

Cultural Pluralism: Critique and Application to the Study and Analysis of Nigerian Government and Politics

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Abstract

What are the peculiar features that tend to condition the way and manner in which Nigerian government and politics are being studied and analyzed? Is there any encompassing analytical framework through which these peculiar features can be adequately and comprehensively studied and analyzed in a manner that in turn provides informed view and opinion on Nigerian body politics? The article examines the form and character of politics in Nigeria using cultural pluralism as an analytical framework. It is set against the objective of providing detailed and exhaustive analysis of cultural pluralism as a theoretical framework of disquisition; and determining as well its appropriateness to the study and analysis of politics in Nigeria. The methodology is qualitative and hinged on descriptive examination of the concepts that are contained in cultural pluralism as a theoretical formulation and further analysis of the adequacy and suitability of the concepts in being able to properly enhance a holistic study and analysis of the peculiar features of politics in Nigeria. It concludes that in its present form, the framework is inadequate and archaic.

Keywords: Cultural pluralism; Nigerian government; Nigerian politics; Territory; Political unit; Social mobility

Introduction

The subject matter of politics is one that has continued to attract scholarly attention. An important legacy of the attention is the multiple and competing understanding of what it is. This is good for scholarship as it provides very interesting perspectives to what politics is. As both concept and conceptual tool of analysis, it has continued to generate stimulating and interesting controversies. One problem however, is its broad application irrespective of the levels of development of societies and varieties of political systems. This is understandable given the fact that politics exists everywhere not only at the level of domestic and state-state relations, but in homes, churches, mosque etc as well. With respect to the study and analysis of how countries are ruled and decisions arrived at, the idea of politics as a framework of understanding is one that has attracted series of intellectual efforts. Consequently, contemporary literature on the broad political structure and process of Nigeria is replete with all kinds of theoretical formulations that generally compete for recognition. This is partly due as well to the peculiarities that are often associated with the Nigerian body politics. One of the frameworks of analysis in literature is cultural pluralism. It is therefore important to begin the article by raising the question: What is cultural pluralism? More fundamental, what are its technical properties? To what extent does it serve as analytical framework with which Nigerian government and politics can be studied? As important and influential as the questions are, equally more fundamental questions need be raised due to the contending nature of the explanatory frameworks in which the entire body politics of Nigeria is being conceptualized and analyzed. The tasks in this article are legion. First, there is and in line with the overall objective of providing a clearer perspective to the understanding of the complexities and complications that characterize the practice of politics in Nigeria, the need to provide a very robust methodological approach to the understanding of the very peculiar nature, content and character of Nigerian government and politics. Second, there is the compelling need to as well provide a purely social science analysis and perspective to the contending (and confusing) use of words and expressions such as “approaches”, “models”, “frameworks”, “methods” etc., in the scholarly attempt to come to terms with, or hold in firm grips, the best and the most comprehensive and authoritative way of

both studying and analyzing Nigerian government and politics, in particular in presenting its associated conflicts over “who get what, when and how”, the globally acknowledged fundamental of any politically organized society. Finally and as here presented, there is the need to explore how, and the extent to which cultural pluralism, as an analytical category and genre, can be used to capture the whole process of Nigerian government and politics or the struggle over “authoritative allocation of values”.

The apt question then becomes: How can we begin to provide answers to the question raised above? Before then, there is the urgent need to first examine the premises of Nigerian government and politics. The argument is that a robust, scientific approach to the understanding of the broad political structure and process of Nigeria needs to identify and combat the premises of politics in Nigeria from the angle of critical social science analysis and mentality. The argument further is that it is only when the premises of the Nigerian body politics are critically examined, that the so-called peculiarities of the system of “authoritative allocation of values” in Nigeria can be greatly appreciated. This is section one of the article. But can the above serve any meaningful purpose without first and foremost asking the question: what is the role of premises in general intellectual development and advancement and in the understanding of cultural pluralism as an intellectual framework of analysis? More forceful, how specifically has the theoretical/epistemological import of the question aided the existing research on Nigerian government and politics? This is the focus of section two of the article. Sections three and four address the specific character and context of literature on Nigerian government and politics placed within

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Received March 10, 2015; Accepted October 14, 2015; Published October 19, 2015

Citation: Tajudeen SA (2015) Cultural Pluralism: Critique and Application to the Study and Analysis of Nigerian Government and Politics. J Glob Econ 3: 154. doi:10.4172/2375-4389.1000154

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the general premises of every modern government and politics so as to provide useful comparative insights. Sections five and six focus on what the article considered as the problematic issue in the analysis of Nigerian government and politics and in turn placed cultural pluralism within its defining characteristics as an analytical framework. Section seven examines cultural pluralism within the context of the emerging processes of globalization, while section eight provides the conclusion to the article.

Methodology

The idea of premises as the foundation of politics: An intellectual perspective

What does the section intend to contribute to the understanding of the article? The question offers a good starting point to the understanding of the peculiar features of politics in Nigeria, and in the understanding as well of the choice of cultural pluralism as a framework of intellectual disquisition with which to study and analyze these peculiarities. Important to the understanding of the question earlier raised and in the generation of answers, is the simple question: What is a premise? The submission here is that until an answer is found to it, it might be difficult to place the entire article within a perspective to study that offers insights into the fundamental questions and problematic areas of contemporary social science analyses. Premises are here defined as the logical basis upon which a political thought or idea is based, which in turn from the bedrock of political activities. With specific reference to the subject of discussion and analysis, i.e Nigerian government and politics, it simply means the foundation of thoughts and the nature of practice of politics in Nigeria and the way and manner in which they are in turn analyzed? What the above has revealed is that politics in Nigeria has its own distinctive features and practices. Politics in Nigeria, without argument, is a product of either the design of the British colonial master, or the anti-colonial or nationalist forces, or the imperial or comprador forces, or the contending and competing forces and factors that are inherent in it or all of the above in a reinforcing relationship. These competing forces and factors in themselves ultimately define the character of leadership and followership, or the ideological orientation of those who capture political power at every point in time. It is interesting to note that the premises of Nigerian government and politics, elaborately considered, help to determine what type of government at a given time, and also the type of constitution and how it is to be operated.

What is being said in effect is that the competing perspectives which people give to these premises, and the extent to which they have been imbibed and internalized, tend to determine also the ideological character of the ruling party in power and the condemnation or commendation of the existing political institutions and structures. Premises in theory and practice help to shape the outcomes of political inputs in such a manner that any "stress" or sign of instability can be predicted. The premises of politics can as well be used to mean the prevailing politicization and the extent to which the political culture in turn mirrors the practice of politics. A presentation of the broad premises of Nigerian government and politics, it is here argued, has the advantage of helping to contextualize the imperialism and Western-outlook of cultural pluralism as a framework of analysis. This has become important in order to be able to determine the contemporary relevance or otherwise of it especially the lack of concept that are specific and special to it. The lack of which in turn points direction to its scientific limitation as a likely broad and integrative framework of analysis within which the understanding of "systems theory" for

instance rests especially with the intervention of Easton through his emphasis on "pattern maintenance" and "systemic persistence." The presentation of the broad premises of Nigerian government and politics is preceded by a short, critical examination of the role of premises in general intellectual development and advancement especially from the social science perspective. This is done so as to amplify the understanding of cultural pluralism [1]. However and very important to the section of the article, what is the role of premises in general intellectual development and advancement and to what extent does the answer which is here presented help to simplify further the meaning and understanding of cultural pluralism?

The role of premises in general theory building and development

As earlier said, if premises are indeed the logical bases of arguments and positions as held to by an individual or a group and the cornerstones of political life and activities, it means that premises determine the force and processes underlying any politically organized community and therefore represent the outward appearance of political activities in general terms. It is essentially an approach to governance or conception of politics. The Nigerian political structure and process, by implication, is a product of certain sensibilities and perception that have been accepted to as the determining factor of governance or social relations. From the perspective of critical scholarship, two forms of premises dominate social science disciplines which, without argument have great consequences for the understanding of the point that is being made. These are inductive and deductive reasoning methods. The two forms of premises are concerned with the building of generalization either from particular to general or from general to particular. Social science analysis derives its strength and vitality from this accepted notion of scientific construction. From the single individual (particular observation) whose thinking, orientation and mentality is to use the State to serve the purpose of material accumulation, or that of the family or group or community (general observation) who feels satisfied with the action of the individual and hence develops the sense of being part of "mainstream" politics, as churches, mosques, palaces and community town-halls, etc for instance are built by the single individual action, in the name of his community. The individual is instantly awarded chieftaincy and other titles in the churches and mosques and becomes transformed into a "demi-god" dictating the direction of politics and determine the tempo of political activities. The examples that are here cited describe the structure and process of politics in Nigeria and remain embedded in the above analysis of premises. This no doubt underscores the relevance of cultural pluralism as a framework of analysis and especially within the context of Nigerian politics.

The character of literature on Nigerian government and politics

The sources of information on Nigerian government and politics are as diverse as the perspectives which have influenced the thinking, orientations and mentality of authors. In other words, information on Nigerian government and politics vary in line with the chosen perspective which a particular author employs. In practical intellectual terms, it means that authors make use of the approach that best fits their considered premises or perceptions of government and politics in Nigeria. The above can be further extended to mean that we can conceive of multiple and competing premises of Nigerian government and politics. This conception has led to the use of all kinds of approaches to illustrate or explain the nature and character of Nigerian government and politics. Among these approaches are the

institutional, the behavioural, the ethnic group, the federal, the political economy, among others. The institutional sources of information employ the study of political institutions in the attempt to grasp the understanding of politics in Nigeria. The tensions characterizing the relationships between the executive and legislative arm of government especially on issues relating to the passage of the appropriation acts, the impeachment of governors and passing of no confidence votes on ministers and commissioners etc, the role of the courts and tribunals in the settlements of electoral/constitutional matters, the conditions/circumstances warranting the issuances of certain orders by one arm of government against the other and the appropriate political and constitutional interpretations of these conditions and circumstances; among others, ever remain the focus of the institutional approach. The behavioural on the other hand, set against certain hypothetical premises and constructions, investigates the reasons for violence, for example, in the body politics of Nigeria. Violence is rooted in the political culture of Nigeria since her colonization by the British. The Aba Women Riot of 1922, the Western Region Crisis of 1965, the Tiv Violence and the post election disruptions following the 2011 General Elections and lately the terrorist activities of Boko Haram in the north of the country, provided sound bases for the application and utilization of the behavioural approach.

The ethnic group theory examines the ethnic basis of politics in Nigeria as politicians are ever faced with how to strike the delicate and important nationalistic balance between civic and primordial considerations. While he maintains the national identity of being a Nigerian, the Nigerian national politician has his roots in his family house, town, ward, local government area, and state of origin, significant political socialization processes within the federal framework of resource mobilization, allocation and distribution. Even though the ethnic group theory is linked to the federal approach/theory, the focus on the latter however involves investigations into how resources are distributed especially between the centre and the states, between the centre and resource producing areas etc, to the detriment of who handles what and how well it is being handled within the established federal parameters. Finally, the political economy approach focuses on the processes of the integration of Nigerian political economy into the global economy of capitalism and implications arising from such integration.

The general premises of modern government and politics

Simply put, what is government, and what is politics as well? How have governmental and political processes in Nigeria deviated from the general understanding of government and politics? Let us consider politics first. Politics is an activity revolving around the production, distribution and consumption of resources. By this, we mean that the production, distribution and consumption of resources are characteristically scarce and limited in all political systems. The conflicts can be in the forms of physical combat, contest of ideas, in particular ideas relating to “who gets what when, and how” among others. Government, on the other hand, is one of the characteristics of a State. Others are population, sovereignty, and geographical size. Government is the legitimate use of the instrument of coercion by the State. It has three principal organs: legislature, executive and judiciary. Government serves the interest of the people, the larger society. The premises of modern government and politics derive their sources from the overriding question/issue in political philosophy, that is, the purpose of government, or the need/justification of government? The state of nature that was in existence before the emergence of the modern notion of government was generally criticized as might mean

power then. There was general disorder and political instability, since only the powerful survived. Government therefore came into being as a way of maintaining peace, tranquility and order. Government, it is then taken, fundamentally exists for the purpose of peace and order, and for the welfare of citizens as well. This is the cornerstone with which the contemporary premises of government and politics are now based, and the parameters of governmental assessments all over the world.

The specific premises of Nigerian government and politics

First, being both multicultural and multilingual a society, the system of government and politics in Nigeria is premised on the principle of federalism. The founding fathers of modern Nigeria even though accepted the geographical division of Nigeria into North and South, East and West, and by so doing fought for independence along regional loyalties, they however, clinched to Where’s principle of federalism. The likes of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who were wrongly reported as regional leaders, were, in spirits, federalists as they believed in the indivisibility of Nigeria and the growth and development of Nigeria along the federal path. This further explains why the then regions attained their independence at different dates. The various colonial Constitutions were also regional until Nigeria became a federal State in 1954. Accepted that the federal principle had been bastardized (and still continues to be) especially during the periods of military rule, the recent open expression and support for it in the proposed amendment to the 1999 Constitution further attests to the weight of the premise. Today, every Nigeria politician is a committed federalist; differences only exist in the degree of the federal spirit.

Second, as a multi-religions society, Nigerian government and politics is premised on the principle of secularity, that is, the non-adoption of any religion as State religion. The various Constitution, in particular the post independence Constitutions, such as the 1979 Constitution, the 1989 Constitution (that was never put to use), and the 1999 Constitution (as amended) have codified in them the principle of secularity. This has informed (and still informs) the pattern of politicking and also serves as a strategy for winning elections. Where a gubernatorial candidate is a Muslim, his/her deputy is usually either a Christian or a believer of other faith. The only possible exception was perhaps the June 12, 1993 Presidential Election, where the most likely winners of the election, the candidates of the Social Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Abiola and Alhaji Babagana Kingibe, were both Muslims. The effect of this on the existing political culture was however, truncated by the military as the Election was annulled. However, in recent times, especially following the controversial introduction of Sharia in Zamfara State and the possibility of its extension to Kaduna, Niger, and Yobe States, the secularity of the Nigerian State has come under severe attack. The enforcement of the secularity principle, if not properly managed, can lead to the disintegration of Nigeria. Some actors and observers for example, saw the Zamfara experience under the first term of President Olusegun Obasanjo administration as a political strategy intended to bring down his government before the expiration of his tenure in 2003[2]. It is however, interesting to note that he won a re-election in the same year, 2003 for reasons not unconnected with his ability to adequately manage the Zamfara State experience with no any other option but to retain his Vice, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, who is a Muslim from the North.

A third premise is that the Nigerian government has come in place to ensure the security of lives of its citizens. Consequently, governmental existence in Nigeria is premised on the need to provide peace and maintain order. Government in Nigeria, the premise can be extended

further, exists to provide for the welfare of its citizens. Administrations, military and civilian alike, have responded by providing social amenities and security outfits for the purpose of citizens welfare and enjoyment. The above have become specially incorporated into post-independence Constitutions and captioned: "The Directive Principles of State Policy". However, the extent to which the Nigerian government has been able to respond to the welfare and security needs of her citizens is debatable. Cases abound where citizens' lives have been threatened, either by the State acting independently, or by co-citizens, or by external forces especially those Nigerian citizens that reside in the border towns. Amenities have not reached all the nooks and crannies of Nigeria. More disturbing, they function epileptically.

Fourth, every Nigerian is equal before the law. Every citizens, be he Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, etc is equal before the law. Every citizen has equal fundamental rights, and therefore every Nigerian has equal vote and equal right to stand for elections having satisfied the necessary constitutional provisions. Among others, such provisions relate to the fact that no Nigerian should be discriminated against on the ground of place of birth, state of origin or ethnicity, etc. However, and in practical terms, to what extent are Nigerians equal before the law? The reality is that some categories of people are more equal than the others. Accusations and counter-accusations, bothering on marginalization (the extent to which one is separated from power), by those considered to be displaced or dispossessed of power, continued to be levied.

Analysis

The problematic issue in the analysis of Nigerian government and politics

Simply put, what is the analytical or research relationship/function between the elaborate explanations and analyses of the premises of Nigerian government and politics (as presented above), and that of cultural pluralism as an independent form of analysis, the central concern of the article? The research relationship reveals itself when we ask some other specific and critical questions. How can the whole process of the Nigerian political structure and governmental arrangement be analyzed within the claims and postulations of cultural pluralism? In other words, can the content, character and structure of Nigerian government and politics be analyzed with one broad, analytical arrangement as culture pluralism seems to present itself? If yes, how can this be done convincingly? What must be contained (by the rule of logic) in the broad framework of analysis? How can the presentation arising from such a formulation be made explicit and concise? The questions are no doubt important under the present circumstance. However, a re-reading of the question only reveals the intellectual crises enveloping the study and analysis of Nigerian/African government and politics. The specific nature of the practice of government and politics in Nigeria, the competing modes of analyses that are contained in the social sciences at large, and the orientation and sensibility of the scholar and or social science analyst will no doubt make this difficult. The possibility of developing a broad analytical category or classificatory scheme in itself is a major epistemological issue or problem. Whether approached from the angles of institutions or processes of politics (behavioural analysis), there is ever the problem of developing a neat classification of the properties and variables, in particular how they relate and correlate. This has the implication of limiting our generalization and theory building that will in turn capture the whole of the events, the series of processes, the negotiations and outcomes that uniquely describe the practice of politics in Nigeria. The above identified and imposed limitations suggest out-rightly the need

for either a reinvention or reformulation of the existing frameworks of analyses so far used in the study of Nigerian government and politics.

The problematic issue however, still remains: How can the existing frameworks of analyses be reformulated to be able to address the peculiar features of government and politics in Nigeria? This is no doubt a difficult task. The choice or alternative that is here chosen is therefore a limited one. What is here focused on, to be reminded, is cultural pluralism. It is however, important to clarify some points by raising some other questions. First, what is the implication of the interchangeable use of "approach", "theory", "model", "framework", etc., to describe the series of intellectual processes through which Nigerian government and politics can be adequately studied? It is observed that this one of the difficult epistemological problems in social science analysis. Social science analysis, contemporary social science analysis in particular, has the problem of clear-cut conceptual formulation and specification. This, without much argument, has to do with the level of its theoretical sophistication, comparatively speaking. Accepted that the article is not a distinct work on contemporary issues and problems of social science research methodology, the confusion in literature needs be clarified. "Approach", "theory", "frameworks", etc, no doubt is intellectual exploits aimed at capturing what is of interest to the scholar and or researcher; they however, possess distinct properties which disallow their interchangeable use.

Approach, technically speaking, addresses the question of how to describe and not necessarily, what is being described and or explained. It is therefore lacking in the power and ability to predict. Theory perhaps takes up from the intellectual inadequacy of approach to include what is being described, how it is being described and the consequences arising there from. Model, on the other hand, attempts to both describe and explain, in a manner that allows for quick comprehension. It might be lacking in the power to predict, the hallmark of a theory. Lastly, framework, in contemporary social science discourse, can either be based on an existing theory or be anchored in the process of conceptualization. It is important to therefore note that "approaches to the study of Nigerian government and politics", "theories of Nigerian government and politics", "models of Nigerian government and politics", etc, as found in literature, apart from being confusing, need not give us the same results in terms of richness of analytical prowess as they differ in their explanatory powers.

Cultural pluralism: Defining characteristics as an analytical framework

Cultural pluralism, it is here reasoned, requires elaboration for it to be properly understood. First, there is the need to explore further what Crawford Young calls "types of cultural differentiation" [3]. The reason for the choice here adopted is rooted in the way and manner in which the social sciences in broad terms have invaded the discipline of political science. While one is not trying to discourage multi-disciplinary pre-occupations and analyses, the point simply is that a poorly applied multi-disciplinary approach will only succeed in complicating what is being explained. What the point of emphasis directs our minds to is that a proper understanding of the application of cultural pluralism especially to the understanding of Nigerian/African politics requires that the application be carefully done or else we might run into a problem of great magnitude. It is also to be reminded that as a framework of analysis, cultural pluralism has its variants which serve different intellectual purposes. Cultural pluralism, it should be further admitted to, as an analytical framework, runs through the distinct disciplines of anthropology, sociology and political science

which make its understanding and application much more complex. At face value, it presents a matrix of culture competing for positions and relevance in the political schemes of things. Pluralism, as opposed to plurality, in political science, defines the existence of political power in diverse sources. In other words, it defines specifically the phenomenon of multiple competitions for political power. In this sense it can be distinguished from, or contrasted with monism. Before an elaboration of “types of cultural differentiation” will be accomplished in the article, first to be preoccupied with is perhaps what makes or accounts for cultural pluralism as a framework of analysis in political science and in particular, in analyzing Nigerian government and politics.

Crawford Young puts it directly [3] “Cultural pluralism is a quintessentially modern phenomenon”. He continues: “It is part and parcel of the process by which, in post-Renaissance Europe, kingdoms gradually became nations, with England and France the most important precursors”. Cultural pluralism, it is being implied, is a consequence of social transformation and or social change especially given the rapid urbanization following the increasing population that marked the turn of the twentieth century. In his words: “The polyglot urban center thrown cultural groupings in much more intensive interaction with each other,... the city often spawns new or significantly transformed identity groups”. (Ibid: 27) He continues further: “In the countryside, the small-holder lives on what he can grow by his efforts in the soil. In the city, the individual must survive on what he can earn from employment or trade, in direct and often desperate competition with others”. (Ibid: 47) We thus have a kind of explanatory framework through which the conflicts of politics can be better explained and appreciated, especially following the rising expectations that accompanied the attainment of independence in 1960 and beyond. But the question remains: do the explanations provide above give cultural pluralism its defining characteristics in an attempt to explain the extreme conflicts and violence that characterize politics in Nigeria? In its present form, the explanations are no doubt inadequate until the “types of cultural differentiation” as proposed and or formulated by Crawford Young are fully explored and examined in the article [3]. The assumption here is that such examination will help to reveal the understanding of cultural pluralism, in particular its innate properties and capability in serving the full purpose of framework of analysis especially of the social science categorization.

According to Crawford Young [3], the main types of cultural differentiation include: “ethnic, race, religion, caste and region” The question can then be asked: What does each term mean, and to what extent do they help to facilitate the understanding of cultural pluralism as a framework of analysis? While Young accepts “language, common cultural value or symbols” as defining characteristics of ethnic groups, he however, argues on the other hand, that: “territory or political unit”, even though are “frequent correlates”, “but not as universally valid criteria”. Race, in the opinion of Crawford Young, “remains potent factor as a subjective basis for social differentiation and collective consciousness”, since, he argues further, it is hinged and centered on colour (Ibid: 60). For religion, as an element of cultural pluralism, Crawford Young argues that: “is limited to the great world religions Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity” (Ibid: 60). According to him, “religion offers not only a comprehensive world view, but also an all-embracing social identity (Ibid: 64). Caste, in the opinion of Crawford Young, is a: “rigid, ranked system of social strata, endogamous and ascriptive” (Ibid: 64). He continues: “The ranked categories are often occupationally specialized. Ranked is constantly expressed and validated in interaction among the caste. In Wolof society, in Senegal, where the caste pattern is particularly clear, there

is separation into royal and noble higher castes, and artisanal, praise-singer, (griot), and slave lower castes. Normatively these castes are endogamous. A clear correlation is discernible between upper caste origin and representation in the modern elite”. (Ibid: 64). The final formulation of Young’s types of cultural differentiation” is what he calls “regionalism”. According to him, “In many states, sub-national loyalties adhere to portions of the country with a special history, a particular ecological configuration, or an established tradition as an administrative entity” (Ibid: 64-65).

It is proper to now ask: To what extents have the formulations of “ethnic”, “caste”, “regionalism”, etc, made cultural pluralism a framework of analysis in which Nigerian politics can be distinguishably analyzed? In other words, to what extent do the formulations give cultural pluralism a distinct position within the competing frameworks of analyzing Nigerian politics and government? The questions reveal the inadequacies that are contained in the equally influential and provocative piece of Yolamu Barongo titled “Alternative Approaches to African Politics” [4]. Barongo’s discussion and analysis of cultural pluralism was rather too shallow and in-exhaustive. To provide answer to the question raised requires that the entire frame work be extensively critiqued. However, before then, there is still the need to give cultural pluralism its defining characteristics and properties. The defining characteristics and properties would in turn tell us how the framework either operates, or is to be applied.

The kernel or point of emphasis of cultural pluralism is the reason for conflicts in the practice of politics in extremely plural society of the Third World of which Nigeria is already a part of. While the framework recognizes the differences in the levels of development and political attainment of the Third World as a whole, it nevertheless captures how the desires to make ends meet especially in the cities throws-up cultural identity which in turn provides the framework and platform in which political competition is advanced. Its variant of ethnicity in particular seeks to describe and explain the keen competition for places and positions in the civil service, schools and institutions of higher learning and public arenas of decision-making, among others, competitions which in turn produce violence and possible break-down of law and order. The competitions historically have led to coups and counter-coups, and as well retarded political development and growth. In terms of contained conceptual formulations, concepts such as “social stratification”, “social classes”, “communication,” social mobility,” etc, are central to it, since what is essentially explained is the clash of interest engendered by cultural identity.

Cultural pluralism cannot be said to be the entire creation and invention of Crawford Young as himself acknowledged the fact that analysis of cultural diversity and plurality is as old as the history of scholarship, in particular as social scientists of different persuasions tried to look at the basis upon which human interactions lead to perennial conflicts of catastrophic magnitude [3]. Is cultural pluralism a sufficient explanatory framework of analysis of the specific nature of Nigerian government and politics? While it is here recognized that the article is specially designed to critically examine and evaluate cultural pluralism, the fact remains that a critique of it will be inadequate unless placed in the whole of the body of thoughts and frameworks in which Nigerian/African politics are being analyzed.

Cultural pluralism, it is here submitted, is both static and a-historical. Cultural pluralism, one restates, is therefore not appropriate for the study of the contradictions, the “you chop, I chop” mentality that ever remains the hallmark of Nigerian government and politics. By focusing on the outward appearance of the average Nigerian (specifically

average Nigerian politician) without caring to look at the inner motives and thoughts that drive him, cultural pluralism remains a superficial theoretical framework with which the content, character and the body politics of Nigeria can be scientifically studied, analyzed and presented. The inner thoughts which drive an average Nigerian politician (professional and non-professional), are key to the understanding of the character of the Nigerian State, public policies and dealings with the outside world. Notwithstanding, cultural pluralism is unique in the sense that it provides an average body of thoughts in which the practice of politics of politics can be viewed. The ethnic framework of analysis of which the book of O. Nnoli ever remains a standard presentation derives much inspirations and insights from cultural pluralism [5,6].

Cultural Pluralism and Globalization

The encapsulating global developments in the areas of trade and investments liberalization, information science and technology, and popular empowerment in the decision making processes, have, without argument, questioned the utility and continued application of cultural pluralism to the study and understanding of contemporary Nigerian political structure and processes. Beginning from the mid-1980s, especially following the introduction of structural adjustment by the Babangida administration which he implemented alongside a Transition to Civil Rule Programme, there emerged the sudden upsurge in the activities of groups and individuals, especially civil society groups and individuals concerned primarily with the entrenchment of fundamental core values of democracy without regard to the politics of fractionalization of Nigeria along the pre-colonial social formations that make it up [7-11]. Nigerians, as attested to by the annulled June 12, 1993 Presidential Election, and perhaps influenced by the global waves of democratization of the 1990s and the driven ethos of contemporary public administration and management such as transparency and accountability, have come to recognize the indivisibility of the country and the rejection of the bifurcation of the processes of allocation of values along primordial considerations and criteria [12]. E-mail practices in the banking, insurance and financial sectors of the contemporary Nigerian economy and society have jointly facilitated a renewal process of national integration and development to the extent that primordial attachments and ties are fastly being discouraged. Through internet services, Nigerians, for example, want to know happenings around and beyond their cultural confinements on daily basis, and this, they remain committed [13,14].

Conclusion

The article is concerned primarily with a critique and application

of cultural pluralism as a framework of analysis in which Nigerian government and politics can be studied and analyzed. The approach that is adopted in the piece is first, a critical examination of the role of premises in intellectual discourse and in the study and analysis of the broad bases of Nigerian government and politics. The chosen approach is no doubt unique to the article. The other intention is to help us understand the practical application of cultural pluralism as an intellectual formulation. Though useful in helping us to understand the process of politics in Nigeria, cultural pluralism, as presently formulated, is a-historical and therefore less useful in bringing about a scientific and concrete understanding of the practice of politics in Nigeria, especially giving the increasing waves and dynamism of contemporary forces and factors of globalization.

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