws and

Olugbemiga Samuel Afolabi is a member of the Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Johannesburg, South Africa, and the Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. <afolabiolugbemiga@yahoo.ca> and <oafolabi@uj.ac.za>

rules for personal gain.¹ That is why Transparency International describes corruption as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It can be classified as grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs.”² Political corruption, mostly championed by the political elites, and arguably the most rampant type of corruption in some parts of Africa, is the focus of this essay, within the context of political settlement and anticorruption campaigns. Political corruption is a common phenomenon in every society. It thrives most especially in societies with weak or nonexistent institutions, a fact associated with Africa.³ However, while this is so, the preponderance of the corruption malaise in Africa has raised questions about its relationship to politics and democracy. Also, given the weak nature of African institutions and structures, the tendency is for corruption to grow unchecked and, in the process, to delegitimize electoral democracy, as evident in the continent. This naturally constitutes barriers to democratic sustenance, as resources which are dividends of democratic practice that should be used for the general benefit of citizens instead are appropriated by the elites. It has been noted by Paul Heywood⁴ and Stephen Riley⁵ that corruption is more inimical to democracies than to authoritarian states, as it hinders democratic consolidation. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to emphasize that corruption is equally inimical to both democracies and authoritarian regimes. Hence, the argument that corruption is more detrimental to democracies may be misleading because corruption, regardless of the political environment in which it is present (developed or developing countries; democratic or authoritarian states), always has very devastating effects. Nevertheless, the argument is correct to the extent that corruption ensures that resources which could have been used to better the lives of citizens and attain economic development, regardless of regime type, are diverted and embezzled. To that extent, at least, corruption can hinder democratic sustenance and consolidation. In Africa, it is the elites who predominate in corruption, making political corruption obvious.

¹ Daniel Jordan Smith, “Kinship and Corruption in Contemporary Nigeria,” *Ethnos* 66, no. 3 (2001): 344-364; Daniel J. Smith, *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Contemporary Nigeria* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); and Russell Smith, “Chipping Away at Corruption: Can We Rely on eGovernance? eCorruption and Unmanaged Risk,” paper presented at the 11th International Anti-Corruption Conference, Seoul (May 25-28, 2003), http://www.aic.gov.au/conferences/other/smith_russell/2003-05etheft.pdf (accessed January 2, 2014).

² “What Is Corruption?” Transparency International (2017), <https://www.transparency.org/what-is-corruption/#define> (accessed January 3, 2017).

³ Smith, *A Culture of Corruption*.

⁴ Paul Heywood, *Political Corruption: Problems and Perspective in Political Corruption* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).

⁵ Stephen Riley, “The Political Economy of Anti-corruption Strategies in Africa,” in *Corruption and Development*, ed. Mark Robinson (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 139.

In practical terms, the high level of elite corruption in Nigeria and South Africa and its effects on the post-colonial African state as a political institution have spawned many theories that have been the focus of scholarly attention, although scholars have drawn different conclusions. While some scholars believe that the nature and character of the state in Africa encourages elite corruption,⁶ others view the state as the center of power and resources that can be exploited.⁷ Still others see the state as weak and a resource to be plundered,⁸ and lately, captured.⁹ The above conclusions therefore raise questions about the nature and character of the African state as compared to other states that have passed through the same historical trajectories but have experienced different outcomes in terms of the state's nature and character. The difference, it can be argued, is located in the diminished role and importance of the state in pre- and post-independence Africa, harmony among the elites, the calculus of power dynamics, and the nature of the political settlement that followed a clientelist distribution of goods and services in a ranked order. This is unlike other states that have different characters and outcomes. The above reasons have combined to engender corruption that has become ingrained within the state, society, and politics in some African countries.

The high incidence of elite corruption has led to the establishment of anticorruption agencies, with campaigns dedicated to curbing the menace. In spite of elite corruption, many African states have one or another form of electoral democracy, pointing to the interconnectedness of elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns as constitutive elements of African politics. The aim of this essay is to explain how elite corruption and anticorruption

⁶ Wale Are Olaitan, "Towards a Functional African State: Bridging the Gap between the State and the People," paper presented at the CODESRIA 11th General Assembly, Maputo Mozambique, December 6-10, 2005, and Thomas M. Callaghy, "The State and the Development of Capitalism in Africa: Theoretical, Historical and Comparative Reflections," in *The Precarious Balance: State and Civil Society in Africa*, ed. Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988).

⁷ Olugbemiga Samuel Afolabi, "The State and Election Administration in Nigeria," *The Nigerian Electoral Journal* 6, no. 2 (2014): 93-129; Efosa E. Osaghae, "Ethnicity and the State in Africa," Working Paper Series No. 7 (Kyoto, Japan: Afrasian Centre for Peace and Development Studies, 2006); and Claude Ake, "The State in Contemporary Africa," in *Political Economy of Nigeria*, ed. Claude Ake (London: Longman, 1985).

⁸ W. A. Olaitan, "The State and the Limits of Democratization in Africa," *Annals of the Social Science Academy of Nigeria* (Abuja: SSAN, 2004); Jean-François Bayart, Stephen Ellis, and Béatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999); and Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁹ Haroon Bhorat et al., *Betrayal of Promise: How South Africa Is Being Stolen*, State Capacity Research Project (Johannesburg: Centre for Complex Systems in Transition, 2017); Report of the Public Prosecutor (2016), <http://cdn.24.co.za/files/Cms/General/d/4666/3f63a8b78d2b495d88f10ed060997f76.pdf> (accessed December 6, 2017); and Richard A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

work to shape African politics. The main question the essay poses is why elite corruption seems to continue unabated, most times on an increase, despite the presence of anticorruption campaigns to fight misconduct in some parts of Africa, specifically in Nigeria and South Africa. Thus, while shining the light on Nigeria and South Africa, the essay focuses particularly on political and elite corruption, anticorruption campaigns, and the continuous and increasing rate of corruption, despite anticorruption campaigns in these countries, as a pointer to other emerging democracies both within and outside Africa. In most parts of Africa, political corruption among elites is prevalent, hence, there is a need to investigate the phenomenon.

The essay is structured as follows. It opens by providing background and arguments as well as the aim of the research. Section two examines and conceptualizes the key terms used in the study. Specifically, elite corruption, anticorruption, and political settlement are conceptualized. Section three focuses on elite corruption in Nigeria and the politics of anticorruption, while section four is devoted to analyzing how elite corruption plays out in view of anticorruption campaigns in South Africa. Section five presents the conclusion, in which similarities, differences, and inferences are drawn to explain why elite corruption continues unabated despite anticorruption campaigns. The analysis reveals how corruption and anticorruption campaigns are now constitutive parts of the politics of democracy in many parts of Africa.

Corruption, Anticorruption, Political Settlement, and Deep Politics in Africa

The difference between theory and practice of democracy in all societies, according to Robert Dahl, shows that “in practice, democratic systems have always fallen considerably short of the criteria and values that justify democracy.”¹⁰ Corruption is one of those failings that could move democracy below par regarding expectations and is associated with several meanings. It can be viewed as decay, degeneration, or perversion. Corruption, at the rudimentary level, means a “change from good to bad; to debase; to pervert.”¹¹ Corruption occurs in both private and public realms and one is connected to the other. It has many faces, types, forms, and levels. Corruption, while not peculiar to any tribe, race, or culture, operates through different strategies in societies.¹² Since the focus of this essay is on elite corruption, involving

¹⁰ Robert Dahl, “Justifying Democracy,” *Transaction Social Science and Modern Society* 32, no. 3 (1995): 46.

¹¹ Colin Leys, “What Is the Problem with Corruption?” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 3, no. 2 (1965): 216.

¹² Olugbemiga Samuel Afolabi, “Ethnicity, Political Settlement and the Diffusion of Power in Africa,” a working paper presented at the Faculty of Social Sciences Annual Conference, Obafemi Awolowo University, June 20–22, 2018.

the private and public realms, corruption is addressed as “the abuse of public resources or public power for personal gain.”¹³ Transparency International’s definition of corruption tends toward the same line, viewing it as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It can be classified as grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs.”¹⁴

Corruption occurs because there is a set standard of behavior within the public or private realm, such that any irregular behavior outside this set standard that leads to a break of certain rules, whether written or unwritten, becomes corruption.¹⁵ What this implies is that corruption occurs when behaviors deviate from set standards of *modus operandi* within public or private institutions and settings. This understanding perhaps led to the description of corruption by Joseph Samuel Nye as “a behavior that deviates from the formal duties of a public role, because of private (gain)-regarding personal, close family, private clique, pecuniary or status gain. It is a behavior which violates the rules against the exercise of certain types of (duties) for private (gains) regarding influence.”¹⁶ In Nigeria and South Africa, the incidence of corruption is pervasive. While corruption is mostly perceived as economic in nature (illicit accumulation of public funds), the opportunities afforded by politics and access to state power cannot be overlooked. Outright stealing or covert appropriation of state resources, to using state offices to employ children of the rich and powerful as a conduit to siphon money, to various forms of nepotism and outright stealing and diversion of public funds into private accounts are examples of how political corruption is conducted in Africa. This speaks directly to the nature and character of the state, which is weak, can be manipulated, hijacked, and plundered. This, in a nutshell, is the hallmark of political corruption in Africa.

Anticorruption is the opposite of corruption. The term encompasses the full gamut of actions and inactions taken toward curbing corrupt practices in any form or strand it takes or in which it operates. Anticorruption could thus be referred to as the antithesis of corruption; the antidote to any appearance of corrupt practice(s). As an institution, anticorruption agencies are public institutions created by governments with the force of law to arrest and prosecute persons and institutions (private or public) that engage in corrupt practices. Anticorruption therefore addresses both the process—campaigns, enlightenment, education, and so on—and the procedures—concrete actions—

¹³ “What Is Corruption?” *Corruption Watch* (2017), <http://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/learn-about-corruption/what-is-corruption/our-definition-of-corruption/> (accessed April 11, 2017).

¹⁴ “What is Corruption?” Transparency International (2017), p. 1, <https://www.transparency.org/what-is-corruption/#define> (accessed January 3, 2017).

¹⁵ Leys, “What Is the Problem with Corruption?” 215-230.

¹⁶ Joseph S. Nye, “Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis,” *American Political Science Review* 61, no. 2 (1967): 419.

that seeks to sanction those who abuse the privileges and perks of government office. Thus, anticorruption agencies are created mainly to debar individuals and groups from corrupt practices as well as to discourage (by means of campaigns) corrupt practices by members of the political class (elites) within and outside government. Anticorruption campaigns are not limited to the political class, as they are directed to the general public. However, elites are the principal focus of the anticorruption campaigns. To address the growing menace of corruption and, given the damaging effects of the scourge on development, most states in Africa now have anticorruption agencies.¹⁷

Following Pallavi Roy, power based on a political settlement is understood as activities that seek to maintain a balance of power among groups with access to economic benefits. Therefore, “a political settlement is a sustainable distribution of organisational power based on a mix of formal and informal institutions that are supported by these organisations, and which delivers benefits or ‘rents’ to them.”¹⁸ According to Edward Laws and Adrian Leftwich, political settlement implies both formal and informal processes, engagements, agreements, and so on, in any setting that is geared toward the enthronement of politics as a means for dealing with and resolving disagreements over interests and ideas and the distribution and use of power, rather than resorting to violence.¹⁹ What this suggests is that political settlement ensures that societal differences, specifically those relating to interests, ideas, and power, are resolved via some sort of political negotiations, bargains, and compromise, rather than through violence. Political settlement is dynamic and may cut across agreements such as peace deals and be between leaders and followers, rather than being strictly the business of elites.²⁰ Furthermore, Laws and Leftwich believe that political settlement can help toward better understanding of how ideas, interests, and relations of power (among leaders, elites, or coalitions) can be either vehicles of positive progress or obstacles to development. In many African states, political settlement emerged as an obstacle to development because it serves the private interests of elites rather than the public interest.

Further, the Department for International Development (DFID) defines political settlement as coming to a common understanding, usually among elites, about how power is shared, organized, and exercised for the purpose

¹⁷ Barry Hindess, “Investigating International Anti-corruption,” *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 8 (2005): 1389-1398; Elizabeth Harrison, “Unpacking the Anti-Corruption Agenda: Dilemmas for Anthropologists,” *Oxford Development Studies* 34, no. 1 (2006): 15-29; and Grant W. Walton, *Anti-Corruption and Its Discontents: Local, National and International Perspectives on Corruption in Papua, New Guinea* (London: Francis and Taylor, 2017).

¹⁸ Pallavi Roy, “Anti-Corruption in Nigeria: A Political Settlements Analysis,” ACE Anti-Corruption Evidence Working Paper 2 (London: University of London, 2017), 17.

¹⁹ Edward Laws and Adrian Leftwich, “Political Settlement,” *Developmental Leadership Programme (DLP) Concept Brief* (York, UK: University of York, October 1, 2014).

²⁰ Ibid.

of managing economic and political relations.²¹ This, it is averred, can be achieved via means such as electoral processes, peace agreements, institutions, and informal agreements, among other means.²² To sum up the definitions ascribed to political settlement, Laws submits that processes and practices; continuous involvement (not just a one-off event); vertical as well as horizontal relations; and national and subnational dimensions (rather than just national) are elements consistent with political settlement in any setting.²³ Thus, all political societies engage in one form or another of political settlement. Political settlement therefore speaks to the best political arrangement according to each state's particular and unique characteristics.

According to Markus Schultze-Kraft, political settlement in Nigeria takes the form of dynamic processes, which may be overt or covert involving negotiation, compromise, bargaining, accommodation, and variants of collaboration among elites.²⁴ Senior government and civil service officials, leaders and “godfathers” of political parties, influential businessmen, retired military officers, political party bosses, Nigerian and international oil industry players, and community chiefs, among others, constitute the elites in Nigeria's political space.²⁵ This speaks more or less to how political settlement is conducted in South Africa as well.

Therefore, political settlement in South Africa and Nigeria revolves around many individuals and groups, a great number of which are rooted in economic determinism, ethno-religious attachments, labeling, and political corruption. An examination of political settlement in Africa shows that the potentiality for settlement is determined by group interest, coalition-building efforts, and access to power by constituent ethnic and racial groups. These factors provide the primary motivation. The second motivation for political settlement is to ensure ethnic and racial balancing for stability and elite politics. This often leaves room for corruption to thrive. For example, threats and violence are sometimes employed by powerful individuals and groups to undermine state authority in Nigeria and South Africa by those who are left out of power. Certain access and accruable benefits are provided to appease such individuals and groups through political settlement, mostly channeled through unlawful means.

²¹ Department for International Development (DFID), “Building Peaceful States and Societies,” a DFID practice paper (London: DFID, 2010), 22.

²² Ibid.

²³ Edward Laws, “Political Settlements, Elite Pacts and Governments of National Unity,” DLP Background Paper, No.10, Developmental Leadership Program (Birmingham, UK: University of Birmingham, 2012).

²⁴ Markus Schultze-Kraft, “Nigeria's Post-1999 Political Settlement and Violence Mitigation in the Niger Delta,” Institute of Development Studies, London (2013), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301869578_Nigeria's_Post-1999_Political_Settlement_and_Violence_Mitigation_in_the_Niger_Delta (accessed November 7, 2017).

²⁵ Ibid.

This is why Schultze-Kraft contended that the dynamics of diverse power configuration in Nigeria, even though located in competitive clientelism, has helped to “shed light on the fundamental question of why violence involving a growing number of state and non-state actors escalated and receded at certain points after the political transition; and what would be the elements of a more effective strategy for addressing the causes and manifestations of violence or preventing its re-emergence.”²⁶ In preventing violence and accommodating those left out of power, the tendency is for corruption to flourish, as accommodation by elites is done through political settlement by using state resources illegally.

The term “deep politics” refers to the truth often concealed by leaders, mostly by framing substitute and captivating narratives to please the people. Peter Dale Scott coined the term, which he used to refer to goings-on that are very much at odds with the stories dished out to the public about what is happening in such a way that the truth is continuously repressed.²⁷ This practice by politicians regularly deceives the public, often through propaganda, while keeping the realities hidden from it. Deep politics involves deceptive official narratives issued by authorities in the thrall of political elites. Scott avers that if politics is the 10 percent of the iceberg that is visible above water level, deep politics is the 90 percent which lies underneath.²⁸ This implies that politicians involved in deep politics conceal many deals and much information, often deceptively, in an attempt to reveal little to the masses. This means that in the play of deep politics, the masses are privileged to know only what the elites want them to know (which may not be the reality), while keeping the reality hidden in the “deep.” This is often the case with corruption and anticorruption campaigns in some parts of Africa, where elites politick and deceive the public with a show of fighting corruption, while indulging in and sponsoring corrupt practices in the background. Thus, while the public may have the perception that the elites are fighting corruption, in fact, elite corruption continues unabated. This situation exists in Nigeria and South Africa, where despite elites’ public campaigns against corruption, including the establishment of anticorruption agencies and institutions, they represent the epitome of grand political corruption.

Elite Corruption and the Politics of Anticorruption in Nigeria: The Politics of Democracy by Other Means

Corruption and politics in Nigeria revolve around the nature and pattern of distribution of political settlement. Corruption in Nigeria, for analytical

²⁶ Ibid., 7.

²⁷ Peter Dale Scott, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

²⁸ Ibid.

purposes, can be divided into three phases. The first phase is the colonial period, which falls roughly between the amalgamation in 1914 to 1959 (pre-independence); the second is the post-independence period, which stretches from 1960 to 1998 (largely military); and the third is the post-1999 period (return to democratic rule). In the first period, the seeds of corruption were sown by Britain as Nigeria's colonial power. Corruption, or more accurately, elite corruption, as a social malaise was promoted by Nigeria's colonizers, as colonization is corruption institutionalized. Specifically, corrupt means were used by the colonial power to access and exploit Nigeria's resources. For example, acts such as granting rights to British companies at the expense of host companies, exclusive rights to exploitation, outright reparation of colonized Nigeria's monies to Britain, as well as appointment of cronies all contributed to institutionalization of corruption in the early stages.²⁹ Other pre-independence acts by Britain, including electoral fraud, contributed to how corruption became entrenched in the Nigerian state and society.³⁰

While corruption in the pre-independence period was dominated by white British colonial officials, corruption in post-independence Nigeria up to 1999 was largely engaged in by the military, with civilian collaborators. This is traceable to military rulership of the country, the military having taken over governance through a *coup d'état* shortly after independence. The pre-1999 military-dominated era was largely built on sharing political posts and offices to accommodate various elite interests, given Nigeria's multi-ethnic nature. Correspondingly, large-scale corruption and unaccountability took place, with the military elites awarding their members bogus and inflated contracts and engaging in outright stealing of state funds. The massive corruption of the military was rooted in its being an undemocratic institution involved in governance, which was largely unaccountable to Nigerians.³¹ However, due to citizens' outrage, anticorruption laws were passed and governmental agencies, such as the police anti-money-laundering unit, were empowered to tackle corruption. But the campaigns against corruption were largely symbolic, as few persons were prosecuted and jailed. The campaigns were not meant to discourage corrupt practices and apprehend corrupt officials, but rather to pacify the populace, negotiate and bargain political power, and share economic benefits through corrupt channels via political settlement. Anticorruption efforts are not anachronistic of elite corruption in Nigeria's democracy; rather, they

²⁹ Austine Ejovi, Voke Charles Mgbonyebi, and Okiemute Raymond Akpokighe, "Corruption in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective," *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 16 (2013): 19-26.

³⁰ Billy J. Dudley, *Instability and Political Order and Crisis in Nigeria* (Ibadan, Nigeria: University of Ibadan Press, 1973).

³¹ Ogbewere Bankole Ijewereme, "Anatomy of Corruption in the Nigerian Public Sector: Theoretical Perspectives and Some Empirical Explanation," *Sage Online Journal* (April–June 2015): 1-16.

are an integral part of the politics of corruption and democracy that is exercised by Nigeria's political leadership of various power blocks and political elites. Thus, the anticorruption efforts of different regimes within post-independence Nigeria until 1999 were sites of contested political practices and meanings among the elites.

Corruption-wise, the military engaged in massive looting of the state's resources. As an integral part of the political class, its members were more corrupt than other elites, and have been fingered in virtually all corruption cases in Nigeria.³² These cases include stealing by military governors, the Haliburton and Siemens corruption cases, and the fraudulent award of oil blocks to top military brass and their civilian collaborators. As earlier noted, to stem popular angst against corruption, the military promulgated decrees (laws) against corruption. But the decrees were used to silence opponents and to bargain with those who could not be intimidated. The anticorruption drive was used to test the efficacy of political settlement at its infancy in Nigeria.³³ For instance, there was an agreement between the military and politicians that none of the military's members was to be probed and that all ill-gotten wealth could not be recovered by the incoming civilian government in 1999.³⁴ These agreements had the effect of rendering the anticorruption campaign exercises futile.

The third phase of corruption in Nigeria, which is ongoing, is dominated by civilians through the instrumentality of electoral democracy. The year 1999 marked the return of the country to civil rule as opposed to the previous military rule. The post-1999 period is marked by the formal establishment of anticorruption agencies and codification of anticorruption laws. The establishment of anticorruption agencies was meant to reduce and eradicate corruption in all facets of public and private lives. However, the anticorruption agencies established by post-1999 regimes, especially the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), are partisan. They serve as a front for any government in power. These agencies often are used to label political opponents as corrupt, and to hound and prosecute individuals and groups outside the ruling party, although with few convictions. Labeling opponents as corrupt, while mostly engaged in by the government and ruling political party of the day, is not unidirectional, as it is done by individuals and groups outside the government as well. Principally, however, the labeling of groups and individuals as corrupt

³² Michael M. Ogeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria since 1960: A Socio-Economic Analysis," *Journal of Nigeria Studies* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 1-25.

³³ Ijewereme, "Anatomy of Corruption in the Nigerian Public Sector."

³⁴ Markus Schultze-Kraft, "Nigeria's Post-1999 Political Settlement and Violence Mitigation in the Niger Delta," Institute of Development Studies, London (2013), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301869578_Nigeria's_Post-1999_Political_Settlement_and_Violence_Mitigation_in_the_Niger_Delta (accessed November 7, 2017).

is done through the instrumentality of anticorruption agencies, inclusive of allegations and prosecutions. This has led to the description of Nigeria's anticorruption agencies as pawns on the chess board of the political class that determines who is investigated, arrested, and prosecuted.³⁵ Thus, instead of receding, corruption in Nigeria has continued unabated and is increasing through the amount of the funds that are stolen,³⁶ with deleterious effects: a troubled Nigerian economy, high levels of poverty, lack of social services and justice, and denial of the right to a "good life."³⁷

Reliance on what Leena Koni Hoffman and Raj Navanit Patel called the "legal and governance-based measures" that largely have focused on public procurement rules and government-funded anticorruption³⁸ has not helped due to the nature of political settlement and labeling and the overtly politicized anticorruption agencies and their campaigns. Therefore, elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns provide the context for continued elite corruption through political settlement, hence, serving as the "deep" realm of the politics of democracy for accessing and maintaining power in Nigeria. Furthermore, labeling individuals or groups as corrupt is done to gain political and electoral advantage over political opponents. The above therefore validates our contention that elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns are politics by other means in Nigeria. A good example of such politics is the release of a list of allegedly corrupt persons by the President Buhari regime implicating only the opposition party's members.³⁹

One key emerging dimension of elite politics and anticorruption campaigns that was designed on paper to aid the anticorruption drive, but which has become part of politics of democracy in Nigeria, is the "whistle-blowing" policy and the persecution of "whistle blowers" by agents of the state. In its conceptualization, whistle blowing is meant to encourage citizens to report cases of fraud, bribery, looted government funds, and other corrupt practices, with evidence to the government, including the anticorruption agencies, under the provision that such citizens are to be protected, commended, and/or given a certain percentage of the money or loot that is recovered. However, in practice,

³⁵ Emmanuel Obuah, "Combating Corruption in Nigeria: The Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes (EFCC)," *African Studies Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 17-44.

³⁶ "Illicit Financial Flows to and from Developing Countries: 2005–2014," *Global Financial Integrity Report* (Washington, DC: A Global Financial Integrity Publication, 2017).

³⁷ Leena Koni Hoffman and Raj Navanit Patel, *Collective Action on Corruption in Nigeria: A Social Norms Approach to Connecting Society and Institutions* (London: Chatham House Report, May 2017), and Opeoluwa Adetoro Ogundokun, "A Human Rights Approach to Combating Corruption in Africa: Appraising the AU Convention Using Nigeria and South Africa" (LLM diss., Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria, 2005).

³⁸ Hoffman and Patel, *Collective Action on Corruption in Nigeria*, iii.

³⁹ Emmanuel Elebeke, "FG Releases More Looters' List, Says Lists Based on Verifiable Facts," *Vanguard* (April 1, 2018), <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/04/fg-releases-more-looters-list-says-lists-based-on-verifiable-facts/> (accessed June 6, 2018).

citizens who have undertaken to report or “whistle blow” on the nefarious activities of corrupt elites, have faced attacks in various forms on their honesty. Therefore, honest citizens find themselves variously suspended, intimidated, or punished by having their salaries withheld if they report corruption in their respective work settings or corrupt activities in the larger society. The harassment takes place despite the officially stated policy by the government that claims to encourage citizens to report cases of fraud and guarantees them protection for so doing. Thus, elite corruption in Nigeria and the lack of political will to address the menace, in spite of anticorruption campaigns, is evident in the persecution and intimidation of whistle blowers under the whistle-blowing policy. Solomon Ifejika posits that whistle blowers in Nigeria, both in private and public realms, suffer all sorts of intimidation, retaliation, and victimization, including outright dismissal by the state and its officials who are meant to protect them.⁴⁰ Prominent instances of this practice abound. For exposing a financial fraud of N70.6 million in the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTCA), a director in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ntis Thompson, was unlawfully suspended on December 19, 2016, and later sacked.⁴¹ Efforts by the director to get protection from state agencies, such as the EFCC and the Inspector General of Police, proved unhelpful.

Other cases are plentiful. In August 2011, a staff member who exposed the alleged embezzlement of over N300 million by some top members in the National Women Development Center, Abuja, was unlawfully dismissed.⁴² Such also was the case for the former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, who blew the whistle over the sudden disappearance of USD 20 billion from the public treasury, and was unconstitutionally suspended by the presidency.⁴³ Mr. Aaron Akase, a staff member, who revealed allegations of fraud in the Police Service Commission was humiliated and placed under indefinite suspension without salary.⁴⁴ Likewise, a House of Representative Appropriations Committee chairman, who exposed corrupt practices of budget padding in the National Assembly, was suspended and hounded out of the country.⁴⁵ The list continues and is unexhaustive. For those who were

⁴⁰ Solomon I. Ifejika, “The ‘Other Side’ of Whistleblowing Practice: Experience from Nigeria,” *Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Center Journal* 4 (2018): 1-10.

⁴¹ “How Foreign Affairs Ministry Suspended Whistle-Blower for Exposing N70.6m Fraud at DTCA,” *Vanguard News* (January 21, 2017), <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/01/foreign-affairs-ministry-suspended-whistle-blower-exposing-n70-6-m-fraud-dtca/> (accessed March 11, 2018).

⁴² “CSOs Demand Passage of Whistle-Blowers Protection Bill,” *News Diary Online* (August 25, 2018), <http://www.newsdiaryonline.com/csos-demand-passage-of-whistle-blowers-protection-bill/> (accessed March 11, 2018).

⁴³ Ifejika, “The ‘Other Side’ of Whistleblowing Practice.”

⁴⁴ Beverley Agbakoba Onyejiyana, “The Whistle Blower as a Gatekeeper of Good Governance,” *Business Day Online* (November 14, 2013), <http://www.businessdayonline.com/2013/11/the-whistleblower-as-a-gatekeeper-of-good-governance> (accessed March 11, 2018).

⁴⁵ “The Limits of Whistle Blowing,” *Nigerian Tribune* (June 7, 2017), <http://www.tribuneonline.ng/limits-whistle-blowing> (accessed March 11, 2018).

government employees, even after their reinstatement after public outcry, their salaries were not paid for more than a year. This is just a brief sampling of what whistle blowers experience in Nigeria.⁴⁶ For whistle blowers who are more fortunate, it takes ages to pay them the agreed percentage, and some, in many cases, are not paid at all as stipulated in the whistle-blowing policy.⁴⁷ In sum, various strategies often are deployed to harass and discourage whistle blowing. The above examples are meant to show, in concrete terms, the harassment associated with reporting cases of fraud and corrupt practices in Nigeria. In addition to the risks and dangers associated with exposing corruption, such harassment and intimidation, both official and unofficial, have had a deleterious effect on anticorruption campaigns, as many honest citizens are afraid to report corrupt practices. This explanation provides a realistic picture of Nigerian elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns. It also shows that anticorruption campaigns are not pursued sincerely by elites, and instead used to win the approval of the masses in the elites' effort to either retain power or gain power via elections. In concrete terms, table 1 provides a listing of some reported cases of corruption in the third phase of corruption in Nigeria.

Elite Corruption and Anticorruption Campaigns in South Africa: State Capture, Political Settlement, and Labeling

The study of corruption and its effect on democracy in South Africa can be roughly divided into two phases; pre-1994 apartheid rule (dominated by a white minority) and post-1994, after the end of apartheid rule (dominated by blacks). As with all states, including South Africa and Nigeria, the incidence of corruption is global as well as local. However, the problem of corruption in Africa is of huge proportions.⁴⁸

As noted above, pre-1994 independence was characterized by apartheid rule and dominated by whites. Incidences of elite individual and group corruption were noticeable, and measures were taken to address the anomaly. By its name, apartheid rule used corrupt means to take over governance, and its rulers were not overtly responsible to the general South African public. In the period preceding 1994, the lack of accountability, obligation, and responsiveness resulted in the mismanagement of power and the resources

⁴⁶ "Persecution of Whistle-Blowers, Threat to Anti-Corruption Fight-NGO," *Vanguard News* (June 13, 2018), <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/06/persecution-whistle-blowers-threat-anti-corr-uption-fight-ngo/> (accessed June 11, 2018).

⁴⁷ "Ikoyi Cash: Whistleblower Gets N421m, Jets Out of Nigeria," *Vanguard News* (December 14, 2017), <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/12/ikoyi-cash-whistleblower-gets-n421m-jets-nigeria/> (accessed June 11, 2018).

⁴⁸ Ayodele Aderinwale, ed., *Corruption, Accountability and Transparency for Sustainable Development* (Ota, Nigeria: Africa Leadership Forum Publications, 2003).

Table 1. Some Notable Elite Corruption Cases in Nigeria

S/N	Elites	Corruption Charges
1.	Sambo Dasuki (former National Security Adviser)	Allegedly involved in a USD 2.1 billion arms deal charge
2.	Uche Secondus	Allegedly collected 200 million naira in illicit funds from the office of the former NSA
3.	PDP former Financial Secretary	Allegedly collected 600 million naira in illicit funds from the office of the former NSA
4.	Chief Olisah Metuh	Allegedly collected over 1.4 billion naira in illicit funds from office of the former NSA
5.	Dr. Raymond Dokpesi	Allegedly collected 2.1 billion naira in illicit funds from the office of the former NSA
6.	Dudafa Waripamo-Owei	Allegedly distributed and placed 830 million naira in illicit funds into accounts of four different companies
7.	Robert Azibaola	Allegedly collected USD 40 million in illicit funds from the office of the former NSA
8.	Rotimi Amaechi	Allegedly looted over 97 billion naira along with co-indictees, including a former army general
9.	Saminu Turaki	Allegedly looted 36 billion naira
10.	Timipre Sylva	Allegedly looted 19.7 billion naira
11.	Murtala Nyako	Allegedly looted 29 billion naira
12.	Senator Danjuma Goje	Allegedly looted 25 billion naira
13.	Senator Abdullahi Adamu	Allegedly looted 15 billion naira
14.	Orji Kalu	Allegedly looted 3.2 billion naira
15.	Kayode Fayemi	Indicted by the Ekiti Judicial Commission of Inquiry of sundry financial malfeasance of over 2 billion naira
16.	Senator Joshua Dariye	Allegedly looted 1.2 billion naira
17.	Babachir Lawal	Allegedly awarded a 200-million-naira fraudulent contract to his personal company from funds meant for the maintenance and care of IDP camps
18.	Attahiru Bafarawa	Allegedly laundered 15 billion naira
19.	Gabriel Suswan	Allegedly laundered 9.9 billion naira
20.	Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu	Allegedly involved in a 700-million-naira electoral fraud
21.	Abba Moro	Allegedly involved in a 676-million-naira recruitment scam

Source: Gbenga Bada, "These 66 Nigerian Politicians Have Been Listed as Corrupt by the Ruling and Opposition Parties," *Pulse Nigeria* (April 4, 2018), <http://www.pulse.ng/bi/politics/these66-nigerian-politicians-have-been-listed-as-corrupt-id8204890.html> (accessed February 11, 2018), and Nurudeen Lawal, "List of Top Ongoing Corruption Cases Involving Nigerian Politicians (Infographics)," *Legit* (2018), <http://www.legit.ng/1178749-list-top-ongoing-corruption-cases-involving-nigerian-politicians-infographics.html> (accessed February 11, 2018).

of the state.⁴⁹ This stage in South Africa could be said to parallel the second period in Nigeria, when analyzing corruption in both countries.

During the post-1994 period, which is ongoing, corruption in South Africa has continued unabated and grown to be a complex malaise. Like Nigeria, the effects are seen in both private and public realms. Corruption tendencies are found in all spheres of life, and with the immediate former president, Jacob Zuma, accused of corruption, the malaise has become ingrained within society.⁵⁰ This is because corruption, during the pre- and post-1994 periods in South Africa, is rooted in the politics of political settlement, with the transfer of power from white minority rule to black majority rule. The natures of political development, social history, and bureaucracy have contributed in no small measure to shaping corruption in South Africa. Institutional weaknesses, though not as weak as in Nigeria, also have contributed to corruption and continue to encourage people to engage in it. The desire and motivation for corruption-free behavior is being undermined by government officials and other members of the political class, whose association with and open display of ill-gotten wealth has increased the perception that public office can be used for individual and group gain.⁵¹

However, unlike Nigeria, the social history of South Africa plays a role in elite corruption, as corruption emerges out of political and social tensions. The black majority that presently is dominant in governance previously was excluded from politics and the economy, but now it is in control of the state and showing tendencies to bridge the gap economically through unwholesome avenues.⁵² However, while perception of corruption is high in the country, actual measurement of corruption is significantly lower,⁵³ and far lower than in Nigeria, when compared.⁵⁴ Yet, in practical terms, corrupt activities by government officials between 1994 and 1998 resulted in the loss of about

⁴⁹ Michaela Elsbeth Martin and Hussein Solomon, "Understanding the Phenomenon of 'State Capture' in South Africa," *Southern African Peace and Security Studies* 5, no. 1 (2016): 21-34.

⁵⁰ Ayodele Aderinwale, *Corruption, Democracy and Human Rights in Southern Africa*, summary report of a seminar organized jointly by the Africa Leadership Forum and Transparency International, Pretoria, South Africa (July 31–August 2, 1995), www.africaleadership.org/.../corruption_democracy%20&%20human%20rights%20southern%20Africa.pdf (accessed January 7, 2014), and Robert Mattes and Cherel Africa, "Corruption: The Attitudinal Component: Tracking Public Perceptions of Official Corruption in South Africa, 1995–1998," unpublished paper (Cape Town: IDASA, 1999).

⁵¹ Soma Pillay, "Corruption—the Challenge to Good Governance: A South African Perspective," *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 17, no. 7 (2004): 586-605.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Department of Public Service and Administration, *Country Corruption Assessment Report: South Africa* (New York: United Nations, 2003), 3.

⁵⁴ "Sub-Saharan Africa: Undemocratic Regimes Undermine Anti-Corruption Efforts," Transparency International (2017), <https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/cpi2018-sub-saharan-africa-regional-analysis> (accessed January 30, 2019).

R20 billion.⁵⁵ In 1998 alone, over R10 billion worth of fraud was investigated⁵⁶ and R86 was recovered.⁵⁷ Each year, the cost of corruption in South Africa amounts to over 50 billion rands a year.

In general, the African Union has estimated that corruption costs Africa more than USD 148 billion a year. Below are few graphic examples of prominent cases of elite corruption in South Africa. They represent the most publicized cases of corruption.

Indicative Cases of Elite Corruption in South Africa

- President Zuma Corruption Scandal

In 2018, the highest court in South Africa found former President Jacob Zuma of South Africa guilty of diversion of funds worth over 246 million rands for private property development.⁵⁸ In another charge, the former president also was accused of involvement in a USD 2.5 billion South African arms deal.⁵⁹

- The Gupta Family Scandal

The administration of former President Zuma is alleged to have engaged in undue and illegal favors for the Gupta family. The allegation also includes the Gupta family's involvement in appointments to and removals from public office, and unlawful awarding of contracts to persons or companies linked to the Gupta family, among other corrupt practices.⁶⁰ To date, South African authorities are seeking

⁵⁵ Hennie Van Vuuren, "Small Bribes, Big Challenge: Extent and Nature of Petty Corruption in South Africa," *Crime Quarterly*, no. 9 (2004), <http://www.issafrica.org/pubs/CrimeQ/No.9/VanVuuren.htm> (accessed May 10, 2017), and Julie Berg, "The Accountability of South Africa's Private Security Industry: Mechanisms of Control and Challenges to Effective Oversight," Criminal Justice Initiative, Occasional Paper 2 (Cape Town: Open Society Foundation for South Africa, 2007).

⁵⁶ Tom Lodge, "Countering Public Corruption in South Africa," *Transformation* 46 (2001): 53-70.

⁵⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Department of Public Service and Administration, *Country Corruption Assessment Report: South Africa*, 3.

⁵⁸ Greg Myre, "South Africa's Zuma Leaves Office as He Entered—Accused of Corruption," *NPR* (February 14, 2018), <http://www.npr.org/sections/parallel/2018/02/14/584631829/s-africas-zuma-leaves-office-as-he-entere-accused-of-corruption> (accessed January 11, 2018).

⁵⁹ Reuters, "Corrects: Former South African President Jacob Zuma to Be Prosecuted on 16 Charges of Corruption," *Washington Post* (March 16, 2018), http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/former-south-african-president-jacob-zuma-faces-corruption-charges/2018/03/16/f3f9439c-2929-11e8-b79d-f3d931db7f68_story.html?noredirection&utm_term=.4d9c94749d4a (accessed January 11, 2018).

⁶⁰ *State of Capture*, Public Protector Report (Johannesburg: Public Protector, South Africa, October 14, 2016).

to recover over USD 4.07 billion from Gupta illegal and corrupt deals.⁶¹

- Bank of Baroda Scandal

The Bank of Baroda, an Indian state-owned bank, allegedly has been used by South African elites to launder funds. For instance, in the organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), Sharife Khadija and Joseph Josy report that the Bank of Baroda allowed the Gupta family to move millions in illegal and shoddy deals and transactions to offshore accounts.⁶² Between 2007 and 2017 alone, over 4.5 million rands had been illegally circulated around a few Gupta-associated companies.⁶³

- The South African Arms Deal Scandal

The South African arms deal scandal refers to a USD multi-billion deal which involved the acquisition of arms from Germany and France.⁶⁴ The arms deal encompassed large-scale corruption, high-level bribery, and embezzlement, mostly by the South African elites and members of the African National Congress (ANC). As of March 2018, former president Jacob Zuma was facing charges involving the 1998 arms deal scandal.⁶⁵ A total of 783 charges concerning illegal payments and receipt of bribes from French arms firms had been brought against Zuma, with corruption cases ongoing.⁶⁶

Showing the relationship of corruption to the politics of democracy in South Africa, President Thabo Mbeki contended that corruption “constrains our ability to fight poverty, negatively affects economic development,

⁶¹ Sharife Khadija and Joseph Josy, “India’s Bank of Baroda Played a Key Role in South Africa’s Gupta Scandal,” Organizing Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (February 27, 2018), <http://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/7696-india-s-bank-of-baroda-played-a-key-role-in-south-africa-s-gupta-scandal> (accessed January 11, 2018).

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Sam Perlo-Freeman, “The South African Arms Deal,” World Peace Foundation (2017), <http://www.sites.tufts.edu/corruptarmsdeals/2017/05/05/the-south-african-arms-deal/> (accessed January 11, 2018).

⁶⁵ “South Africa Arms Deal That Landed Zuma in Court: What You Need to Know,” *BBC News* (April 16, 2018), <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-43668243> (accessed January 11, 2018).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

damages social values and undermines democracy and good governance.”⁶⁷ Yet, unsaid by Mbeki, is that the nature of political settlement, which determines the structure of power and economic benefits in post-independence South Africa, has shaped the spread and functioning of corruption in the republic, resulting in state capture, poverty, and worsening economic disparity. This is because, as posited by Robin Theobald, corruption, rather than the promotion of political and economic development, weakens administrative capacity and injures democracy, stability, and national unity, while also inflicting poverty and political and economic backwardness.⁶⁸ Therefore, corruption is not a “winner takes all” scenario; some individual or group will pay the price for the resources that are corruptly appropriated. This is because opportunities are denied to individuals and groups and democratic rule is questioned when public funds are misused or misappropriated.⁶⁹

In South Africa, several anticorruption steps have been taken. These include the promulgation of new laws and the establishment of institutional bodies charged with the responsibility to fight corruption. A vivid example includes the Directorate of Special Operations (DSO). It is a unit of the National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa, charged with the powers to investigate and prosecute organized crime and corruption. The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) is another body that is empowered to investigate corruption in the public sector. The SIU is similar to Nigeria’s ICPC and is an independent institution that is accountable only to the president and the parliament. In addition, other anticorruption agencies in South Africa include:

- The National Prosecuting Authority;
- The Directorate of Special Operations;
- The South African Police Services;
- The Special Investigating Unit;
- The Independent Complaints Directorate;
- The Public Protector;
- The Auditor General; and

⁶⁷ Thabo Mbeki, “Opening Address at the 2nd Anti-Corruption Summit,” Pretoria (March 22-23, 2005), p. 1, <http://www.polity.org.za/article/mbeki-launch-of-anticorruption-summit-22032005-2005-03-22> (accessed January 13, 2014).

⁶⁸ Robin Theobald, “Lancing the Swollen African State: Will It Alleviate the Problem of Corruption?” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 32, no. 4 (1994): 701-706.

⁶⁹ Gareth Newham, *Tackling Police Corruption in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 2002); Kader Asmal, “Remarks by Professor Kader Asmal, M.P., Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Committee at the Launch of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of Chapter 9 and Associated Institutions,” Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Pretoria (2007), <http://www.pmg.org.za/report/20070821-adoptionreport-chapter-9-institutions-and-remarks-committee-chairper> (accessed January 15, 2014); and Steinar Askvik, “The Dynamics of Political Trust in South Africa, 1995–2006,” *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010): 25-44.

- The Public Service Commission and various parliamentary committees.⁷⁰

As in Nigeria, the presence of these agencies has not ameliorated or eradicated corruption in South Africa. Rather, the scourge of corruption is growing, resulting in what is called state capture.⁷¹ State capture simply means the existence of illicit influence on state and public policies, with economic and political benefits to the influencers. It is also a type of corruption that manipulates state policies and processes for private gain.⁷² However, it must be mentioned that efforts of the former public protector, advocate Thuli Mandosela, and ex-EFCC chairman, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, in fighting corruption were laudable. While Mandosela compiled a meticulously written report documenting details of state capture and bringing the matter to public attention, Ribadu dared the odds to investigate members of the ruling and nonruling political class, including high-profile politicians, for large-scale corruption. However, both men were harassed and unceremoniously sacked from office for their vigorous anticorruption efforts in indicting corrupt elite politicians.⁷³ Therefore, the reason why corruption has continued apace is found in the fact that beyond the public projection of fighting corruption via the creation of anticorruption agencies and institutions, including whistle-blowing policies, there is the interplay of deep politics which ensures that elite corruption, the means by which the state remains captured, continues unabated.

The politics of political settlement in South Africa, through which corruption crept into the state during the pre-1994 period, started with the negotiations between the economically dominant white minority rulers and the active militant liberation movement on behalf of the black majority. It was the beginning of compromises between and among individuals and groups outside the purview of laws but situated within the confines of politics and practical exigencies. The agreement was, according to Brian Levy, Alan Hirsch, and Ingrid Woolard, a compromise between the two forces (the

⁷⁰ Bhorat et al., *Betrayal of Promise, and Report of the Public Prosecutor* (2016), <http://cdn.24.co.za/files/Cms/General/d/4666/3f63a8b78d2b495d88f10ed060997f76.pdf> (accessed December 6, 2017).

⁷¹ Cheryl W. Gray, Joel Hellman, and Randi Susan Ryterman, *Anticorruption in Transition 2: Corruption in Enterprise—State Interaction in Europe and Central Asia* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2004); Joel Hellman, Geraint Jones, and Daniel Kaufman, “Seize the State, Seize the Day: State Capture and Influence in Transition Economies,” *Journal of Comparative Economics* 31 (2003): 733-751; and Joel Hellman and Daniel Kaufman, “Confronting the Challenge of State Capture in Transition Economies,” *Finance and Development* 38, no. 3 (2001): 1-9.

⁷² Martin and Solomon, “Understanding the Phenomenon of ‘State Capture’ in South Africa.”

⁷³ “Nigeria: Firing of Anti-Corruption Chief Would Boost Abusive Politicians,” *Human Rights Watch*, a human rights publication (2008), http://pantheon.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2008/01/01/nigeri17671_txt.htm (accessed November 2, 2017).

white minority rulers and the black majority). The arrangement, according to them, was that the constitution would prevent the manipulation of government for the protection of economic and other privileges of the mostly white elites, while black majority rule would ensure *pari passu* control over financial resources by those holding political power.⁷⁴ In addition, activities preceding the 1994 elections suggest that there also was willingness on the part of the white business elites to cooperate in sharing ownership of assets and other managerial controls with a few individuals from the black majority.⁷⁵ This has ensured the continued and sustained institutionalization of corruption, albeit, in disguised form in South Africa, irrespective of the campaigns by institutions established to fight corruption in the country.

Therefore, the loopholes the agreement created were exploited by both whites and blacks who used power to engage in elite corruption. Secondly, the African National Congress (ANC), the dominant black political party, came to power and was a behemoth that harbored different sets of individuals and groups, making it virtually impossible for the party to oversee and control those in its fold. Its largeness leaves open loopholes that can and have been exploited. Levy, Hirsch, and Woolard maintain that the ANC offered a broad umbrella for different categories of persons, just like many other national liberation movements in the country.⁷⁶ Formally, while the ANC was an alliance of organized black workers (under the aegis of the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU) and the more elite South African Communist Party, in practical terms, its supporters, especially during elections, cut across virtually every section of the country's black society. Levy et al. further aver that sections of society from which the ANC drew support during elections included black professionals and businesspeople, employees of white-collar jobs, migrant workers, farmers, landless people, and the extremely poor, among others.⁷⁷ These various groups, according to Levy et al., had their varying interests to pursue rather than national interest, including illegal appropriation of state funds.⁷⁸ The scenario painted above has ensured that national interest is consistently substituted by and subsumed under the interests of individuals and groups. This, indeed, is corruption via other means by the South African political elites, and it has meant both economic and political backwardness for the vast majority in the country. The described agreement from the onset shaped the pattern of political settlement and rendered the state weak, as the agreement had both public and private faces that ensured that elites (white and

⁷⁴ Brian Levy, Alan Hirsch, and Ingrid Woolard, "Governance and Inequality: Benchmarking and Interpreting South Africa's Evolving Political Settlement," Effective States and Inclusive Development Working Paper Series, no. 52 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2014), 9.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

black) kept their access to power and accruable benefits within the purview of the transition to democracy in South Africa. Hence, corruption flourished, resulting eventually in state capture.

State capture therefore should be understood as a corrupt phenomenon, characterized by the subversion of key state institutions through a network of patronage, with the aim to curtail their control capability to enable looting of the public purse for private gain. Relatedly, diverse economic and political interests, coupled with the sense of entitlement following years of apartheid, has led to continuing high incidences of corruption. In practical terms, tacit agreements often are observed: elites in power share the benefits of the new power and resources with those outside governmental frameworks. For instance, the link of state capture with the Guptas represents but one of the ways in which elite corruption, represented by those in power, has led to state captured for private gain.⁷⁹ Besides the Guptas and state capture, the Eskom corruption scandal represents the subversion of state-owned business enterprise by government officials for private gain to the unlawful benefit of politically connected elites. In fact, the term “state capture” is closely tied or related to the corruptive influence of the Guptas on then president Jacob Zuma.⁸⁰ It was the particularly close affiliation between President Zuma and the Gupta family that stirred up great concern that the South African state had been captured, not just through the Eskom corruption scandal but also through other deals. Many analysts have argued that the notion of state capture has long been part of the dealings of the ruling African National Congress, but concealed by the fact that the South African state has not been regarded as a failed or failing state.⁸¹ Thus, state capture does not start and end with the Guptas and Zuma, but has other insidious, hidden outlets that form part of the deep politics of democracy in South Africa.

The above examples help to show the link between the corruption and politics of political settlement within the ANC and the larger society, perpetuated mainly through elite corruption. It is becoming clearer that political power, which is at the center of political settlement, is now seen as a “mechanism that can be used to extract financial benefits from the state, and not necessarily to foster an environment where the needs of ordinary citizens are met.”⁸² It would be foolhardy to assume it is only the Guptas who were or are involved in state capture, as others, such as the state-owned Indian Bank of Baroda, also have been a means for state capture in South Africa.⁸³ The problem of corruption goes beyond this to include the impotent anticorruption agencies,

⁷⁹ Bhorat et al., *Betrayal of Promise*.

⁸⁰ Martin and Solomon, “Understanding the Phenomenon of ‘State Capture’ in South Africa.”

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 21-22.

⁸³ Khadija and Josy, “India’s Bank of Baroda Played a Key Role in South Africa’s Gupta Scandal.”

which remain unable to carry out the mandate of checkmating corruption in South Africa due to elite manipulation of the politics of anticorruption campaigns. Additionally, the anticorruption drives led by the Minister for Public Service and Administration, including the rules and values for curbing all manner of corruption, were undermined, given that the head of government, Jacob Zuma, until recently the president, allegedly was heavily involved in corrupt practices. Hence, as in Nigeria, the frameworks established by the government to address corruption have not been effective nor adhered to; rather, the elites continue to use them as tools to achieve their political interests, gaining cheap “integrity” canonization from their followers. This is true to the extent that the anticorruption agencies have been established by the governments to suggest to the people that they, indeed, are in for a fight against corruption, while increasingly and unabatedly using that guise to perpetuate corrupt practices. Engagement in deep politics is anchored on the fact that electoral politics, no matter its imperfections in the continent, remains the only game in town in Africa, both for the elites and the mass of the people. Thus, elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns have become the “deep” politics of democracy in Africa. In other words, elite corruption is a key feature of electoral democracy in Africa and constitutes an integral part of Africa’s politics of democracy. This will remain valid as long as political elites continue to politick by highlighting issues of corruption and anticorruption for electoral purposes (the main thrust of democracy), without the sincere political will to curb the menace or to discontinue their engagement in corrupt practices. This dilemma explains the increasing corruption among the politically entrenched and other elites in the midst of all the anticorruption agencies and institutions that have been mobilized to fight corruption in the countries under focus.

Conclusion

Corruption and anticorruption campaigns are supposed to be opposite sides of the same coin. They are meant to be antagonistic, but sadly, the reverse is the case in most parts of Africa. While democracy is a system in which accountability is the operative word, elite corruption is now the key constitutive element in Nigeria’s and South Africa’s democracies. While any ruling party in government in Nigeria often is alleged to be using anticorruption to hound and label the opposition, the ruling political party in South Africa (mainly the ANC) is the most accused in terms of corruption allegations through the politics of political settlement. In this regard, therefore, the claims of anticorruption slogans are mere rhetoric.

Elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns present an interesting picture of how electoral democracy is constituted in Africa. The very act of political labeling has become part of the “deep” politics of democracy. So also have elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns become part of the politics of democracy in Nigeria and South Africa. This is true in some

other African countries, as well. The essay has revealed that anticorruption campaigns are mere symbols in the anticorruption drives in Nigeria and South Africa. This has been demonstrated in the body of the work, as the agencies only bark but do not bite. Political settlement in both countries, though with different historical backgrounds, has had a significant effect on the spread of corruption in Africa. Political labeling, on the other hand, often is used as a tool to gain electoral advantage, as has happened under successive regimes in Nigeria and predominantly between the ANC and the EFF in South Africa. Thus, anticorruption campaigns are pawns in the larger landscape of elite corruption in Africa. Anticorruption campaigns are not helped by perceptions that they are ineffective in checking elite corruption. In some instances, in both countries, anticorruption agencies themselves have been accused of corruption. Elite corruption is such that an anticorruption campaign is directed mostly at opponents, small fry, and those outside the elite class. Most times, members of the elite class are not held to account for their corrupt activities, as the ruling political parties rely on them to win elections and maintain themselves in power. Hence, because elites are participants and beneficiaries of corruption, there is a lack of political will to sincerely fight corruption. In addition, even when salutary policies are initiated, for instance, the whistle-blowing policy, such policies are rendered ineffective as they are not meant to work but instead to be used as symbols of honesty to gain public approval. In order to access power or retain it in a democracy, there is continuous lip service and grand deception in the fight against corruption by the elites, in order to present themselves as worthy candidates or leaders of democracy to the people. Political settlement in Africa, as opposed to Khan and Roy's analysis, borders on unlawful appropriation of state resources and illegal rent distribution among connected elites. Efforts by public-spirited individuals, including the former chairman of the EFCC in Nigeria and the public protector in South Africa, to investigate and bring to book elites engaged in corruption in both countries, even though they exposed the workings and identities of corrupt elites, largely have not been successful. Instead, these reformers were sacked, sharing the same fate with honest citizens who expose fraud and corrupt activities as whistle blowers. This means that the main antics of most African elites in present-day democracy is to hide under the guise of fighting corruption in order to win elections, while they and their political cronies remain largely corrupt. While anticorruption agencies are deployed mostly to "torment" and "intimidate" political opponents, corrupt elites among the ruling class often are spared, even as elite corruption continues unabated. This is the nature of elite corruption and anticorruption campaigns in the deep politics of democracy in Africa.

