

Participatory Democracy, Dead End in Nigeria

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Abstract

Looking at the recent political development in Nigeria, the transition from Civilian to Civilian administration, the process that led to the transition was fundamentally initiated, designed, guided and imposed on the people by the democratic dictators, however Democracy is far more penetrating process than the ritual of election and more also that the transfer of democratic leadership with a super imposed party constitution without the opening of political parties and with restricted political space, hold a manipulated periodic election, not minding the participation of vote of the people because of repressive nature of our authoritarian leadership. The fact that beclouded the Democratic elite hostility has been blown open by the inability of the Democratic propaganda to ratify the bankruptcy of the capitalist pattern of democracy, this Democracy which consist in the failure of participation and also concern of the mediocrity of leader. The abstract shall demonstrate the inherent danger in Exclusive Democracy in Nigeria.

Key Word: *Participatory Democracy a Dead End in Nigeria.*

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Introduction

Political and socioeconomic injustice provided hate memories with its origin in the past and also the linked with the limitation of the present social order have been exploding, people's fears and extend perception have not only been surviving but are increasingly translated into the practical political project, after a prolong dictatorial rule and everything will come to the open state governance based on the consent of the people. Resources by the multinational cooperation and the democratic government without much caring with the rapid disappearing of the harmonious group relations.

Looking at the recent political development in Nigeria from 2003 to date, the transition from civilian to civilian administration, the process that led to the transition was fundamentally initiated, designed and guided and imposed on the people by the democratic dictators. However, democracy is a far more penetrating process than the ritual of election and more transfer of democratic leadership, with a super imposed party constitution without the opening up of political parties and with restricted political space, hold a manipulated periodic election, not minding the participation and vote of people because of the repressive nature of the authoritarian leadership. The fact that beclouded the democratic elite hostility has been blown open by the inability of democratic propaganda to ratify the bankruptcy of the capitalist pattern of democracy, democracy consist in the failure of participation and also the concern of the mediocrity of leaders.

The growing wave of tension and conflict threaten unity and harmonious inter ethnic and inter group relations, more complex is the drive toward sectarian and chauvinistic distinctions that give manifestation to themselves in various forms. Many group feel excluded from the centre of the shift has been witnessed in recent times after years of been treated as some sorts of pariah group, ethnic identities and ethnic nationalism have gain strength and even degree of legitimacy In recent years; as long as negative interpretation of identity based politics. As been divisive, dominated and oppressed groups could also view it dynamics in some extent as struggle for participation and to construct a pan religious identity project based one equality of people and common political practices. Operating the same law rather than narrow and chauvinistic and primordial one that is exclusive.

It was clearly manifested by the actors reassertion of ethnic, religious and communal identities, political mobilization of people even by their religious-political forces and militants seems to remain within the realm of sectarian role in the shift in favour of identities that have been centralizing state and its layer of ruling classes.

The complex political and historical process, have to be unearthed to understand why democratic processes is based on exclusion. The problem lies with ruling forces controlling state of power, another factor is the imbalances due to the way the state treated different groups. Also important is the lack of social justices and the right for people and the communities.

The working people were enmeshed in serious difficulties. The era was characterized by collapse of the country's health system rural poverty grew and destitution grew in proportion. Peasant, were paying more for agricultural inputs while the price of consumer goods and services were escalating in context of skyrocketing inflation. Employed school leavers and even the university graduates were swelling the number of the urban and rural poor. Certain strata of the middle rehabilitation scheme. The influx of ex-soldier into the rural environment and the urban slums contributed to many becoming more restive. This is why the growing ethnoreligious conflicts. What it means is that only clients of those who control state power actually continue to have access to state resources through patronage.

Historicizing the Imperative of Democratic Justice and Inclusiveness in Nigeria

The impossibilities of democracy is the growing confusion surrounding election that is rooted in colonial experiences for the period that the British ruled us, they never allow democratic participation and democracy to flourish. They did no they have election at any level of the governance until 1919 when they introduced election in Lagos municipal council and in 1923 when they extended the principles of African representation from Lagos to Calabar into the colonial legislative council even, then a property pre-qualification for participation of an annual income of \$600 and the measure of western education was also made for elimination and participation. When in 1947 Richard constitution expanded the space for participation in democracy through the indirect election system. Under this system people who lost election at the primary stage emerged winners, very obvious that such injected or re-nominated candidates constitute 9000 of what was obtain to the federal election of 1959 which produced the first political leader for the first Republic. This is the beginning of the dilemmas of participatory democracy in Nigeria.

When we got the third republic, we could not be said to have started on a truly democratic footing, our civilian leaders were just beginning to learn the ropes with mistakes but before they settle down, amongst them got impatient with the game of waiting to the next election. They conspired to over throw the legally constituted government by force of arms, they did not succeed but inspired the soldier

who struck pre-maturely which terminated the first attempt at laying the foundation for inclusive democracy in the country. It ended efforts made by the political leaders to resolve the controversy surrounding the first and national elections.

The exclusion of sub term-woman slave, lumpens and other marginal from ground narrative, about history and culture is arguably as old as the art of history writing (itself). Not only are they excluded from the history but also their inclusion largely remained undocumented. The contributions of the excluded have made the development of language and culture that belongs to this genre. The oral text they have produced and continued to reproduced is in the rebellion that form an essential critique of the post colonial movement from their marginal standpoint. Their multiple discoursed, both covert and overt reveal cultural resilience and creativity as they come in groups with the existential reality of every day's life. As panderer, struggling artisans, hawker or plain unemployed on the so-called in vavour sector, they engage in the cultural production in various art form which they recover their memories about the political. These cultural site and the urban texts from which we can understand their grammar of protest these text may be inform of music like (Fella Anikuti) art and periodic carnival if possible. The fundamental question in the area of social-linguistic is under what circumstances does a subaltern and disempowered group become a dominant voice in development? What are the likely political implication of a situation which the "excluded" image and symbols become national icon signposts. These question resolve around subversion and counter culture; they coil in image of excluded groups forcing its way to the power bloc. Several decades of socio political and economic crisis have weaken people in the post colonial societies, especially, in Africa to the realization that democratic mode of governance based on a credible constitution made by genuine representative of the people's basic needs aspiration, as well as building stable politics. Undemocratic authoritarian and unconstitutional modes of rule had led to reckless misrule and underdevelopment and the virtual destruction of the social political and economic foundations of the political economy of most-colonial countries, especially, those in AFRICA. Revival and revitalization of these countries is to large extent conditional on a return to constitutionality and supremacy of the rule and good governance. This is in turn, possible only if the process of making or reviewing constitutions is broad based, accommodative, censual and transparent. In general, political participation is required or desired as it conferred legitimacy and popular acceptance driving it power and authority from the people in particular case of crisis in the middle of post colonial countries emerging from prolong authoritarian rule, the constitution is suppose to revive hope in a union brought about by colonialism and the accumulation strategies of post colonial elite. The best way to make the constitution a workable and acceptable document is to ensure that as many shades of opinion and interest as possible are in involved in its making. it is in thus sense that scholar come to conclusion that the process of bringing about a constitution is an important as end result.

Political participation must be an inclusive rather than exclusive anchored on broad representation, accommodate various forms of shades interest and. It must ensure active participation by its all citizens. Must have capacity for consultation and consensus building. Must be rooted in-enlightened discussion, debate of contribution and active involvement of the civil society given the guiding principles of good governance and the spirit of interpersonal and intergroup relationship in a polity, the process of bringing it about must, first and foremost be inclusive rather than exclusive. It must seek to bring every body on board. It mustn't seek to deliberately exclude anybody so that the tendencies for unimagined tension and pressure from groups and movements could be avoided.

Democratic exclusiveness and the possibly religious fundamentalism in Nigeria

When the project of constituting individual for full participation in modernity reveals its absolutely in the actual experience of everyday life, violence become the only form of self affirmation of the new subject-the neo-community become then a necro-community.the exclusion from modernity takes a religious meaning: thus self immolation become the way to fight against exclusion through the variety of political processed, depending upon the dynamics of each nation state and the form of global articulation of each economy, an Islamic fundamentalist project emerged in all the Muslim society and among the Muslims minorities in the non-Muslim societies, not by turning to tradition, but by working on traditional materials in the formation of a new godly communal world, where deprived masses and disaffected intellectuals may reconstruct meaning in a global alternative to exclusionary global order, regardless of our judgment on the matter. What has to be reckoned with through the negation of exclusion, even in the extreme form of self sacrifice, a new Islamic identity has emerged in the new historical attempt to build the Umma, the communal heaven for the believer. God have come to an electronic dark age in which new pagan hordes with all the power of technology at their command are on the verge, of obliterating the last strong hold of civilized humanity. A vision of death lies before us. As we live the shores of Christian western man behind, only a dark and turbulent sea of despair.

The answer to the question, which can only be empirically or historically, determined whether societies remain as societies or else fragmented into a constellation of tribes, sometimes euphemistically renamed political communities. The third process of constructing identity; that is identity process produce subjects as defined by Alan Tourame:

They are the collective social actors through which the individual reach holistic meaning in their experience. In this case, the building of identity is a project of a different life, perhaps on the basis of an oppressed identity, but expanding toward the transformation of society as the prolongation of this project of identity example of the above mentioned; a post patriarchal society, liberating women, men and children, through the realizations of women identity or believers, brothers and sisters, under the guidance of God's law, be it Allah or Jesus, as a result of the religious conversion of the godless, anti-family, naturalist societies, otherwise unable to fulfill human needs and God's design.

Identities are stronger source of meaning than role because of the process of self construction and individuations that they involve. In simple terms, identity organize the meaning, while role organize the functions, it define meaning as the symbolic identification by social actors of the purpose of his/her action.

If all identity are constructed, then the issue is how, from what, by whom and for what, the construction of these identities use building material from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institution from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from apparatus and religious revelations. These social materials are rearranged for their meaning according to their social determination and social project that are rooted in their social structures and in their space, time framework.

The identities are legitimized by introducing dominant institution of society to extend and rationalize dominations of social actors in the name of nationalism on the other hand resistance identity is been generated by those actors who are in position and conditions devalued and stigmatized by logic of domination, thus building trench of resistance on the basis of principle different from, or oppose when it explain the emergence of politics, while project identity deal with when social actors on the basis of

whatever cultural material are available to them, they build a new identity that redefined their position in the society and by so doing seek the transformations of overall social structure. This is the case for instance when women move out of the trenches of resistance of women identity and women's rights, for challenge patriachalism.

Purposive collective action whose come, in victory as in defeat transforms the value and institutions of society, since there is no sense of history other than history we sense from an analytical perspective there are no "good and bad" progressive and regressive social movements. They are all symptoms of how we are, and avenue of social change in our world often take form of fanaticism and violence that we do not usually associate with positive social change. And yet this is our world, this is us in our contradictory plurality, and this is what we understand, if necessary to face it and to overcome it.

Conclusion

Over the years both real and perceived control of political and economic power by certain dominant power bloc in Nigeria have partly contributed in giving rise to all sort of conflicts, expression of conflicts have. In been in class, in gender, religions, ethnic, communal and political reform with highest level of exclusion from the control, participation of the state and its centrality to access the control and distribution of the provision of services.

Political and socio-economic injustice provided hat memories with it origin in the past and also the link with the limitation of the present social order have been exploding people fear and extended perception have not only been surviving but are increasingly translated into the practical political actions-whether in peaceful agitation or in violent uprising. The lid of suppressions of grievances was lifted, no matter the limits of the new democratic project, after a prolong dictatorial rule.

The growing wave of tension and conflict threaten unity and harmonious inter-ethnic and inter-group relations ethnic identity and ethnic nationalism including religious fundamentalism are been formed and are derived toward sectarian and chauvinistic direction that give manifestation to themselves in various form. As many feel excluded form the centre of national political power, access to the state as well as its resources and services are all the burning issues of exclusion. The complex political and historical process, have to be unearth to understand why the democratic process is based on exclusion.

The problem, lies with the ruling forces controlling state power, another factor is in balance due to the way the state treated different groups. Also important is the lack of social justice and rights for the people and the communities. There is also the factor of undemocratic nature of governance characterized by lack of participation with the weak state civil society that claimed to fight for democratic principles.

So long as (the) country leadership is made up of person whose primary concern is to tool the public funds. So long as all those entrusted with check and balances in the system have thoroughly compromised themselves. So long as the civil society has failed to live up to expectation of being an effective watchdog over the political society and as long as the people remain uneducat5ed and ignorant of their rights, emasculated and incapable of protecting their own dignity, no matter what model of democracy, it is a possible exclusion and also a possible fundamentalism

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