

THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL QUESTION

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DOI:[10.13140/RG.2.2.16461.56809](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.16461.56809)

Abstract

It is a fundamental conviction that 'civism' must be major among the instruments for the appreciation of an enduring national democratic enterprise. Nigeria is an emerging democratic society since the '1999-launch' of our fourth republic. It is also a factum that Nigeria has grossly failed the hermeneutical properties and modalities of democratic practices denotable and commutable in and through the political virtues of patriotism, credibility, integrity, triumph of the principles of civility and the civilization of love. The multifaceted political vices of political-defections, cheating, stubborn-subordinations, hard-powers, smart-power, duplicity, fraud, executive indiscipline, pretentious disclaimers and cabalisms-hidden-agenda, Fulani herdsmen killings, kidnappings, religious bigotry and the displacements of peoples from their ethnic historical homelands etc. have stifled the purities of democratic dispensations of good governance in Nigeria. Based on the above factors, democracy in Nigeria has so far not protected and projected the representation of a civil society, the coordination of the people's will and mandate, the common national values, resourceful guidance of available skills, peaceful control, co-existence, national identity as a pride of place, responsible social and political ideologies etc.

Introduction

Democratic deliveries have been on the practices of civic exclusive political pedagogies. This paper has as its major research trust what is conceived therein as the political conflicting *loci* with the concepts of *Nationalisms and Nationisms*. The democracy of Nigeria is not 'Demos centered' because of the lack of the devotions to the public weal, democratic-rule-following, implicit traits and skills of good governance. On this note therefore, the country stands bedeviled with separatist sympathies.

This paper equally hopes to project the possibilities of the expected political will and its appropriateness for the generation of patriotism against the backdrops of separatist sympathies in Nigeria that have become a perennial national question and has become also the civil '*mentis-facts*' in the tribes and tongues of the Nigerian- nation and -hood since the country's independence.

The Democracy of Exclusion: The Nigerian Face

To chart the part of this paper properly, it is necessary to state very clearly that the concept of 'democratic exclusion' will in this paper be placed on the same thematic level ground with the concept of 'political exclusion'.

A democracy of exclusion signifies and intrinsically implies that there can be a political-sociology of exclusion. On an advanced notation therefore, the concept of a 'democracy of exclusion' adjudged from the mainstreaming of any democratic theory, practice and constitutionalism is a political palaver whereby a nationalism that is expected to practically uphold the political sociology of the *demos* becomes a polity of the *Who is in and Who is out* within the same national political delivery-exercises in matters of the distribution and redistribution contents of the promulgated constitutionalism.

The democracy of exclusion from the social picture of this paper is a politics of the 'practical differentiations' of the excluded and the marginalized within the same Nigerian politically commuted social platform. A democracy of exclusion in this paper is understood to mean a politics of oppressors whereby 'justice is not fairness' which stands as the negation of John Rawls teachings that 'justice is fairness'.

Furthermore Beran (1984, p. 24) says that 'secession is the essence of anarchy'. Gauthier (1994, p.366) teaches that the primary purpose for separatist/secessionist sympathy is based on two major political reasons: Security of the *demos* and their security for the individual political rights. Gauthier's reason is based on the facts that a democracy that is duly constituted must be an institution with the legislative guarantee that is expected to bust collective complementary political existential interpretations. And where this institution fails to guarantee the above prescriptions and definitions, separatist/secessionist sympathy becomes a 'needful' political state of affairs.

Nigeria as we live it today, is bedeviled with what this paper calls the politics of ‘cold-shoulders’ with very clear pointers towards some regions, ethnic peoples, religions etc. within the same political geography who have become ‘kept outs and slights’ based on the issues about who are real denizens and non-denizens within the interfaces of practical political mainstreaming in the same country. The regular ‘Hate Speeches’ politics in Nigeria are all about the politics of participation and non-participation drawn as political borderlines, margins of political playgrounds and citizenship. On the above note therefore, the concept of political exclusion implies by all practical contents and conceptions, the opposite to the concept of political inclusion which stands as the only perfect definition for democracy .

The implicit contention of this paper (the little worry) is based on the fact that the observable, practical and everyday-live-political-pointers, show-case the Nigerian democracy with two political faces. One face is the democracy without, as said above, the *demos* and the second becomes the democracy that can be defined as the ‘governance of the elected by the elected for the elected’ (Okonkwo, 2016:105).

The issues above indicate that the ‘people- *demos*’ i.e. ‘the ‘governed’ are not in the political focus and/or picture of the democratic agenda of Nigeria of our time in spite of the facts that the constitution of the ‘Fourth Republic’ of 1999, (Section 14- (2) page 327-328 categorically states that:

1. Sovereignty belongs to the people;
2. The security and welfare of the people should be the primary purpose of governance;
3. The participation by the people in their government shall be ensured in accordance with the provisions of this constitution.

In spite of such constitutional provisions, the general experience in Nigeria is that the laws of the land can be padded or flouted with no implicit political impediments like punishments and due-processes on defaulters, especially when the defaulters are the law-makers themselves from the same political ranks and files across the arms of the government.

In other words, democracy can be described within the Nigerian political praxis as a democracy of ‘governance versus government and/or the democracy of the personality versus due processes’.

On another note also, we may recall that the ‘National Policy on Education’ (art. 21-22) of Nigeria stipulates that the major objective of the national policy is to promote ‘Patriotism, moral norms and values, fairness, understanding and national unity etc’.

From the curious practical political civility that is common place in Nigeria, the model of democracy practiced is indicative of a governance with an unpatriotic, intolerant power-show, governance decorated with impunity, governance of man-know-man-indiscipline, governance of executive indiscipline, governance of buses of power-godfathers-conflict, exclusionisms etc.

The politics of exclusion is a political philosophy that presses on the questions and concerns of the mainstreaming constitutional democracy and centers its operations on the practical political praxis on exterminating inclusion within the same given ‘*demos* political geography’ thus constituted.

The *demos* political setting in this type of case study-situation, powers the question about the politics of ‘who is in and who is out’ of the constitutional distributive justice that enshrines and genuinely promulgates the bond of/for political exercise definably on ‘*demos* for the *demos*.’ The problem involved here is the signal of a polity where there exists very distinctly and recognizably a politics of polarization which reveals itself by ways and political means of a nationalism that contains a structural social dissentious perception of what this paper calls ‘the political enemy within’ who may also be tagged the ‘anti-nationalists’

Such a political feeling within a common polity affects both the political and democratic rights of the secular character of the nation. The little worry of such political situations nurture and nature socio-political tension, communally polarized violence, aggressive minority - majority politics of fear, nationwide perpetrations of the privileged versus the marginalized political demography.

The little worry therefore reflects a polity of the privileged and marginalized i.e. ‘ex-clusionists versus in-clusionist’ social political polarizations within the same secular state called Nigeria. The main reason behind this paper is the socio-political tension presently plaguing on the collective political image and will of

Nigeria as a result of the ethno-socio-histories and ethno-cultural-differentiations.

The said socio-political tensions emanate from the Nigerian socio-cultural conceptions of nationalism, nationism, religion, welfares'-public-social-schemes, distributive justice, public sector interventions, security, constitutional-policy-management, due-processes' managements, safeguards of lives and property, herdsmen terrorisms and clannish-protective-social-policies, polarized political appointments of the military, police, civil society, security services, selective consultative policy-fora, lack of gender-equality, citizenship-good-practices, selective-ethics in civil services and appointments, ethnicity etc.

This paper is also conscious of other anti-democratic practices and conditions like the violations of the fundamental human rights in the areas of equal access to jobs. The Nigerian democratic practices so far, have not excelled in the areas of the politics of equal-republicanism or the politics of equals, the people's-politics of equals in privileges' extensions, equal citizenship participatory democracy as the theory of the *demos*-rule (peoples'- rule).

Nigeria is popular in her political *mentis* of the 'birth-place-ethno-democratic-leader-crazy' i.e. the ethno-democracy of the ethnic-political base whereby the peoples' political choice is based on ethno-choice and not necessarily on qualification and humanity. It is also a well known Nigerian political picture that the political commitment to liberty and choice does not exist in real practice since the voters' voices and mandates can be aborted and wasted from judicial commissions (the Supreme Court *vendattas'*-democracy). The present stand of democracy is not foisted on the political democratic culture of the need of the people by the people for the people (i.e. the people-centered-*demos*-government).

The mismanagement of the above issues can be summed up as the major political sources of marginalization and exclusion in Nigeria. Based on the above factors, this paper projects the present Nigerian democracy as a 'non-institutionalized democracy' because of the in-depth violations and contradictions of the fundamental human rights, moral rights, inherent virtues, rule of law and the essences of being human. The Nigerian constitution as amended in 2011 provides the national fundamental human rights for the anchorage of democracy and genuine political culture as follows:

1. The right to life, section 33(1);
2. The right to the dignity of the human person, section 34 (1);
3. The right to personal liberty, section 35 (1);
4. The right to private life, section 35 (1);
5. The right to private family life, section 37);
6. The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, section 38 (1);
7. The right to freedom of expression and the press, section 39 (1);
8. The right to peaceful assembly and association, section 40;
9. The right to freedom of movement, section 41 (1);
10. The right to freedom from discrimination, section 42 (1);
11. The right to acquire and own Immovable property anywhere in Nigeria, section 43 etc. (cf. Ofoegbu J.: The Place of Human Rights in Nigeria's Democracy ([http:// dx.doi.org/10.4314/og.v1oi 1.4](http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/og.v1oi.1.4)).

From the above constitutional provisions (as amended), Nigeria has the provisions for a cultured democracy and has also, by the implicit powers of this amendment, presented the real identity-card for the dignity of a democratic citizenship for socio-political participation and nationality.

In the words of Gellner (1987, 6), the bonds of nationalism, presupposes and preconditions the freedom and share of social justice and deliberative democracy. This section of the Nigerian constitutional amendment implies that every denizen of Nigeria owes every other denizen equal respect and protection of everyone else's rights as provided for the guarantee of the democratic social welfare. Unfortunately, the present demonstrations of politics and democracy in Nigeria are far from the expectations of the above appeals to egalitarian principles of justice and national identity.

The above little worry of this paper can be summed up again in the words of Robert Goodin (Goodin, p.134-5) where he summarizes political exclusion as the culture of the 'schoolyard' and cites John Rawls theory of 'justice as fairness'. In his words we learn that:

At its most banal, talk of 'social exclusion' similarly evokes deep-rooted institution traceable to slights in the schoolyard. We all keenly recall the pain that comes from being cold-shouldered and cut out of the game of our schoolmates... Furthermore, such slights might be more consequential than at first they seem. Many of the grander 'sources of human misery' –

plague pestilence, poverty, famine, war, torture and so on- may actually be traceable to social exclusion of one sort or another.

The above statements stand as the pointer-reasons for the argumentative analytic-descriptive stances for the democracy of exclusion in Nigeria. And on the other consequential implicit political face of Nigeria, the above remarks stand to highlight the ‘political alarm situation’ that heralds the separatist/secessionist political sympathies raging in Nigeria across the ranks and files of the national concepts. This is also the reason why Goodin (cf. Ethics, 98: 663-86) asked the question: What is so special about our fellow countrymen? This is in his opinion the reason why some denizens of a country fall into the political cracks constituted by the system of multiple, overlapping communities that are emerging out of the fragmentation of traditional sovereignties. In other words here begins the propagation grounds for separatist political sympathies.

To support the above positions, Nigeria cannot forget so soon two public documented reports in tandem with the above: The documents are:

1. The Story of Cain, Abel and Nigeria

This first document is from the Adalaku Ademola report of 13th November 2013 in the Punch Newspaper about the practical face of democracy in Nigeria which he described as *The Story of Cain, Abel and Nigeria* along with the World Bank report that about 100 million Nigerians exist in a politically institutionalized extreme poverty and implicitly projects Nigeria to have 8.3% of the total world 1.2 billion destitute scale.

In this report we read that:

Today, Nigeria is literally bleeding. There is too much violence. We have bred enough Frankenstein monsters to hunt us. We feed them red meat each time they cry for blood. Those who are not killed by Boko Haram are killed by the Joint Task Force. Those who escape the JTF fall into the hands of mind-bending illiteracy. Those who manage to escape all those are consumed by road accidents. Some die in poorly equipped hospitals. Those lucky to bypass all of the above are either killed by hunger, poverty, or frustration practically turns them to the living dead. It is the curse of Cain. The earth antagonizes people who needlessly shed blood. Recently, multiple road accidents claimed 100 lives. In a country where life counts, that should have led to a major social change. Sadly, not even a paragraph of official response came from the

government, not even the local government chairman of the areas the accident happened. Unfortunately, the government aides who explain away these deaths are the same ones who rush to Twitter to console President Barack Obama over the Boston bombing. They are not their own brother's keepers because their brother's life is worthless.

2. **The Dike Chukwumerije Poem Titled: The Wall and the Bridge**

This poem was delivered at the occasion of the 23rd National Economic Summit, held from the 10th of October to the 12th of October 2017, at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja Nigeria. The theme of the Summit was: *Opportunities, Productivity and Employment: Actualizing the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan.*

This summit had also a thematic podium discussions on other issues like: *Think Nigeria, Skill, Competences and Capacity; Access to Capital, Legislations and Economic Inclusion*, among others.

Dike Chukwumerije, in dealing with this poem introduced another poem from the popular echoes of: *Things Fall Apart, The Center Cannot Hold, Mere Anarchy Is Loosed upon the World* – a poem by W.B. Yeats popularized by Chinua Achebe's novel: *Things Fall Apart*.

Chukwumerije's poem was to highlight the Nigerian political contra-dictums, contradictors and contradicters as the *typos* of the Nigerian existential political being-ness and naturally-natured feelings of innate separatist/secessionist sympathy. The poem *The Wall and the Bridge* is further a poem that highlights the Nigerian impacts of cultural differences-nationalism versus nationism -with the strongest reminder that *No culture is older than being human.*

Here is the poem:

If the white man calls me 'niger'
My blood will boil in righteous anger
For the evil of discrimination is clearly established
When a white man tries to treat me like rubbish

But if Hausa says Igbos are greedy and rude
And Igbos say Hausa are haughty and rude
And Ijaws say Itsekiri must die today

And Ezza tells Ezilo there is no other way

If Yorubas declare it is Awo or nothing
And we use 'Federal Character' to share everything
So before you can even smile and tell me 'Welcome'
You must first ask me where my father is from

If those were settlers but now indigenes
Say those who are settlers can't become indigenes
And the constitution says we are all citizens
Local government keeps issuing certificate of origin

If my brother passes jamb but can't go to Uni
Because he is Tiv and is not Kanuri
And Unimed has a quota for his catchment area
So he must go back to Benue or wait one more year

If it's ok to say not ok to marry someone
Just because they are Kalabari
That every tribe should have its own tide
Are we not then practicing ...Apartheid?

If you cannot buy land unless you are native
And cannot find work unless you are native
And cannot feel safe unless you are native
How can we then say we are not primitive?

Yet, you go to London and get their passport
Then settle wherever and however you want
You stand there and fight for equality
And come back to start to use ethnicity

I don't get the logic of thinking of 'it is different'
To be tribalistic and then to be racist
If you are happy to judge him just hearing his name
Whatever you call it my friend, it's the same

When there is no courage to cross this divide

When there is no faith to look deep inside
And stop judging accents and surnames and dressing
This fire we are quenching will only keep burning

Which nation can stand dividing its people?
How can one build on foundation so brittle?
If we cannot see ourselves in each other
This journey ends here, we are going no further

For when God made man, He gave him no facial marks
He did not make 'Gbagi', 'Okun' or 'Angas'
As sure as black man is just like a white man
No culture is older than being human

This is the truth until we accept
Our nation would stumble on its broken foot
For the same things that can bind us that drive us apart
For the wall and the bridge are both in the heart.

From all above, this paper describes the Nigerian democratic stances as:
The democracy of contradictors, the democracy of contradicters, the democracy of discriminatory ethics, the democracy of unconstitutional and unpatriotic federal character, the democracy of catchment area and anarchy, the democracy of the opportunists polarization, the democracy of padded impunity, the democracy of the 'in versus the out' nationalism, the democracy of selective judiciary, the democracy of exclusive divide and rule, the democracy of institutionalized and pathological corruption, the democracy of pandemic executive indiscipline, the democracy of spendthrift and leadership failures, the democracy of economic ruination, the democracy of separatist sympathies etc.

In the light of the above faces of democracy in Nigeria, Chief Obafemi Awolowo (198, p.210) defined the Nigerian democratic stances as the democracy that is pinning away on its death-bed, a democracy that has been mercilessly assaulted and violated, a democracy that is made to suffer from gross misuse and utter lack of nurture.

The Ownership of Nigeria and Separatist Sympathy: The National Question

The issues projected in the first part of this paper especially about the socio-cultural/ethno-separatist fillings of Nigerians within the ‘still-existing common polity’, are obvious signals that implicitly herald the feelings of sympathy for separatist political moves that also compound the question about the rightful owner/owners of the Nigerian polity and state.

The New York Review of Books of November 4th, 1993 cited Czeslaw Milosz in his work *Swing Shift in the Baltics* to have said:

... But if an ethnic group with the same language and common past is regarded as the creator and rightful owner of the State that is Nationalism.

The main and critical question which Czeslaw Milosz did not and cannot ask for us is: How can a state like Nigeria reference her ownership of the nation along the political faces and existentialisms of multi-ethnic and multi-nationalist?

Based on the issues as presented above, it becomes important to revisit the state and face of the present Nigerian polity with the following questions and use their political prefaces and interfaces to review, as well as, establish the problematic existence of the facts about the ownership and separatist sympathies’ registrations within the Nigerian state and polity.

The questions are as follows:

1. Which ethnic group is the rightful owner that has same language and common past (as stated above) that can stand and rightfully declare itself as the political owner/owners of the Nigerian state or country?
2. Does Nigeria qualify; based on democratic practices as described and presented above, to stand the tests of Nationalism (i.e. Nigeria first) or Nationism (i.e. ethnic group first)?
3. Does the Nigerian democracy as a ‘divine-right-democracy’ qualify her present political practice and legitimacy of/for ownership of its geography and her justification of the ‘minority-ruler-ship/leadership that is reality by

ways and means of ethnic cleansing, immigrants minority Fulani killings, land-annexation controls by the *Ruga*-politics?(see the table below).

4. Do the Nigerian democratic-state-politics and -policies have sufficient reasons for the justification of the regular killings and unjust aggressions that are common place within the Nigerian political geography? (see the table below)
5. Does the Nigerian constitution contain permissible and/or restrictive legal provisions (e.g. for *jus ad bellum* –justice for war and/or *jus in bello* –justice in war) that deal with the regular/on-going-war-like situations that are rocking the social security of the Nigerian unitary statehood? If ‘yes’ are the laws for both ends of the questions effective in the face-offs of ‘Boko Haram, Ruga religious killings, ethnic-cleansing and the political multiple killings and regional political hate-speeches and unrests? (see the table below)
6. Another question is, if the Nigerian Constitution has any provision for the justification or defense of the ‘Villainous Attacker’ i.e. killing of the attacker in self-defense.
7. Has democracy in Nigeria been short-changed to be ‘the government of the elected by the elected for the elected?’
8. The Nigerian coat of arms that was proposed on May 20th 1960 (Coat of Arms Ordinance Number 48 of 1960 and finally and officially adopted in 1975) provides the **National Motto**: ‘Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress’. How relevant is that in the present political dispensations and playgrounds of Nigeria democracy today?

At this point, this paper will not be complete if there is no stressed reference to the religious politics that is primary in the political arena for the separatist sympathies in Nigeria. Nigerians cannot forget so soon the 1985 secret registration of the nation in the ‘OIC- Organization of Islamic Communities’.

The Nigerian history records that at that time, the Minister of External Affairs was a Christian and was not in the knowledge of the secret arrangement for the registration of Nigeria into the organization rather Alhaji Lukman who was then the ‘Minister for Petroleum’ was sent to Fez in Morocco to represent the ‘peoples

of Nigeria –both Christians, Muslims, Traditional Religionists etc’ and registered all (i.e. the country) into the OIC. Alhaji Lukman and his delegates were addressed by the OIC Chairman as follows:

Your seat has been reserved and we hope you will apply your consistent dynamism to the achievement of the aims and objectives of the OIC.
(National Concord, 24th January 1986)

The arguments then were:

If Nigeria withdraws from OIC then the Christians must also withdraw all diplomatic relations with Vatican. (New Nigeria, 20th March, 1986;
The Guardian, 11th February, 1986)

It is important to recall the records of the ‘West Africa Magazine, concerning the OIC membership of Nigeria that published the crisis in Zaria where the protesters rampaged the city chanting:

No Sharia No Peace, No Sharia No Constitution, No Sharia No Muslims, No Sharia No Nigeria. (West Africa Magazine, 24th April, 1978)

The above was followed by a stronger declaration confirming the deals of separatist sympathy for an all Islamic ‘Statecraft’ for Nigeria which says that:

Muslims will not give up Islamic values to enable the Nation (Nigeria) achieve a unified legal system. (New Nigeria, 12th December, 1986)

It is also history that in 1979 the *Muslim Students’ Society* MSS of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria while demonstrating in the city proclaimed:

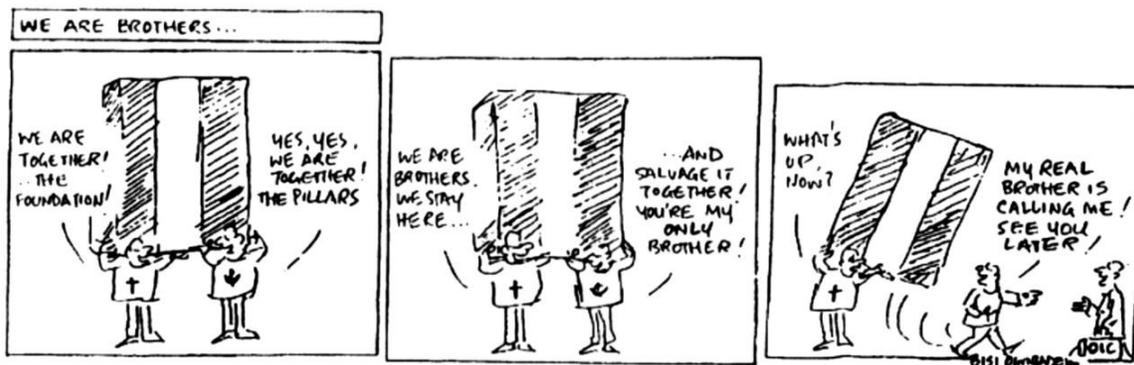
Stop opposition to Sharia or take full responsibility for putting the entire nation in chaos. (Kukah, M, p. 115)

On the grounds of such references above, the religious separatist battle lines were ready and clearly drawn. At this point, this paper wishes to draw attention to the diagrams below presented by the cartoonist’s impressions of the impact of

OIC on national unity which also designed the separatist sympathies in Nigeria and reported same in the *African Guardian* of 5th March 1987 with the caption: *OIC and Religious Politics in Nigeria*.

At this point in the Nigerian history, the political machinations were already programmed and geared towards a total Islamism of the political existentialism of the country (see the cartoon below). This cartoon demonstrates the political contents of religious separatist sympathies in Nigeria.

OIC and Religious Politics in Nigeria(African Guardian 5th March 1987)



Analysis:

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| We are together the now? foundation!/ we are together the pillars! | Yes, yes, we are together! The pillars | We are brothers, we stay here/ And salvage | What's up now? My real brother is calling me! See you later! |
| | | it together! You're my only brother! | |

To put to shape the most acute trait to the Nigerian democratic claims, a 'working document' presented in Brussels by Jose Luis Bazan on the 16th May 2020 titled *Fulani Militias' Terror* identifies the major source of the scourges on the democratic unity and the application and complex situation for the separatist sympathies in Nigeria. This document amplifier the separatist sympathies that are the issues in this research work due to the passive attitude of the political 'democratic elected' leadership and their appointed military, police, service chiefs and their public authorities.

The referenced document below collected and registered the passive attitudes of the elected democratic ruling class and their failures to provide reliable and political transparency that can project the correct applications of a constituted democratic rule of law.

The issues also recorded in the document reveal that the Fulani attackers destroy the houses, farmlands, properties; churches etc of their victims in dozens of thousands and the victims are predominantly Christians while the Fulani attackers are predominantly Muslims. Jose L. Bazan’s report says that within the period of his research 656 attacks took place, 2,539 persons were killed, 393 wounded, 253 kidnapped, 16 raped, more than 7,582 home and 24 churches were destroyed.

The Table below presents the statistics of the Fulani attacks in Nigeria from 2017-7th May 2020.

| | ATTACKS | KILLED | WOUNDED | KIDNAPPED | RAPED | HOMES | CHURCHES |
|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|
| 2020 | 141 | 335 | 46+ | 137 | 2 | 176+ | |
| May | 2 | 4 | 5 | | | | |
| April | 33 | 107 | 16+ | 28 | 2 | 166+ | |
| March | 23 | 102 | 2+ | 24 | | | |
| February | 16 | 33+ | 23 | 3 | | 10+ | |
| January | 67 | 89 | | 82 | | | |
| 2019 | 169 | 524 | 84 | 75 | 3 | 606 | 23 |
| December | 7 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| November | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 | | | |
| October | 11 | 12 | | 18 | | | |
| September | 12 | 32 | 1 | 16 | | | |
| August | 14 | 17 | 3 | 15 | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|----------|------------|----------|
| July | 16 | 10 | 2 | 9 | | 75 | 2 |
| June | 8 | 14 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 322 | 2 |
| May | 53 | 165 | 20 | 2 | | 12 | 15 |
| April | 14 | 80 | 14 | | | | |
| March | 19 | 105+ | 37+ | 10 | 1 | 247 | 4 |
| February | 6 | 68 | 2 | | | 40 | |
| January | 2 | 14 | | | | | |
| 2018 | 245 | 1,478 | 230 | 29 | 7 | 300 | 1 |
| December | 5 | 13 | 5 | 12 | | | |
| November | 2 | | | 5 | | | |
| October | 3 | 31+ | 4 | | | | |
| September | 8 | 44 | 51 | | | | |
| August | 17 | 24 | 4+ | | 1 | 95 | |
| July | 10 | 63 | 3 | | | 16 | 1 |
| June | 12 | 132 | 40 | 4+ | | 45+ | |
| May | 19 | 289 | 14+ | 1 | 3 | | |
| April | 36 | 296 | 49+ | 1 | 1 | 82 | |
| March | 33 | 174 | 24+ | 1 | | 50+ | |
| February | 41 | 118 | 6 | 4 | | | |
| January | 59 | 294+ | 30+ | 1 | 2 | 12+ | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|--------------|--|
| 2017 | 99 | 202 | 33+ | 12 | 4 | 6,500 | |
| December | 18 | 65 | 14+ | | | 3,000 | |
| November | 5 | 4+ | 1+ | 1+ | | | |
| October | 2 | 7+ | | 1+ | | | |
| September | 6 | 22 | 10 | 1 | | | |
| August | 7 | 3+ | 1 | 3 | | | |
| July | 1 | | | | | | |
| June | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| May | 19 | 26 | | | 3 | | |
| April | 8 | 42 | 2+ | 1 | | 3500 | |
| March | 6 | 14 | | 1 | 1 | | |
| February | 10 | 4 | | | | | |
| January | 11 | 13+ | 4+ | 3 | | | |
| | 654 | 2,539+ | 393+ | 253+ | 16 | 7,582+ | |

Source: Bazan, J. L (2020) Fulani Militias’ Terror: Compilation of News (2017-2020), Working Document, Brusells.

There may be many more questions and queries around and about the genuineness of democracy as it is being practiced in Nigeria. In my earlier account about the variegated practical faces of democracy in Nigeria, the author of this paper defined democracy in Nigeria to mean ‘the governance of the elected by the elected for the elected- a democracy without *demos*’ (Okonkwo 2016,p105).

The issues above are directed towards the provisions of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on democracy. All the questions are supposed to have their summative answers within the Nigerian 1999 constitutional provision section 14-(2) (p. 327-328) and the National Policy on Education (section 21-22) and the 2011 constitution as amended and duly cited above.

The documents as provided, among other issues, indicate the expected democratic *loci* that good governance (Leadership-Followership) in Nigeria must stand for the promotion of patriotism, moral norms and values, fairness, understanding, national unity etc. To cap it all, the ‘National Pledge of Nigeria’ provides for all citizens of the country both the leadership and the followership- with the following words/stanzas as the definitive clue for a Nigerian consciousness for civility and polity as well as the political cannons and codes of conduct for the collective existence of the denizens of Nigeria as follows:

I pledge to Nigeria, my Country,
To be faithful, loyal and honest,
To serve Nigeria with all my strength,
To defend her unity and,
Uphold her honour and glory,
So help me God.

From the issues above, the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the National Policy on Education, the National Pledge stand out as the Nigerian definitive democratic agenda-setting and rule of law. The first reaction towards the reasons for the separatist sympathies in Nigeria take their roots from the histories of the ‘colonial political sells’ of the Nigerian sovereignties through the deals of the 1914 amalgamation of the protectorates and peoples that never considered the territorial grabs and gaps within the different existent ‘historic homelands’ and distinct ethnic peoples irrespective of their autochthonous and distinct ethno- administrative boundaries.

The ‘colonial political sell’ of Nigeria as mentioned above, was like a ‘political botanical garden’ that the British Colonial Government used to ferment and propagate the present tragedies and the political cancers of separatist sympathies plaguing the Nigerian nation till date.

To substantiate and confirm the political blunders of the British colonial masters and the present Nigerian government, this paper makes bold to recall the statements of Peter Smithers who was the British Parliamentary Private Secretary to Minister of State and was also the Secretary of State in the Colonial Office from 1952-59. The ‘Nigerian Lesson’ as it was captioned and published in the *Times of London*, Wednesday, 15th July 1998 explains the whole ‘Little Worry’ of this paper. Sir Peter Smithers’ submission states as follows:

Sir, During the negotiations for the independence of Nigeria, the view of the Secretary of State at that time, with which I agreed, was that in Nigeria we should attempt to put together a large and powerful state with ample material resources, which would play a leading part in the affairs of the continent and of the world.

This was attractive but it involved forcing several different ethnic and cultural groups into a single political structure. The negotiations were complex and very difficult, the chief problem as I remember relating, significantly, to the control of the police and the military.

In the retrospect of 40 years it is clear that this was a grave mistake which has cost many lives and will probably continue to do so. It would have been better to establish several smaller states in a free-trade area.

In exculpation it must be said that we did not then have the examples of the collapse of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union before our eyes. It should now be clear for all but the willfully blind to see that it is extremely dangerous to force diverse racial and social entities into a single rigid political structure such as that which is being built upon the foundation of the Maastricht treaty.

Recent history suggests that it would be best to complete the development of the Common Market and to call a halt to political integration in Europe.

On the grounds of the above issues and confessions from the colonial trade-masters, Nigeria is till date bedeviled with the political culture of demoralizing conflicts that peddle between Democracy, Nationalism, Nationism, Separatism and Patriotism. These five issues are the main crisis and political pressure-points that define and design the political imbalances that nature and nurture the ethnic-nationalist political feelings and filings for separatist sympathies in Nigeria.

Okonkwo (2016, p. 105-112) in his paper titled: *The varied faces of patriotism in Nigeria* exposed the political playgrounds that fertilize and culture separatist sympathies in Nigeria. This paper reviews some conflicting political practices that query among others, the 'real presence and existence' of 'democratic-patriotism' for the show-case and possibility-contents of 'real democracy' in Nigeria.

The common political query on the said real presence of 'real democracy' in Nigeria is about the 'real presence, of democracy in spite of the anti-democratic political fuses like the following issues:

1. The 'real practices' of a political admixtures of religion, bad faith and lack of inclusive civility;
2. The complications and conflicts in affective practical political imports that expose the Nigerian-nation to exists on the negative 'real presence' of a polity grounded both in negative planning, policy, national identification and nation-hood;
3. The polity with socio-political immunities/immunity-clauses;
4. The citizenry that exists on the political sociologies and cultures of a nationalism (to mean- Nigeria first) versus nationism (to mean ethnicity, tribe and tongue first);
5. The polity where patriotism conflicts with the pride of place in tribe and tongue to mean, I am Fulani/Igbo/Hausa/Yoruba etc first, which indicates that Nigerians as the denizens, are not proud to identify with their *own-ness* country;

6. The polity earmarked with political administrative leadership-failures and effective leadership-hard and smart -powers’;
7. The polity designed to flout the rule of law;
8. The polity infested with sacred untouchables expressivities through practical political impunities etc;
9. The polity with little or no pride of place in their national/nationality pledge i.e. no pride of place for the pledges of faithfulness, loyalty, honesty etc., and therefore cannot defend and enforce the unity of the country and uphold its honor and glory;
10. The polity that lacks the patriotic-*credo* for a common socio-cultural patrimony *pro-patria*-i.e. the feeling of a Nigerians’-own-ness- own-most-country, devoid of incessant ethnic hostilities, conflicts and tensions and lacks the patriotic-*credo* that is politically designed for the guarantee and realization of collective resourcefulness, collective *modus socialis* and political collective dreams, all in all - *pro-patria*.

From the facts and socio-political faces of Nigeria as presented above, there is no doubt that Nigeria is going through a dictatorial leadership style with and through the democratic palaver-covers that the country never experienced even during the military dictatorship eras of our political history.

The separatist and/or secessionist sympathies are most obvious now than ever in spite of the existence and active political legislative presence of the 1999/2011(as amended) Constitution of the country as cited above. The separatist/secessionist sympathies substantiate and also instantiate queries on the legitimacy of the Nigerian collective polity versus the multifarious ethno-separatist and religious-separatist political ideologies plaguing the territorial integrity of Nigeria’s Nationhood. Every separatist and/or secessionist sympathy is, among others, all about the quest for:

1. The people’s rights to a legitimate sovereignty;
2. The people’s right to their liberal political ideal world;
3. The people’s right to the relevance for their political principles;
4. The people’s right to their collective self determination;
5. The people’s right to their territorial integrity;

6. The people's prima facie right of plausibility to their collective good;
7. The people's right to communitarian cultural identity, cultural consciousness, language, ethics and communication;
8. The people's right to socio-cultural affinity, affiliation, membership, territorial common history, geography and population;
9. The people's right to religious values, institutions and homogeneity and not a religion for the extermination of lives and properties;
10. The people's right to decolonize all kinds of colonization especially internal and or local *Ruga*-colonization etc.

Conclusion

This paper has tried to x-ray in a short assessment, some of the multifarious reasons for the present high-level separatist political feelings and sympathies in Nigeria. Nigeria, from the present political claims and practical applications of a 'republican-democratic statehood' cannot from the constitutional provisions *vis a vis* the existing practical social domains of the politics of exclusions, defend the popular democratic tenets of *Liberte, Egalite and Fraternite* and thereby cannot as experienced and lived-out in the country claim a 'democracy that is inclusive' but rather a 'democracy of exclusion'. Nigerian democracy as it is practiced propagates consciously 'a democracy for separatist sympathies'.

This paper is firm on the conclusion that Nigeria as socially and politically presented today, cannot defend the present practical polity to qualify as a 'free society'. The political face-offs with 'the holy political executive receptionists' (*ndi odara iwu eje nga- the political sacred untouchables*), the political 'Honorable-House-Members' (*ndi ononu buru-he/she who gets in/seats in takes/carries all*) and immunity-impunity politicians (*mpu na iti*), cannot guarantee the real presence, vision and missions of democracy in Nigeria (cf. Okonkwo, J. 2016, p. 109).

True federalism and constitutional democracy consists in the implementations of the expected ‘inclusive *demos*-patents’ ‘for all and in all’ as the most essential domain and content of political democratic free mobility and goods.

The above referenced political *demos*-patents serve as the *Key-Note-Designations’-Diagnostics* for the entire civil political obligations in any given democratic governance and should also permanently project same in all and for all the political office holders as the *modus Vivendi* and *modus operandi*.

The *demos*-political-patents must gain expressivity in and through the dividends of political securities of common/communal life (*vita communis*), fraternal political commerce (*commercium fraternae*), and common good (*bonnum communae*). The unfortunate fact remains that the above mentioned democratic dividends are presently very remote in the present Nigerian democratic praxis.

From all the above expectations, the Nigerian present democratic practices have failed majorly in the expected patentable political references *pro-demos-pro-patria* (for the people and for the father land) and these factors have led to the *high-tempo political gears* towards the ongoing separatist sympathies.

Furthermore, the separatist sympathies in Nigeria will continue to increase as long as the politics of exclusion gains abetment through the political machinations of leadership failures especially along the lines and fancies of political weaknesses and bad faith in the delivery and distribution of the dividend of democracy in fairness, equity, inclusion of the excluded as key to any politics of participation.

The separatist sympathies will continue to exist as long as the Nigerian politics does not manifest the social contracts of the ‘republican citizenship’ as provided in the above cited Nigeria Constitution of 1999 and 2011 as amended, National Policy on Education and the National Pledge and make them stand as the practical domestic legitimacy, political obligation and justice for a Nigerian political cooperative venture.

To warrant the Nigerian polity to claim the sociology of democracy, more political demands must be made on the protection of human rights, distributive

justice, protection of the lives of denizens and their properties. Without the above provisions, the claims of a Nigerian territorial integrity as preventive measures against separatist sympathies will remain necromantic.

From all the above propositions concerning the reasons and possible warrants for the separatist sympathies raging in Nigeria, there is therefore a common and popular clamor for a socio-political question Nigeria must answer.

This question is:

Who is the rightful owner of the Nigerian state and or who are the rightful owners of the Nigerian state?

The answer is sure and simple: The *Demos* (Denizens of the Republic)

In social history, there is also a question that has to be considered while considering the current administrative excesses (e.g. the Fulani Herdsmen/Ruga legislative conflicts) that have no bearings to the constitutional provisions of 1999 and 2011 as amended as cited above.

The question is:

Does any person or group of persons in Nigeria as denizens (Fulani denizens and non denizens), have the claim of ownership of any land with the mandate of a 'Divine-Ruga-Right' to annex any ethnic historic ancestral homelands?

The answer constitutionally is: No!

The unconstitutional, non-contractarian illegal impositions on a civil republican society therefore, rightly empower the quests for the separatist sympathies in Nigeria.

The most important question, millions of helpless Nigerian that have been displaced while many were killed and are still being killed on their ethnic historic ancestral homelands are asking is the ethical question about the ultimate meaning of life (the most important question of life), and about the reasonable

political plan of life and for life in the country Nigeria that is a democratically constituted republican state.

When the constitutional legal expectations, principles, degrees of socially constituted mobility and freedom have failed and deep-rooted hate speeches, social violation of constitutional rights and privileges, social exclusions, political marginalization and -boundaries, levels/degrees of citizenship dominate the 'shop floors' of the Nigerian expected participatory democracy, then the meaning and value of constitutional democracy must give way to separatist sympathies.

As it stands today, the rule of citizenship (the *demos*) as the logical referencing for any given 'democratic virtue', which implicitly heralds the 'senses' of a 'single-status-moral community', is almost necromantic in Nigeria.

On the above notes therefore, the 'separatist sympathies' in Nigeria will continue to rise and make Nigeria into a 'cosmopolitan-political-open-border-jamboree' which implicitly signals the demands for new separatist political borders and political geographies.

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AMAMIHE: Journal of Applied Philosophy, ISSN: 1597 - 0779,
Vol. 19, No. 3, 2021
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