

# **POLITICS, DEMOCRACY AND THE MILITARY: A MATERIALIST ANALYSIS**

**MOSES EROMEDOCHENE UKPENUMEWU TEDHEKE**

Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science & Defence Studies, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, Nigerian Defence Academy, P.M.B 2109, Kaduna State, Nigeria

## **ABSTRACT**

This study frowns at the idea of an apolitical military which is completely ahistorical. Philosophising and theorising an apolitical military is a complete negation of the dictum that war is politics or policy by other means. The disposition in African and most of the Third World to an apolitical military is a product of the Cold War politics and a struggle among the then Western and Eastern blocs' competition for world hegemony. This study has taken a historical swipe on the place of the military in historical states from antiquity to the modern states. We have found out that the military is central to the survival of the state whether in the slave states, the feudal states, now the capitalist states and in whatever form whether democratic or autocratic. We discovered that from the slave state to the absolute monarchy of the nascent capitalist state, the military was central in the political process hence the heads of such states were equally their military heads, such as, emperors and kings.

This was gradually replaced by the modern democratic system in which the military being restricted to its rightful professional dynamics does not abandon the state, politics and democracy. It supports and protects the state in politics and democracy since the emergence of property franchise, taxpaying franchise, adult male franchise to the current universal suffrage. It has only been partisan in protecting class power and not in active political contest or direct involvement in politics. Hence in modern democratic dispensation, the military is subject to civil control or authority to defend and secure society and its political framework for the survival of the state. No more! No less!!

**KEYWORDS:** *Democracy, Military, Egalitarianism, Antagonism, Gentile*

*History is important because if you don't know history it is as if you  
were born yesterday and if you were born yesterday anybody up  
there and in position of power can tell you anything*

– Howard Zinn –

*They who have put out the peoples eyes reproach them of blindness*

– John Milton, 1642 –

*Propaganda is to democracy What violence is to a dictatorship*

– Noam Chomsky –