## Colonialism, relative deprivation and the making of modern Nigeria.

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### Abstract

*This paper focuses on unraveling and re- establishing relationship between colonialism with its relative deprivation ethos against the indigenous people of Nigeria and its linkin the making of modern Nigeria. In its attempt to meet its focus, the paper significantly takes its point of departure from contemplations of relative deprivation of indigenous people of pre-colonial Nigeria. Thus, it is a fundamental thesis in this paper that there is significant link between the deprivations and frustrations of the indigenous people of pre- colonial Nigeria and the manifestation of aggression and protest movements in Modern Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Colonialism, Relative deprivation, Indigenous, Frustration, Aggression, Modern Nigeria

### Introduction

Contemporary Nigeria as a stateis deeply faced with a contemptible plight that seeks for attention. The state of affairs as is witnessed by any keen observer does suggest a character of an illness whose threatening path has been clinically diagnosed. Nigeria's case could be described as a huge leap from bad to worse[1]. Today, the country sits on the brink with the brutal reality of state failure staring it in the face. The aspirations, optimisms, and yearnings that accompanied decolonization have turned into disillusion and disenchantment. At a good rate, the response of anger and frustration is increasingly finding expression in violent conflicts, inter and intra-tribal and religious, armed groups engagement with the state, as well as ever rising level of urban crimes and insecurity. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that progressively, the state has most recently, lost its privileged monopoly of force application.

Groups such as Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the East, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in the South-South, Boko-Haram in the Northeast, Odua People's Congress (OPC) in the West and armed robbers and kidnappers plying its highways with impunity have all given Nigeria the toga of a failing, if not failed, state in this century. To understand how the country is reduced to these sad manifestations is, in essence, to review the narrative of colonialism with regards to theill-omened repercussions of colonial rule's tune of frustrations of relative deprived people of pre – colonial Nigeria.

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[1]Aniekwe, C. C. &Kushie, J (2011). Electoral violence situational analysis: Identifying hot-spots in 2011 general elections in Nigeria. Retrieved October 16, 2021, from http://nevr.org/media/resources/Nigeria_Electoral_Violence_Situational_Analysis.pdf.

Thus, the major plank for its contemplation with regard to the making of modern Nigeria is nested around relative deprivation. In this direction, it is deeply considered that there was and still is a deep connection between an unarguably considered emerged colony of the angry and manifestations of aggression in contemporary Nigeria.

Predicated on the foregoing, it is unarguable that Nigeria to a large extent has since independence manifested several forms of contestations. In his discourse on what is really the trouble with Nigeria, Osaghae reasoned thus:

> "… it is arguably one of the most complex countries in the world and belongs to the most complex countries in the world and belongs to the genre of the most complex countries called deeply divided societies…"[2]

It is in line with Osaghae's postulation above, that, it is unarguably interesting to note that the throes of Nigeria's nationhood has since independence in 1960 attracted a lot of writing. Policy makers, diplomats, statesmen and analysts such asIkime, Gambari, Achebeand Umez,[3] have written considerable volumes on problems of Nigeria.  Further in their attempt to underscore problems of Nigeria and contribute to the foregoing debate, OkekeOkechukwu, AjaAkpuru – Aja and Sydney Emezue[4]in their collection of essays on some topical issues ranging from political, social and economic presented a differing dominant issues in contemporary Nigerian History.

It is in this direction that this paper re-explores Nigeria's history with intention to present a nuanced explanation with colonialism been central in contemplations of the events and social conditions that have carried the emerged nation to the edge.

**The Starting Line: Nigeria**

To understand the starting line of modern Nigeria, it is useful to evaluate the processes of pre – colonial Nigeria transformation into Nigeria. Nigeria which is officially, the Federal Republic of Nigeria is a large country in the West African region. It is important at this point to mention that there was no country known as Nigeria until the year 1914. The boundaries of Nigeria were established in 1914 when the British colonial government amalgamated the Northern and Southern protectorates of Nigeria. Nonetheless, historical scholarship on Nigeria is both dense and broad. Particularly of special interest is the broad

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2Osaghae, E. (1998). Nigeria since independence; Crippled Giant. Indiana University press, Bloomington, Indiana

3Ikimi, Obaro (1980) Groundwork of Nigerian History. Ibadan, Nigeria: published for Historical Society of Nigeria by Heinemann Educational Books; Gambari, I. (1980) 'Party Politics and Foreign Policy: Nigeria under the First Republic'. Zaria:ABU Press; Achebe Chinua(2000.) The Trouble with Nigeria, Fourth Dimension and Umez Bedford Nwabueze (2000), Nigeria: Real problems, Real solutions.SN publishers.
4Okeke Okechukwu, AjajAkpuru – Aja and Sydney Emezue(1998). Issues in Contemporary Nigerian History, published in Nigeria by Educational Books and Investment Ltd

theme exposition of Nigeria by Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime. Even though, he was a British historian, Michael Crowder[5] provided some very rich information on Nigeria. For instance, the account of the Yoruba wars, the annexation of Ilorin to the North and earliest history of such societies such as Efik, Niger Delta and Benin Kingdom are well documented. Obaro's Ground work of Nigerian History on the other hand presents a very comprehensive history of Nigeria's diverse peoples[6]. Thus, it is noteworthy that prior to the Colonialism, there were diverse societies in the Nigeria area who were independent and self-sufficient but ruled themselves as independent states.

It is then comprehensible from the historical narrative of all the above mentioned scholars that it was colonial rule that brought the existing independent societies together through amalgamation. The consequence was to such extent that, colonial rule altered the socio - political landscape of the region.

Asutoch in this direction, argued that:

> "The Nigerian state as an independent entity came into the world scene on 1st October 1960. It was formed as a single political entity in 1914 when the then British colonial power amalgamated various political communities of the region into one political unit called Nigeria"[7].

It is however clear from historical scholarship that before colonial rule, human habitation in the areas in and around modern-day Nigeria goes back many thousands of years. Societies in this region developed agricultural techniques, craftsmanship' in areas such as pottery, leather-working, and iron-working, among others, and engaged in trade between groups. Over time these societies developed into both decentralized and highly centralized states. Decentralized states organized politically around chiefs and council at the village and village-group level, while centralized states, such as those of Ife, Benin, the Hausa states, and Kanem-Borno, developed kingship institutions that placed political and to some extent, spiritual authority in the person of the king, who ruled from a capital city. Cities became the focal points of centralized states, as the bases of political authority and as the centers of trade.

**Situating colonialism in the context of Nigeria**

Colonialism is a form of temporally extended domination by people over other people and as such part of the historical universe of forms of intergroup domination, subjugation, oppression and exploitation. Sanderson[8] therefore notes that much of the history of the capitalist world-economy is a history of colonialism, consisting of repeated and more or less successful attempts by the

5Crowder Michael (1973) The Story of Nigeria, 3rdedn : London, Faber and Faber
6IkimeObaro,(1977) The Fall of Nigeria: The British Conquest: London, Heinemann
7AsutoshSatpathy State Formation in Nigeria : A Historical Background World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues  Vol. 1, No. 1 (JUNE 1992), pp. 61-67
8Sanderson, Steph en K. 2005."World-S ystems Analysis after Thirt y Years." International Journal of Comparative Sociology 46 : 179-213.

core to create a periphery, to control it politically in order to exploit it economically.

In their more explicit discuss, Böröcz, József, and Mahua Sarkar,[9]argues that Colonialism is both a practice and a worldview. As a practice, it involves the domination of a society by settlers from a different society. As a worldview, colonialism is a truly global geopolitical, economic, and cultural doctrine that is rooted in the worldwide expansion of West European capitalism that survived until well after the collapse of most colonial empires.

It is thus within the purview of the forgoing that Colonialism is unarguably considered to be a dominant approach to the study ofbasic problems confronting the developing countries or third world countries such as Nigeria. Bruce J. Berman in this direction posits that:

> That modern African countries is a social construction of the colonial period through the reactions of pre-colonial societies to the social, economic, cultural and political forces of colonialism.[10]

Bruce in an attempt to elucidate on the colonial rule and African countries development problematic in the afore quoted postulation argued that Colonial states were grounded in the alliances with local 'Big Men', incorporating ethnically defined administrative units linked to the local population by incorporation of pre-colonial patron-client relations. This he maintained was reinforced by European assumptions of neatly bounded and culturally homogeneous 'tribes' and a bureaucratic preoccupation with demarcating, classifying and counting subject populations, as well as by the activities of missionaries and anthropologists. Thus leading to the emergence of what he called African ethnic invention through internal struggles over moral economy and political legitimacy tied to the definition of ethnic communities—moral ethnicity; and external conflicts over differential access to the resources of modernity and economic accumulation—political tribalism.

Bruce foregoing explanations is underscored by the fact that before the advent of colonialism, three categories of pre-colonial political system are identified in the Nigeria area; The non-centralised (Igbo, Ibibio, Ijo, Idoma, Tive tc), centralized with fairly extensive political structure such as Kanem Bornu, Kano, Katsina, Edo, Sokoto and Onitsha with kingship titles of Emir, Oba, and Igwe. The empires or kingdoms are those centralized states that incorporated several other states to have a largeterritory and vassalage such as Benin, Kanem–Borno, Sokoto and Oyo. Thus, the solid foundation of pre-colonial political system provided the opportunity for these states to be involved in socio-cultural and economic exchanges. The traditions of origins, state formation, socio-cultural and economic relations of the pre-colonial people suggest that, perhaps the

9Böröcz, József, and MahuaSarkar."Colonialism."Encyclopedia of Global Studies.Ed. Helmut K. Anheier, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Victor Faessel. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012. 229-34.
10Berman J. Bruce (1998) Ethnicity, Patronage and the African state: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism. African Affairs Volume 97, No.388 (July, 1998)

Nigerianpeople had begun the remotest processes of instituting a federation of multi-ethnic culturesbefore the British invasion and eventual official colonization that began from January 1, 1900and ended on October 1st 1960. It is therefore germane to emphasized that colonial policies were not responsible for the interaction among the people but were responsible for bringing the peopleunder one overwhelming political institution. Nothing was wrong with the pre-colonial practices of the people, but it was merely economic imperial concerns that determined the balkanization of the friendly inter-group relations among the pre-colonial Nigerian people by the British colonial government with the imposition of alien rule. It follows then to submit that the imposition of colonial rule significantly altered the social- economic and political structures of the pre – colonial societies.

**Colonial Rule and Relative deprivations**

The proposition of relative deprivation is deeply rooted in the influential work of Ted Robert Gur on "Why Men Rebel"[11].Gurr's lucid and valuable contribution to understanding the root causes of political violence, whether it is riots, rebellions, coups, insurgencies or insurrections just like is the case in modern Nigeria was predicated on Gurr's development of what is referred to as the relative deprivation theory. The general proposition of Gurr's theory, concerns essentially an economic argument that political violence is attributed to a discrepancy between what men and women think they deserve and what they can actually get in society. The resulting frustration culminates in incidences of collective political violence by social groups.

In a seeming collaborative stance above, Ukiwo, advanced a position by exploring the comparative experiences of Calabar and Warri. He argued that forthe fact that the presence and perception of horizontal inequality is crucial to understanding why conflicting relations turn violent. According to him:

> The histories of these two towns, violent group mobilization occur when feelings of alienation and inequality cut across social classes and generational groups because they are perceived as affecting all members of a particular deprived community; when exclusion and inequalities are legitimated by the discourse of indigeneity; when state intervention is perceived as geared towards perpetuating or terminating horizontal inequalities in favour of one group against the other; and when there are prospects of reverse domination in which historically dominant groups feel endangered by the advancement or agitations of hitherto disadvantaged groups. Horizontal inequalities therefore need to be tackled not just because of their direct effects on conflict but also because of their long-term impact on inter-ethnic cooperation.[12]

11Gurr, T. R (1970). Why men Rebel. Princeton, New Jersey, Published for the Centre of International Studies, Princeton University press.
12Ukiwo U. (2008) Horizontal Inequalities and ethnic violence: Evidence from Calabar and Warri, Nigeria in: Stewart F. (eds) Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict, Inequality and ethnicity. Palgrave Macmillan, London

Perhaps, it is predicated on the forgoing, that it could be unarguably stated that the colonial rule's relative deprivations paradigm of unpacking the root cause of modern Nigeria throes unarguably rest in the process deployed by Britain in taking over the Nigerian region. The process was rooted in smart maneuver, violence and militaristic approach in other to galvanize a multi - ethnic and plural society into a state. The subsequent violent group mobilization resistance to British rule and nationalist decolonization movements were all in response to feelings of alienation and inequality which cut across social classes and generational groups because they are perceived as affecting all members of the 'Lord Lugard' indigenous deprived people of the Nigeria area.

In the light of the foregoing, Faeron and Laitin[13] postulation is classic, According to them, economic deprivation provides a solid base for societies to harbor centrifugal pressures that disposes people towards terrorism or aggression. Their attempt to explicate the repercussions of deprivation is predicated on the fact the capability of highly populated countries especially those fraught with grievances of minority groups, and other segments of the society facing socio-political exclusion to harbor centrifugal pressures is high.

It follows to buttresses the point that without educational, economic and political policies that equitably integrates their multicultural constituencies and effectively sanctions elite transgressions in such nation - states such as Nigeria. Frustrations and aggression from its citizens is sure and robustly certain.

Perhaps more than any other factor, Colonialism's impact factor is high in terms of underlying structural conditions in the creation of socio – political instability in modern Nigeria.  In this direction, colonialism is strongly considered to be a strong factor with regard to creating underlying grievances which in a most sustainable way has sustained dissatisfaction amongst groups that make up Nigeria.

In the light of the foregoing, it is pertinent to note that the most common and most effective tool of colonial expansion was the British willingness to use superior military might to subdue any opposition violently and deprive with a well-established system of governance known as indirect rule. This indirect rule system entrenched an obvious political system of exclusion and selective inclusion.

In Falola& Heaton words:

> "The spread of Christian missionaries and British trading interests and the need to keep out French and German interests dovetailed, influencing the decisions of the consuls appointed to oversee British affairs in the coastal states in order to interfere more and more heavily in the local politics of the coastal states from the 1850's. Interference in local politics eventually led to direct British control of the coastal states between 1861 and 1885. Having annexed the coasts,

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13Fearon, J.D. and Laitin, D.D. (2003). 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War', American Political Science Review, vol. 97, no. 1, pp. 75-90

British political interests moved inland, adding to their existing protectorates the Yoruba states and the states on the rivers. The activities of Sir George Goldie's chartered Royal Niger Company were instrumental in gaining ultimate control of the Niger and Benue for the British. With the Niger secured by 1900, British military might turned its attention towards the emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate". In a series of offensives led by Frederick Lugard, British forces finally brought down the caliphate, killing the Caliph in battle in July 1903[14].

As is well said, "only a tree will watch and do nothing while it is been cut" Hence many parts of the protectorates continued to put up fierce resistance to British rule, and slowly, over the first decade of the twentieth century, these pockets of resistance were brought to submission by British guns. Discussing the defeat the Aro, Afigbo[15] observed that in 1901-2, British forces from the southern protectorate moved north into the heart of Igboland to defeat the Aro, whom the British believed to be the political overlords of the entire region. According to him, the Aro succumbed quickly, but the British soon realized that the conquest of the Aro did not lead automatically to the subjugation of all the Igbo and Ibibio as British forces found themselves conquering the interior essentially village by village over the next decade.

A similar situation predominated just to the west of Igboland in the interior of the Niger Delta, where Urhobo, Isoko, and Ukwuani communities put up resistance to British control until 1914.

In an account of Ekumeku movement with regards to resistance to British rule Ohadike,[16] revealed that in western Igbo area around Asaba and Onitsha, on the Niger, the Ekumeku movement caused trouble for British forces periodically from the 1885 till its final defeat in 1909. Ekumeku was an organization established by Western Igbo communities as a communal defense system. Whenever one community faced a military threat, surrounding communities sent soldiers to combat the threat. Afterwards, these soldiers returned home. The decentralized nature of Ekumeku made it difficult for British forces to combat, as the units dispersed over a large space and the leaders and soldiers could be easily replaced if captured or killed. Ekumeku had risen against the Royal Niger Company in 1898 and had achieved concessions in the company after a prolonged period of inconclusive fighting.

The movement as he observed dispersed, but rose again in 1900 to defend Asaba and its hinterland against the new government of the protectorate. Defeated in 1902, Ekumeku rose again in 1904 and again in 1909, when the movement was finally annihilated by overwhelming British force.

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14FalolaToyin and Matthew M. Heaton (2010) A History Of Nigeria, Cambridge University Press
15Afigbo, A. E (1972) "The Aro Expedition of 1901-1902: an Episode in the British occupation of Iboland" Odu: A journal of West African Studies, New series, no. 7
16Ohadike Don C. (1991) TheEkumekeu Movement: Western Igbo Resistance to the British Conquest of Nigeria, 1883-1914: Athens, OH: Ohio University Press

A point must be made here on the role of violence in the British colonial takeover of Nigeria. The use or threat of violence on the part of the British must be seen as the single most important factor allowing them to assume political control over the territories that made up the various protectorates of Nigeria. To refuse to play by British rules was to sign one's own death or deportation warrant.

British military might, in the form of the Royal Navy cannons, and machine guns, and the willingness of the British to use military means to protect the interests of the United Kingdom and her allies made the British a desirable ally for many indigenous rulers against local rivals. These rulers therefore welcomed missionaries and traders, and signed British treaties, hoping that this would persuade the British to intervene in their favor in local disputes. We have seen this in the case of the Egba in Yorubaland. Other rulers, such as JaJa of Opobo, were wary of British motives, but signed treaties anyway to avoid provoking immediate conflict with a superior military power. Still others, such as Calph Attahiru, resisted British encroachment outright, and saw their power, and often their lives, come to a swift and merciless end.

Even under such circumstances, the various states and societies of the Nigerian region did not succumb to British colonial rule without a fight. Indeed, heavy resistance met British incursions at almost every turn. Much has been made of the question whether or not indigenous rulers understood the full implications of the treaties they signed with the British that so undermined their sovereign ability to administer their territories, politically and commercially[17]. Indeed, many may not have understood the implications. Whether they did or not, however, it is clear that few rulers ceded their sovereignty willingly. Some, such as the warlords of Ibadan who aided in the British capture of Oyo, perpetuated their power by aiding British attacks against neigbouring groups, staying in the good graces of the British as long as possible.

Others, such as jaja of Opobo and the Emir of Yola, extended their rule by signing the treaties that effectively opened their trade routes and erased their ability to conduct foreign policy, only later to be ousted forcibly for continuing to restrict access to their hinterlands and to court relationships with other foreign powers. Others, such as many of the ruling elites of the Sokoto Caliphate, resisted by emigrating from the territory they had once ruled, refusing to come under the thumb of an alien power.

Indigenous rulers were not the only actors that resisted British incursion. Some resistance movements organized themselves from a more grassroots level. The unfortunate people of Brass, for instance, were uniformly opposed to the disastrous policies of RNC rule. Although their resistance was led by their king, the sentiments against the company were widespread, even among the growing Christian community, the members of which favored "legitimate" commerce, anti-slavery, and the suppression of the liquor trade.

At the same time, the Ekumeku movement represented a resistance effort with deep rooted origins in the social fabric of the decentralized western Igbo

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17Ikimi Op.Cit

communities. The Ekumeku movement was able to fight against British colonial rule for more than two decades, even in circumstances where their leaders had been neutralized. Socially based resistance movements proved problematic for the extension of British control over parts of the protectorates until well into the twentieth century, particularly in the interior of the Niger Delta and the Bight of Biafra.

The widespread resistance both passive and active that the British faced in their bid to establish colonial rule was crushed only by violence. Sometimes this violence removed an obstinate ruler in favor of a more malleable one. Sometimes this violence took the form of bombarding a state or region to the point at which resistance could no longer be maintained. The use of violence also served as a warning to other rulers or populations who might be considering an intransigent approach. Therefore, at the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, the British extended their colonial grasp over Nigeria more as a result of superior military might and the willingness to use violence to achieve their ends than as a result of any other set of Factors

It is pertinent point must be made at this juncture to state that the making of modern Nigeria goodly dovetails with the relative deprivations which to a large extent social engineered the nationalistic struggle for independence by Nigeria's nationalist leaders, Thus, the process of decolonization in Nigeria commenced with Nationalism in Nigeria. Nationalism in this direction refers to patriotic feeling and the love for one's country to be independent.

It is in consideration of the foregoing stance that [18]Pfaff postulates that ethnic and communal conflict, and racial, religious, or linguistic rivalry and struggle exist for reasons having nothing originally to do with nation states, and concludes that Nationalism is an expression of the primordial attachments of an individual to a group, possessing both positive and destructive powers, and that it is a phenomenon which existed long before the group to which such passionate loyalty was attached became the modern nation-state.

In the light of the above stance, Bello[19] records that the colonial invaders faced the toughest resistance from the caliphs despite the fact that the caliphs were later pre-occupied with fight. Boaham[20] corroborates this assertion while trying to justify the reason behind the militant resistance in the northern Nigeria. He points to the reference and the statement made by the Sultan to Lugard in May 1902. That there was no dealing between the caliphate and European people as there was no dealing between Muslims and unbelievers. Based on this, many of the rulers of pre colonial societies refused to give up their territories.

The essence of this was to establish the consciousness of the traditional Nigerian people at that material point in time. Thus, early resistance was all

18Pfaff cited in Kecmanovic D, (1996) What is Nationalism? In: The Mass Psycchology of Ethnonationalism. Path in Psychology: Springer, Boston, MA. P:96
19Bello, S. (2011), "State and Economy in Kano C. 1894 to 1960 A study ofColonial Day", ABU, Press, Zaria.P:75
20Boahan, A. (1989), "African Perspective On colonialism",: John HopkinUniversity, London.P:50

about struggling for the autonomy of their society and the opposition to the foreign conquest. The nature of resistance, upon their effective subjugation still reveals the level of their consciousness, and their determination to preserve their territory. The factors that influenced their consciousness which led to intensification of their resistance were sometimes, economical and sometimes religious.

Onyeonoro had in a lucid analysis presented issues which apparently interrogate the contradiction between African support forself-determination under colonialism and opposition to the application of the same principle in a post-colonial setting. His analysis raises pertinent questions such as what makes the demand legitimate in one case but not in the other and whether the principle of self-determination have a racial basis.
Thus, he posits:

> The interdependence of the anti-colonial struggle was the product of numerous institutional linkages and interactions between territories governed by the same European power. Most of the nationalist elites from Anglophone Africa were educated in Britain and the United States, where they established personal ties and shared common experiences. For example, the list of delegates to the 1945 Pan – African Congress in Manchester reads like a somewhat later Who's who of Political Leaders. In East Africa a shared system of higher education and the common services organization provided an institutional framework for trans- territorial elite interaction. In French speaking Africa, the integration of the African elites prior to independence was even marked; they attended the same secondary schools, belonged to the same-territorial labour unions and parties and participated in a unified political progress before the promulgation of the loi-cadre in 1956 which ended the French West and Equatorial African Federations. In this type of contest the elites in one country are sensitive to the nationalist developments in a related country, especially in light of their common aspirations for independence and sense of common cause deriving from opposition to a common foe. There was in a sense, a trans – territorial nationalist elite sub – culture[21].

**The nexus: The making of modern Nigeria**

From then fore going, it is unarguable that the making of modern Nigerian identity is chiefly nested with ethnic identity and loyalty. This can be understood when considered from the prism of scholars' contemplation on the concept of race consciousness and West African Nationalism. Scholars such as

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21OnyeonoroKamalu (1974) Secession and the right of Self – determination: an OAU dilemma: The Journal of Modern African Studies, 12, 3

Esedebe; Adi, and Coleman[22], underscores' the fact that prior to the 1914, Nigerians as identified earlier by and large did not see themselves as "Nigerians" at all. European-educated nationalists were the social engineers that initiated what now looks like pan Nigerian identity. They at that time believed the boundaries created by British colonial rule was arbitrary and illegitimate as the racist government policies that relegated otherwise qualified Africans to menial, dead-end jobs in the colonial bureaucracy or in European firms.

Thus, all their aim was to oust colonial masters and enjoy independence. Nigeria's nationalism ideology espoused by the literate class of Nigerians at this time tended to promote a race consciousness focusing on a dichotomy between indigenous black African subjects and alien white European rulers. Hence, it is established that ethnic cleavages in pre-colonial Nigeria had one passion and sentiment and that was to oust the colonial masters and not to forge a national identity. Consequently, it is consequential to observe that of all allured reasons for the failure or fall of the first Republic after Nigeria's independence, not the least in seriousness is the irreconcilable ethnic and regional differences. The patterns and directions of post-independence politics were established in the short-lived Republic, and this made it the reference point for discussing the country's political problems and searching for solutions.

The history of the First Republic consists of the bitter rivalry among the major regional parties in their struggle for supremacy at the centre. The crises provoked by this rivalry cumulatively led to the collapse of the Republic. It was not long after Nigeria's independence that the country had challenges to her nationhood. The cause of the problem since 1960 till now is what is often called the ''National question'', What is Nigeria? Who are Nigerian? And how does a country like Nigeria go about developing a meaningful national identity?

As argued by Ibrahim[23], ethnic-regional conflicts tend to emerge at moments when groups perceive that they are being excluded from access to what they consider to be their right, be they linguistic, political, economic, administrative, commercial, religious etc. Each ethnic group in Nigeria because of the postulation of Ibrahim feels dissatisfied and struggle for an identity of its own. The subjugation of the minor ethnic groups in 1914 amalgamation now became a challenge in managing the politics of inclusion in access to land, public appointments and the control of valued resources and wealth. These excluded ethnic groups subsumed under regions immediately after Nigeria's independence and began to agitate for their own identity. These agitations were linked with political representation as well as access to and control of resources.

22Esedebe Olisanwuche (1994); Pan-Africanism: The idea and the movement, 1776-1991, 2nd edn.: Washinton, DC: Howard University Press; Adi Hakeem (1998) West Africans in Britain, 1900-1960: Nationalism, Pan- Africanism and Communism. London: Lawrence and Wishart and Coleman James S (1963) Nigeria: Background to Nationalism; Berkely: University of California Press
23Ibrahim, J., (2000) "The Transformation of Ethno-Regional Identities in Nigeria" in Identity Transformation and Identity Politics under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria, Uppsala, The Nordic African Institute.

The geographical area now known as Nigeria was created by the British colonial administration in 1914 not by indigenous people themselves. So the people within the borders of Nigeria were known to the world as 'Nigerians' but to most people, whose lives continued to be primarily centered on local communities that had existed for hundreds of years ago. So when Nigeria attained independence, the largest ethnic groups (The Hausa/ Fulani in the Northern part, Yoruba in the Western and Igbo in the Eastern region respectively struggled to dominate the federal level of government. Within each region, ethnic groups often opposed the political domination of the large ethnic groups and this created further subdivisions of identity that challenged Nigerians National identity. Furthermore, by 1960 as Nigeria got independence, it was divided into three unequal regions; the northern region, the Eastern Region , the Western region and the Federal capital territory, Lagos.

The Northern region alone is considered to occupy about three quarters of the country land mass: it was bigger than the other two regions combined. As at 1953 census, the last head count before independence, the Northern Region contained slightly more than half of the two other regions combined. While it could be said that they outnumber others in size and population, the later had far more Western Educated persons. The North fear of domination also made its government adopt what is called Northernisation policy, (A system whereby, if a qualified Northerner is available, he is given priority in recruitment, if no Northerner is available, an expatriate may be recruited or a non- Northerners on contract terms.) This policy did not only affect only the Southerners' looking for jobs in the North; it also affected those already in the employ of the Northern Regional Government.

There were many political parties in Nigeria in 1960, but only three- the Northern People Congress, The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon and the Action Group were outstanding. Each of the parties derived bulk of her support and membership from one of the majority groups and held power in one of the region. Perhaps this was why Ake, adduced that the entrenchment and institutionalization of ethnic nationalism in Nigeria has also meant that parties are formed along ethnic lines. According to him;

> "... the regions and political constituents tended to be homogenous in ethnicity. Thus to win an election you had to win an ethnic group and if this happened to be large, a political base was guaranteed.[24]"

Thus, it is a norm for parties to be formed along ethnic lines in Nigeria. This was the trend in the first republic when the three predominant parties Northern People's Congress (NPC), Action Group (AG) and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon's (NCNC) stood for the three dominant ethnic nationalities – Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Ibo respectively. The trend was not different in the third republic when the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) again stood for the three major ethnic nationalities; Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Ibo. The third republic was different then because the military on the recommendation of the Political Bureau did

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24Ake, Claude (1978). Revolutionary Pressures in Africa: London, Zed Press.

not register more than two political parties - Social Democratic Party (SDP) & National Republican Convention (NRC). In the ongoing dispensation things have not changed radically. The ruling party – Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is a party of the Hausa/Fulani but captured many states in Ibo land notwithstanding the fact that Igbo's uphold All Progressives People's Congress (APGA) as their ethnic party.

From all indications, parties in the ongoing democratic dispensation are still ethnically based thus allowing the pursuit of sectional agenda. Okorie, Udochu and Oluwaseun[25] further highlighted the fact that the polarization of the territories that became Nigeria actually began with the country's creation and administration as two separate colonies, namely Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria. According to Yadudu[26] as they cited, a somewhat romantic interest in the North, especially in the Sokoto Caliphate and its institutions seems to have induced the colonial administrators in the North to treat that colony as if it is special. Thus, every effort was made to advance its territorial and political interests vis-a-vis those of the South[27]. The immediate implication of the ordinance backed by the Muslims' desire to confine themselves to an environment where their religious practices and obligations would not be influenced by the Christian culture gave birth to the rise of SabonGari patterns of settlement in Northern Nigeria. The North was also to become a proto-type "native" state operating its own indigenous institutions, while being protected from all external influences, especially Christian proselytizing and educational enterprises.

Even resident immigrants from Southern Nigeria were to be restricted to the Sabon Gari or foreign quarters. Albert showed that in 1911, Sabon Gari was created in Kano which made it imperative that those coming from the Southern part of Nigeria would settle in that separated part of the city, different from where the Kanawa were settling. Gradually, the culture of establishing SabonGari residence area for those coming from Southern Nigeria spread like wild fire in all parts of the Northern region of Nigeria[28].

Consequently, Kukah[29] has shown that the form of divide and rule administration that was instituted by the British, promoted not only their maximum exploitation of the Nigerian state but also the promotion of ethno-religious and cultural differences. Kukah also argued that the British colonial policy fuelled and poisoned inter-ethnic relations amongst Nigerians. Thus, before the debut of independence, the colonial government had not only laid the

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25Okorie Mitterand M., Eke Udochu and Oluwaseun Bamidele (2016) "Boko Haram Terrorism: The Intersection of Religious Extremism and Socio-Economic Privation"in Gandhara Journal of Research in Social Science ISSN: 2415-2404 Volume 1, No. 3, Winter 2016
26Yadudu, H. A. (1992). 'Colonialism and the transformation of Islamic law in the Northern States of Nigeria', Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law, no. 32
27George, A. K. 2002. The Making of Northern Nigeria, 1900-1965: Kaduna, Nigeria: Arewa House.
28Mustapha, A.R. (2014). Sects and Social Disorder: Muslim Identities and Conflict in Northern Nigeria. Rochester, NY: James Curry
29Kukah, M. H. 1994. Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria: Ibadan, Spectrum Books

foundation of religious extremism in Nigeria, but it had also created permanent mistrust and suspicion amongst the different people and religious groups especially in the Northern region of Nigeria.

It was that mistrust and misconceptions that often created the religious terrorism situations which exploded into Boko Haram terrorism. Towns that have experienced some of the notable religious violence in the post-independence era in the Northern region of Nigeria include; Maitatsine riots in Bulumkutu (1982); Maitatsine riots in Jimeta (1984); Kano (Maitatsine-1980, 1982, 1987, 1990, 1995) Maitatsine riots in Gombe (1985,1991); Jalingo (1992, 2009); Shagamu (1999); Kafanchan (1987); TafawaBalewa (1991, 1995, 2001); Zangon- Kataf (1992); Potiskum(1994, 2009); Moon-Eclipse crisis in Borno (1996); Kaduna (Maitatsine riots in Rigassa 1982, 1992, 2000) Tiv and Others in Nassarawa (2001); Jos (1994, 2000, 2001- 2003, 2008, 2009, 2010); Ikulu-Bajju (2001); Yelwa-Shandam (2002,2004); Mangu-Bokkos (1992-1995); Bukuru-Gyero (1997); Maiduguri (2006, 2009), Iggah-Oyikwa (2002); Kano (2004); Numan (2004); Azare (2001); Bauchi (2010) and Wukari (2010).

**Conclusion**

Predicated on the foregoing, the central issue in this paper is the fact that the relative deprivation of the indigenous people of the Nigeria area is deeply rooted in an arguable stance that colonialism with its relative deprivation ethos against the indigenous people of Nigeria had significant s link in the making of modern Nigeria. In its attempt to meet its focus, the paper took its point of departure from contemplations of relative deprivation of indigenous people of pre-colonial Nigeria. Thus, it is a fundamental thesis in this paper that there is significant link between the deprivations and frustrations of the indigenous people of pre- colonial Nigeria and the manifestation of aggression and protest movements in Modern Nigeria with its nation building challenges It is unarguable that protest movements as witnessed in Nigeria are predominantly driven by relative deprivation. The identity political components of the agitations are functions of relative deprivation. However, the overall compelling issues squarely border on nation-building complications in the post colony.

This paper represents a modest attempt at historically interrogating relative deprivations of the indigenous people of Nigeria area with regards to how it contributed in the making of Modern Nigeria.

This paper has advanced the position that the presence and perception of deprivations is crucial to understanding the making of modern Nigeria, As can be gleaned from the history of Nigeria violent group mobilization occur when feelings of alienation and inequality cut across social classes and generational groups because they are perceived as affecting all members of a particular deprived community; when exclusion and inequalities are legitimated by the discourse of indigeneity; when state intervention is perceived as geared towards perpetuating or terminating horizontal inequalities in favour of one group against the other; and when there are prospects of reverse domination in which historically dominant groups feel endangered by the advancement or agitations of hitherto disadvantaged groups. Horizontal inequalities therefore

need to be tackled not just because of their direct effects on conflict but also because of their long-term impact on inter – ethnic cooperation.

Perhaps more than any other factor, Colonialism's impact factor is high in terms of underlying structural conditions in the creation of socio – political instability in modern Nigeria.  In this direction, colonialism is strongly considered to be a strong factor with regard to creating underlying grievances which in a most sustainable way has sustained dissatisfaction amongst groups that make up Nigeria.

It follows to buttresses as mentioned earlier that without educational, economic and political policies that equitably integrates their multicultural constituencies and effectively sanctions elite transgressions in such nation - states such as Nigeria. Frustrations and aggression from its citizens is sure and robustly certain.

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