POLITICAL MARGINALIZATION AND ISSUES AROUND THE INCLUSION OF THE OTHER: AFRICA'S ALBATROSS

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Abstract
Since the exit of the physical presence of the colonial masters on African soil some decades back, it has become an obvious fact that Africans have found it increasingly difficult to live harmoniously among themselves in a particular country or locale. This is encapsulated in what we termed, primarily, political marginalization. That is, the controversies and struggles that are involved in accepting or rejecting an African on an African soil by fellow Africans irrespective of the African's place of origin. Instances to buttress this fact include the agitations for self-determination, secession by Africans in many African countries in addition to the recent xenophobic attacks in South Africa. It is therefore an examined position of this paper that disunity among Africans caused by political marginalization and other attendant issues are the major albatross to Africa's quest for greatness. In line with this position, this paper essays to offer mere narration of the cause(s) of conflicts by the parties involved in dispute and the employment of violence if need be, as complements to Habermas' discourse ethics which is overly dependent on rationality (better argument as the best means of conflict resolution) as enduring solutions to the aforementioned challenge of political marginalization.
Keywords: Politics, Marginalization, Inclusion, Identity, Albatross.

Introductory Remarks

There are many disturbing issues bedeviling African continent today. But we make bold to argue that beneath these issues is political marginalization prefiguring prominently. This problem cuts across almost every African country the only seeming exceptions being theuncolonized Ethiopia and the newly created countries in the name of Eritrea and Southern Sudan. This political

marginalization is not unconnected with the incursion of the colonial masters in African continent. It is imperative to state at the outset that Africa understood in the context of this discourse are African countries who have in one way or the other come under the influence of colonial administration. And under this categorization, it is hard to discover an African country not within the compass of this discourse, either directly or indirectly. This is because, as the study will reveal, the seminal legacy of colonial incursion of divide-and-rule method -the common brush that seems to have tarred all African country- has snowballed into a big problem we have in Africa today in the manner of political marginalization and other attendant challenges emanating there from. To show that political marginalization is a common problem to almost all African countries, one country at least is investigated from the different sub-regions that Africa is divided into, that is, Northern Africa, West Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa and Central Africa.

Having said this, this discourse is outlined as follows: part one explains the key concepts engaged in the study; part two instantiates the experience of political marginalization with the countries selected as case studies; part three explores the idea of Discourse Ethics of Habermas as a veritable solution to the problem under view with the mind of supplementing it with other views for an endurable solution to this daunting challenge facing Africa; part four brings the discussion to an end with summary and conclusion.

1. Conceptualizing The Kernel Concepts In Employ Here

Politics, this is seen as "the art and science of the government of a state; public affairs or public life as they relate to this; the opinions, principles or policies by which a person orders his participation in such affairs; scheming and maneuvering within a group."[32] For Sinclair, politics, is"1, the art and science of directing and administering states and other political units; government. 2, the complex or aggregate of relationships of people in society, especially those relationships involving authority or power."[33] According to Harold D. Lasswell, politics is simply defined as "who gets what, when and how."[34] Lasswell's definition is quite insightful and appears to have captured the heart of what we

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[32]Lawrence T. Lorimer, *The New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language International Edition*, (New York: Lexicon Publishers, Inc., 1995), p.777.
[33]J.M. Sinclair, *Collins Concise Dictionary* Fifth Edition, (Glasgow: HarperCollins Publisher, 2001), p.1160.
[34]Harold D. Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1936), pp. ix &264.

intend to unravel. This is because Africans are always in the struggle over the control of one resource or the other: oil in Nigeria, Gold in the Democratic Republic of Congo, fertile lands in Kenya and Rwanda, etc. In each instance, some people through manipulations lay undue claim to one thing or the other and it automatically land the nations involved in one conflict or the other. And so it is the issue of how a Hausa/Fulani man in the northern part of Nigeria, for example, will muster the effrontery to say that the oil deposit in the South-South, South-Eastern parts of Nigeria is his without due consultation, compensation for damages done in the course of exploitation of the resource. The question becomes when (the circumstance, time) and how (in what manner) has a particular resource (what) become another person's own. This is the hub of political marginalization in Africa and that is why the researchers here maintain that the definition of Lasswell is quite *ad rem* for this discourse.

What marginalization is not: "Marginalization is not simply one thing, not just one status. While an absence of economic resources may, to be sure, characterize a marginalized group, lack of knowledge, political rights and capacity, recognition and power are also factors of marginalization."[35] For Iris Marion Young, marginalization is maybe the most perilous form of injustice. An entire group of people is deprived of useful participation in social life and accordingly possibly condemned to severe material deprivation. She presents the list, broadly, as including the youth, people not employed for a long time, single mothers, people living with disabilities, indigenous people, the elderly.[36] In addition to the following elucidations, Jenson maintains that "Marginalization is a phenomenon of material resources, but it also includes, for both the EFA Forum and for Iris Marion Young, lack of capacity to participate politically and culturally, in markets and in other institutions. Lines of Social difference and discrimination often overlay, indeed sometimes promote, patterns of marginalization."[37] A school of thought says: "Marginals are people the system of labor cannot or will not use."[38] Being marginalized entails more than earning

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[35]Jane Jenson, "Backgrounder: Thinking about Marginalization: What, Who and Why?"*Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc., (CPRN)* Web Version- November, 2000.p.1.http://www.cprn.org Accessed: 13/6/2016.

[36]Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference,* (Princeton,NJ: Princeton University Press,1990),p.53.

[37]Jane Jenson, "Backgrounder: Thinking about Marginalization: What, Who and Why?"*Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc., (CPRN),* Op. Cit.,p.2.

[38] Iris Marion Young as quoted in Jane Jenson, "Backgrounder: Thinking about Marginalization: What, Who and Why?"*Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc., (CPRN)* Web Version- November, 2000.p.1.http://www.cprn.org Accessed: 13/6/2016.

low income. It encompasses the inability to participate or earn full respect in society. To instantiate this, the community of people with disabilities dread isolation, marginalization and devaluation in a milieu in which their physical difference – not danger of poverty alone-- is a barrier to complete inclusion into society.[39] For Jenson as well, marginalization emerges as a result of being unemployed (absence of jobs), being poor (absence of material resources) and being isolated (absence of social ties).[40] To marginalize means, "to push something or someone to the edges of anything (especially of society or one's consciousness), in order to reduce its or their effect, relevance, significance,etc."[41]

But for International Consultative Forum on Education for All (EFA Forum), UNESCO *Status and Trends, 2000* "Marginalization occurs when people are systematically excluded from meaningful participation in economic, social, political, cultural and other forms of human activity in their communities and thus are denied the opportunity to fulfill themselves as human beings."[42] This is insightful. By political marginalization we therefore mean, the systematic and often clandestine maneuovering of political powers such that a group of people who often time has a natural claim to a particular resource is schemed out of it and placed under second-class citizen status and made to have the impression that they do not have equal claim, right to such resource with others who happen to be wielding political powers. It the use of the advantage of political power to deprive other people what they should ordinarily have, covertly or overtly. This is the mother of all problems in African continent today. African challenges may come in different guises but a painstaking analysis will ultimately reveal it to be of political marginalization.

> …Africa is a vast and varied continent made up of countries with specific histories and geographical conditions as well as uneven levels of economic development. The causes of conflicts in Africa reflect the continent's diversity and complexity. While some causes are purely internal and portray specific sub-regional dynamics, others have a significant international dimension. Notwithstanding these

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[39] www.pcs.mb.ca/ᵔccd. Quoted in Jen Jenson Op.Cit., p. 3.

[40] Jen Jenson Op.Cit.,p.4.

[41]Mairi Robinson, *Chambers 2Ist Century Dictionary of Current English,* (London: University Press, 1998), p.839.

[42] Quoted in Jen Jenson, Op.Cit., p.1.

differences, African conflicts show a number of cross-cutting themes and experiences.[43]

It is the examined position of this research work that the cross-cutting and common experienced problem of Africa is political marginalization and issues around the inclusion of the other fundamented in the lumping together of seemingly incompatible people in Africa. This position finds eloquent testimony in UN Secretary-General's Report on Africa, (UN 1999,3-5) Secretary-General's views on the causes of conflicts; among them are:

> (a)   Historical legacies: (i) the colonial boundaries forced on the newly independent states a simultaneous task of state-building and nation-building. State-building led to heavy centralization of political and economic power and the suppression of pluralism. But the challenge of forging a genuine national identity from among disparate and often competing communities has remained; (ii) the character of the commercial relations instituted by colonialism, also created long-term distortion in the political economy of Africa. The consequences of this position of production and exchange spilled over into the post-independent state. As political competition was rooted in viable national economic systems, in many instances the prevailing structure of incentives favoured capturing the institutional remnants of the colonial economy for factional advantage;…[44]

Political marginalization thus far explained originated from the colonial masters system of administration. With their singular aim of economic interest they pitted Africans against themselves that up till date Africans are still battling with the same problem that appears to be something else. A look into some African countries selected as samples will buttress the point being underscored here.

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[43] Adedeji, Adebayo (ed), comprehending and mastering African conflicts (London: Zed Books, 1999), p.364.Quoted in Abdalla Bujra, "African conflicts: Their Causes an Their Political and Social Environment" *Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF) Occasional Paper*, No.4, 2002, pp.6-7. http://www.dpmf.org Accessed: 13/6/2016.

[44]Quoted in Abdalla Bujra, "African conflicts: Their Causes an Their Political and Social Environment" *Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF) Occasional Paper*, No.4, 2002, p.17.http://www.dpmf.org Accessed: 13/6/2016.

2. Instantiatingthe Phenomenon Of Political Marginalization In Africa

An eloquent testament to the fact of political marginalization in Africa is given by Abdalla Bujra below. Rebellions, by groups not within the military outfit of a country and which angle for a change of a government, are the widely known types of political conflict in almost all African countries. These rebellions are commonly conceived by urban elites who are unhappy with the manner the government had handled them and their region or ethnic group. They gather a section of their regional or ethnic loyalists, secure arms secretly and usually aided by a neighbouring country and occasionally a nonAfrican power as well. Starting grudges of the leadership of such a rebel group would differ from being obstructed from getting political power, under representation of their region/ethnic group in the government and administration, their region intentionally disallowed access to development funds, to ban of their ethnic groups from the private sector, and given out of their land to other ethnic groups (of the ruling ethnic groups), etc. Continuing Bujra says, these unsettling instances may be felt by other ethnic groups, in which instance the rebel group forges coalitions with others and the rebellion gets more widespread. The survival of such rebel movements is only feasible if it is supported and aided by a close by country from where it can have launch pads and arms supplies.[45]

a. Political Marginalization: The Nigerian Situation

William O. Idowu is of the view that the incessant conflicts in Nigeria are political in essence and they are occasioned by: (i) lack of democracy; (ii) the particular organization of the Nigerian Federal system has abetted local and ethnic solidarities, and as such, failed to evolve a national consciousness/unity or citizenship; (iii) the domination and sole handling of the Federal Government by the northern Hausa/Fulani and the resultant marginalization of the other regions and ethnic groups in Nigeria. "*In* the *present-day*, the 'Northern elites' " refusal to share *power* is the *single most important* reason why tribes *have* been resurgent and *ethno national* consciousness *has* come to override *overall Nigerian Nationalism*."[46]

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[45]Abdalla Bujra, "African conflicts: Their Causes an Their   Political and Social Environment" *Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF)   Occasional Paper*, No.4, 2002, pp.6-7. http://www.dpmf.org Accessed: 13/6/2016

[46] William O. Idowu, "Citizenship, alienation and conflicts in Nigeria" *Africa Development XXIV*, nos. 1 and 2, 1999, p.53. Quoted in Abdalla Bujra Op.Cit., p.19.

> Owing to the absence of genuine citizenship, Nigeria has witnessed a series of baffling contradictions: a state of political conflict and instability, and irreconcilable struggle for power, reflected in antagonism and warfare, the politics of alienation, exclusion, and domination, accompanied by an incredible variety of micro-nationalism and pseudo-nationalism; and regrettably a forlorn search for the existence, establishment and sustenance of a well- rounded, vibrant system of democratic governance.[47]

Since the inception of Nigeria as a state, political marginalization has been its quotidian experience. The northern Hausa/Fulanis falsely assume the rulership of Nigeria as their birthright. A seeming respite only came during the 1999 democratic rule of Olusegun Obasanjo. During this period, the president fairly incorporated other ethnic groups in his governance especially the South eastern part of the country and the country experienced relative peace, progress and development to the extent of cancellation of Nigeria's foreign debts among other remarkable achievements. In the background of all this, the Hausa/Fulanis disgruntled by the development staged many destabilizing programmes against the government, prominent among which is the introduction of Sharia laws as part of state laws in some northern parts of the country (Zamfara state especially) which is against the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Hausa/Fulani destabilizing antics came to a head during the administration of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Simply because he is from the ethnic group other than the north, the Hausa/Fulani north vowed to make his government ungovernable and the emergence of the deadly terrorist group known as Boko Haram is not unconnected with this.[48] With the turn of events, 2015 general elections saw the emergence of a Hausa/Fulani north, Muhammadu Buhari, as the president. Today in Nigeria, the situation is best described as an uneasy calm. This is

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[47] Abdalla Bujra, Op.Cit., p.19.

[48] Edwin K. Clark, "An open letter to the Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives Rt. Honourable Aminu Waziri Tambuwal and all Honourable members of the House of Representatives on the motion directing the Inspector General of Police, IGP, to arrest/investigate Honourable Kingsley Kuku an Alhaji Mujahid Asari-Dokubo for their alleged statements and a demand that the investigation should also include all others who have made similar inflammatory, seditious and more provocative statements on the issue including Mallam Adamu Ciroma, Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd), Shehu Sani, Lawal Kaita, the National president of the Arewa Youth Forum, Mallam Gambo Ibrahim Gujungu, Farouk Aliyu, amongst others. Date: 9th May, 2013," Vanguard Friday 10th May, 2013,p. 53.

because there are so many frayed nerves in the country. The south-eastern part is back with their agitation for the sovereign state of Biafra under the platform of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), the south-south militancy is in full swing now with bombing and destruction of oil installations in the country which has seen the country producing and exporting oil, the mainstay of the nation's economy, to almost less than half of its normal production and exportation capacities.

These displays of grievances are as a result of the exclusive and lopsided appointments by the Hausa/Fulani led administration under Muhammadu Buhari. Political marginalization! Today in Nigeria, the security of the country is manned by more than eighty per cent of the Hausa/Fulani north, also the Director generals of most Agencies and Parastatals are headed by the Hausa/Fulanis of the northern extract whether they are duly qualified or not; among other acts of political marginalization. Recently, the legislative arm of government in Nigeria had to reject the list of ambassadorial nominees because it did not respect the federal character formula in giving such appointments. States like Ebonyi, Bayelsa and Plateau, not from the Hausa/Fulani north were excluded, hence, the rejection of the list. There are so many instances to portray political marginalization which has become Africa's albatross not found only in Nigeria but almost in all African countries.

b. The Kenyan experience

As earlier stated that the seminal cause of the problem is colonial machination, Kenya's experience is another good example. The Luo and Kikuyu ethnic groups in Kenya were the most penetrated by capital during the colonial era, and as such, were the most influenced by the colonial economy and culture. They formed an alliance in the dominant nationalist party, KANU , which later came to be the ruling party. The instance of political marginalization in this country played itself out thus:

> However, very soon after independence the dominance of governments and political arena by the Kikuyu-Luo alliance became clear and overwhelming. Immediately after seizing state power, Kenyatta started implementing his agenda of looking after the needs of his basic community the Agikuyu. By 1978, he had secured for them the state government, a vast homeland in the Rift Valley and along the Kenya Coast, put commerce in their hands, in appropriate alliance with

> Asian and European bourgeoisies, and underwritten their security by manning the Police, the military, intelligence and the brutalizing apparatuses such as the general service unit.[49]

At the demise of Jomo Kenyatta and the then vice president Daniel Arap Moi succeeded him as the president in 1978, he discovered that (i) the government and the military, police and intelligence, (ii) almost all the perceived fertile land, and (iii) the private sector open to Africans, that is, all these strategic locations were occupied and managed by the Kikuyu. Moi as the then vice president saw how the state was deployed as a tool to produce the Kikuyu domination that stared him in the face. To correct the imbalance, "President Moi therefore set out to address this situation confronting him and to address the inequalities suffered by his ethnic group and his allies – the small tribes who had lost out during this period (i.e., the followers of KADU who had merged with KANU in 1964)."[50] It is the situations like the foregoing that have dominated Africa's polity, and as such, bedeviled African greatness. It is in the bid to counter balance politically perceived anomalies that many conflicts erupted on African continent thereby obstructing the necessary peace needed for peaceful coexistence and progress. "It can be safely argued that by 1990, two decades of policies to advance ethnic and individual economic interest, had created a volatile ethnic situation in Kenya. At this point a number of significant forces were beginning to affect the political arena and the economy of Kenya."[51]This is a common trajectory among African governments till date.

c. From the perspective of Rwanda

The Rwandan civil unrest can be sourced to the Belgian colonial rule of 1916-1962 which was marked by poor or dissimilar divisions between the two principal ethnicities by the colonial government. Tutsis were systematically advantaged when it comes to education and employment over the Hutus who were neglected. Equally, the Belgian administration brought in the idea of identity cards to identify one's ethnic origin. These acts expectedly led to tensions

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[49] Ogachi Oanda, "Economic reform, political liberalization and ethnic conflict in Kenya"
   African Development XXIV, nos. 1 and 2, 1999. Quoted in Bujra, Op.Cit., p. 23.
[5050] Abdalla Bujra, Op.Cit., p. 23.
[51] Ibid.,p.24.

between the Hutus and Tutsis[52] These highlight the seminal cause of the problem under discourse, that is, the colonial masters' element in the making of Africa' albatross. "The effects of colonial rule were felt during the next few decades that followed the Independence. Hutu leaders were determined to retain power rather than repairing the psychological damage done by the colonizers"[53] Batware says, specifically, in*'Le Rwanda' Emergence d'un Eat, L'Harmattan,* Paris 1993, p.103,that F. Nahismana pointed out factors that brought the division of Rwanda between a pastoral or *Umukenke* zone and an agricultural or *Ubukonde* zone averring categorically that the division is political.[54] This political marginalization is seen in circumstances such as this: "In July 1994, an army of Tutsi rebels of the Rwandese Patriotic Front set up a new ethnic hegemony based on a search of firm Tutsi supremacy in the military administration and the economy."[55] This marginalization is a phenomenon that has appeared to be permanent in African existence. This is well illustrated by Shreya Samant, when he enthused as follows:

> The Rwanda genocide of 1994 is a mark of shame in the human history. It was a ghastly time where two ethnic races of Rwanda were at loggerheads and this conflict resulted in the outright and blatant slaughtering of over 800,000 people in Rwanda. The two tribes, Tutsi and Hutu were the ones involved where the Tutsi tribe was the victims and the Hutu tribe was the perpetrators. Tensions exist between the two even today and even a small spark can ignite the fore of blood and hate in the country.[56]

d. Sudan's example

In line with the thesis of this research work, Aleksi Ylönen maintains that it has been shownhow politicians in Africa took to exploit specific factorof individual identities to delineate constituencies and optimally make gains. This was the situation among the elites already during colonialism, but immediately after independence the spreading of the identity of the ruling elite to replace the

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[52] Billy Batware, "Rwandan Ethnic Conflicts: A Historical Look at Root   Causes*" European Peace University, Austria* 15/1/2012, pp.1-17.

[53] Ibid., p.2.

[54] Ibid., p.4.

[55] Ibid., p.13.

[56]Shreya Samant, Top 12 Most Racist Countries in the World-Listovative. Listovative.com›top-12-most-racist-cou… Accessed: 20/7/2016

persisting colonial political boundaries became part and parcel of nation building in a number of states, and in most situations reducing political plurality by the dint of establishment of authoritarian regimes and one-party political systems became the order of the day. As a corollary, repression and co-optation stayed as chief instruments of governance targeted to exploit political and economic inequalities and disequilibria that had occurred during the colonial era or external administration before that. This has projected political decision-making towards making sure of the continuity of elite monopoly of power. In sum, he says: "It is argued here that generally the main motivations that drive regionalist or secessionist movements to take up arms against a government are a combination of political and economic factors, including grievances, greed, and others, all linked to structural conditions, and generated or exacerbated by exclusive and marginalizing state policies."[57]

> In Sudan, peripheral armed conflicts should be viewed as political challenges to the monopolized rule of the state's Arab-Muslim elite that inherited exclusive political power from the British. However, the armed opposition also defies the Arab-Muslim elite's political project of assimilation of the periphery to build a culturally homogenized Arabized and Islamized polity through extension of their self-proclaimed Arab cultural identity, deeming non-Arabs and non-Muslims as second class Citizens.The implementation of this program was initiated shortly before independence by the northern Sudanese nationalists who have instrumentalized it and drawn support and influences from Arab states, merging it as part of a repressive system deliberately creating inequality, exclusion, and uneven development, against which marginalized communities of the periphery have mobilized politically and militarily.[58]

Furthermore, the carrying out of the governing elite's political objective had buoyed pre-existing political and economic division between the center and the periphery both regionally and ethnic or cultural identity wise. In these conditions, economic progress of the central riverine Sudan, the habitat of the Arab-Muslim patricians, has betrayed the lopsided systematic economic and

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[57] Aleksi Ylönen, "On Sources of political violence in Africa: The case of 'Marginalizing state' in Sudan" *Polit.Cult.no.32 Mexico ene.*2009.
[58] Ibid.

political marginalization of those peripheral missions. Sequel to this, the imbalanced development designs emanating from colonialism have been purposefully maintained, making use of repressive control and policies to enable poverty and dependency, to sustain relative difference in prosperity between the ruling patricians and its constituency in the center and the marginalized periphery, eliciting political and economic unhappiness among the regional aristocrats and their followers.[59] It is a quotidian fact that in Sudan numerous groups and regions have been marginalized or isolated outrightly from political and economic endeavours, like political participation and economic development. This marginalization and isolation has been intentionally executed, standardized and institutionalized in the ruling systems, governance, and strategies of Sudan's 'marginalizing state', which has guaranteed its minority central riverine Arab-Muslim ruling patricians' sole control of political power.

Tracing the sources of conflicts in Sudan, Aleksi further argues that calculated violence against the state in Southern Sudan first emerged in the era of de-colonization in the mid-1950s. That its structural causes are cardinally connected to the policies of the colonial 'marginalizing state' advantaging Arab-Muslim groups economically and politically, while Southern Sudan excluded from the northern parts from the 1920s to the 1940s, was excised from both political participation and economic development. That misgivings, lack of trust towards northerners linked with the bequeath of violence of the 19th century slave raiding, the sole control of the state machinery by the Arab-Muslim aristocrats, and the loss of hope for economic progress and job opportunity in the efforts of de-colonization turned out to be crucial inspiring factors for the advancing southern political patricians to demand for guarantees or federal arrangement for the southern region to avoid the dreaded domination by the more educated, and economically and politically better placed northern Arab-Muslims.[60]

> As the instances broached in this paper reveal, the causes of conflicts in Sudan have been principally political and related to governance of the 'marginalizing state'. The lack of just redistribution of economic resources nationally is an important element producing grievances which are principally political ones because the distribution of material wealth is dictated by political power and political decisions. Even the more clandestine organized violent rebel leaders, is

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[59]Ibid.
[60]Ibid.

conditioned to the political situation. Thus, economic agendas and motivation related to the conflicts in Sudan, and in a number of other African countries, are inherent to their political context.[61]

e. The case of Angola

Talking about the historical and root causes of Angola's inequality at independence, Kamia opines that, first, it is occasioned bythe racial bequeath of colonialism and the sub-human politics of assimilation. That in the course of Portuguese governance in Angola, few black Angolans were positioned in strategic posts within the government. The greater number of doctors, teachers, lawyers, municipal administrators, and industrial workers were non blacks. Contrary to this, the local Angolans, known as *indigena*, were envisioned to fish, plow, and to be blacksmiths and cattle herders. The setting up of a two-tier system of citizens' rights which permitted for the *indigena* population to attain a new status and climb up the social ladder, premised on their acknowledgement of European values and customs was part of the Portuguese colonizers' vision for establishing a 'modern' colony in Angola. Superficially, the *Assimilado* strategy appears less aggressive if one juxtaposes it with the Apartheid experienced in South Africa. "However, it alienates, disintegrates, separates, and marginalizes. In short, it creates inequality. The only difference is that Apartheid was practised in the open and *Assimilado* had been done clandestinely. Both policies dehumanized the native Africans and fundamentally changed their traditional economic activities."[62]

Quoting Cornelio Caley, Kamia says:

> The main conclusions of his preliminary analysis on the issue point to the continuing practice of assimilation and discrimination as designed by the colonial powers. This is still being applied with naming and distinguishing between the variations of colour or mixed races (branco puro, cabrito, mestiço, mestiço escuro e claro, cafuso, negro escuro e claro) still playing a role in the access to education, jobs and

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[61]Ibid.

[62]Kamia Victor De Carvalho, Luciano Chianeque and Albertina Delgado, "Inequality in Angola,"p.48.www.osisa.org/sites/default/files/sup_files/chapter1-angola.pdfAccessed: *20/7/2016.*

resources. The main problem is that the issue is often ignored and simply presented as an issue of education.[63]

f. Central African Republic experience

For Louisa Lombard, at the end of 19th century, Central Africa was being integrated into trans-Sahara (Muslim) network via the creation of raiding-and-trading outposts. The advent of the French initially gave a spike in the slave-raiding. The French deemed the raiding Sultans useful as go-betweens, hence, arming and equipping them. But at the turn of events the French murdered the most powerful raiding sultan when they felt he would run to a new place where he would be more difficult to be controlled. Trans-Saharan network remained crucial, continues Lombard, butthat after the first ten years of the 20th century, the vibrant trade and warfare were supplanted by stagnation, and French administrative efforts remained centralized in the capital. They temporarily gave outalmost all the colony to concessionary firms. The abode of most Muslims, the Northeast, was pronounced an 'autonomous district' for it was too secluded and depopulated to keep up with the circulars given out in the capital.

Due to the fact that the territory is inhabited almost solely by 'foreigners', says Lombard, the central government performs little or no function there. Individualsin Northeastern CAR feel abandoned. People with Islamic-sounding names are forced to pay more at the roadblocks that is a common place experience especially in the Southern and Western areas of the country than individuals with Christian names, and it is knottier for people from the Northeast to acquire national identity documents. Many Muslims, such as former president Michel Djotodia, adopt a Christian name in order to reduce the discrimination they meet on daily basis.

The consequence of this political mishandling is what Lombard summed thus:

> Members of the rebel groups that emerged in northeastern CAR between 2006 and 2009 and eventually became part of Seleka took up arms not so much to replace the government as to force it to distribute more largess to them. Among their grievances: the largest town in northeastern-most Vakaga prefecture, Sikkikede, had not seen a government official in nearly a decade. People in the Northeast are in a bind: not

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[63] Ibid., p.82.

> Central African enough for the CAR, but not foreign enough
> to count as citizens of other countries, either.[64]

The foregoing amply shows the malaise of political marginalization as the albatross of African greatness. It shows as well how it is an inherited problem from the colonial masters.

Apart from the foregoing instances of political marginalization in Africa as a continent, related to it is the fact that Africans seem to have a serious dislike for their fellow Africans, what we termed in this paper as the issues around the inclusion of the other. That is to say, challenges emanating due to fellow Africans who found themselves living in a particular African society. This phenomenon is bothinter-Africa and intra-Africa. The former is illustrated by Jonny Steinberg below. He says, between 1984 and the end of hostilities in Mozambique, an estimated 50,000 to 350,000 Mozambican fled to South Africa. While never granted refugee status they were technically permitted to stay in the *Bantustans* or black homelands established by the apartheid regime. The situation was more ununiformd, with the homeland of Lebowa not allowing Mozambican settlers; the Gazankulu welcomed the refugees with open hands and supported them in the manner of land and equipment. "Those in Gazankulu, however, found themselves confined to the homeland and liable for deportation should they enter South Africa proper, and evidence exists that their hosts denied them access to economic resources."[65] Similarly, he points out further,"Unrest and civil war likewise saw large numbers of Congolese immigrate to South Africa, many illegally, in 1993 and 1997. Subsequent studies found indications of xenophobic attitudes towards these refugees, typified by their being denied access to the primary healthcare to which they were technically entitled." [66]Echoing the same phenomenon, Justin Nwankwo and Obinna Ofozoba stated as follow: "…. However, seven years after, in 2015, xenophobic attacks have again resonated and meted out on Zambians, Zimbabweans, Botswana's, Congolese, Nigerians and indeed a whole lot of foreigners who were legally living and working in the

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[64] Louisa Lombard, "Central African Republic—marginalization is the problem not incipient genocide"https://africajournalismtheworld.com/2014/01/27/central-african-republicmarginalization-is-the-problem-not-incipient-genocide/Accessed: 20/7/2016.
[65]Jonny Steinberg, "ISS Monograph No.117: Mozambican and Congolese Refugees in South Africa: A mixed reception" *Institute of Security Studies* Oct.3.2008
[66] Ibid.

cities of South Africa." [67] It is not only in South Africa, similar experiences exist in other African countries but South Africa appears to be the worst.

From intra-Africa perspective, it is a known fact that in some African countries, Albinos and hunchbacks are still kidnapped and used for ritual issues by their own brethren. In Nigeria, the intra-Africa relationship is quite worrisome. Today we experience a scenario where people will carry their cows recklessly into other people's farmlands for grazing; as such destroying the farmers' efforts and, when the farmers protest they are either maimed or killed outrightly and the government of the day keeps mute because the cattle rearers are of the same ethnic extract with them. In the same country, the constitution speaks of a secular state, but in a broad day light, members of the Muslim communities have unprovocatively killed Christians even to the extent of invading a church on a Friday disrupting their worship and damaging their property in the claim that Christians have only on Sundays to gather for worship. And the government of the day abets such crimes with its calculated silence. All these negative elements have: kept Africans in their own countries, homes as slaves, second-class citizens, consequently unhappy with the vexing question as to whether they are fully included in their supposed countries, homes and, in the overall, have inhibited Africa's quest for greatness.

The situation as seen above calls for a genuine dialogue among Africans both at the intra-African and inter-African relationships. Of all the models of dialogue, Habermas' discourse ethics holds the most promising platform and that is why this paper recourses to it.

3. Discourse Ethics Of Habermas As A Way Forward

To understand Habermas' Discourse Ethics, one has to know his idea of communicative rationality that propelled his theory of Communicative Action which in turn informed his idea of Discourse Ethics. These steps to be taken are occasioned by the fact that it is rationality that forms the *leit motif* of his philosophical endeavours. For Habermas,

> This concept of *Communicative rationality* carries with it connotations based ultimately on the central experience of

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[67]Justin O.Nwankwo and Obinna C. Ofozoba, "Xenophobia and South African Uprising: Reflections on *Ubuntu* as an African Philosophy of Peace" in Emmanuel C. Umezinwa *et al* (eds) *Humanities and African Values,* (Awka: Fab Anieh Nig.Ltd, 2016), p. 4.

the unconstrained , unifying, consensus-bringing force of argumentative speech, in which different participants overcome their merely subjective views, and owing to the mutuality of rationally motivated conviction, assure themselves of both the unity of the objective world and the intersubjectivity of their lifeworld.[68]

With the above foundation laid, Habermas postulates communicative action in the following terms.

In communicative action participants are not primarily oriented to their own individual successes; they pursue their individual goals under the condition that they can harmonize their plans of action on the basis of common situation definition. In this respect the negotiation of definitions of the situation is an essential element of the interpretive accomplishments required for communicative action. [69]

"The concept of communicative action presupposes language as the medium for a kind of reaching understanding, in the course of which participants, through relating to a world, reciprocally raise validity claims that can be accepted or contested." [70]

The foregoing articulations gave rise to Habermas' idea of Discourse Ethics which he named a programme of philosophical justification. This justification carries with it the barrage of two most important steps: (a) a principle of universalization that serves as a rule of argumentation in practical discourse and (b) the rule of argumentation is grounded in terms of the substance of the pragmatic presuppositions of argumentation as such in relation to an explication of the meaning of normative claims to validity.[71]Discourse Ethics, therefore, is informed by two principles, namely: principle of universalization (U) and the principle of discourse ethics (D). The principle of universalization (U) stipulates that: "For a norm to be valid, the consequences and side effects that its *general* observance can be expected to have for the satisfaction of the particular interest

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[68]Habermas Jürgen, *The Theory of Communicative Action Vol.1*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984), p.10.

[69] Ibid., p.286.

[70]Ibid., p.99.

[71]Habermas Jürgen, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, (Cambridge: MIT Press,1983),p.116.

of *each* person affected must be such that *all* affected can accept them freely."[72] While the principle of discourse ethics (D) states that: "Every valid norm would meet with the approval of all concerned if they could take part in a practical discourse."[73] Habermas explains practical discourse as "A procedure for testing the validity of hypothetical norm, not for producing justified norms. It is this proceduralism that sets discourse ethics apart from other cognitivist, universalist and formalist ethical theories, and thus from Rawls' theory of justice as well."[74] These principles mainly unite peoples' minds, course of actions through common understanding in the background of rational argumentation. Explaining the four cardinal traits of argumentation, that is, rules of the principle of Discourse ethics (D), Habermas opines:

> that nobody who could make a relevant contribution may be excluded ;(ii) that all participants are granted an equal opportunity to make contributions.(iii) that the participants must mean what they say; and(iv) that communication must be freed from external and internal coercion so that the "yes" or "no" stance that participants adopt on criticizable validity claims are motivated solely by the rational force of the better reasons.[75]

Furthermore, Habermas states that:

> If everyone who engages in argumentation must make at least these pragmatic presuppositions, then in virtue of (i) the public character of practical discourses and the inclusion of all concerned and (ii) the equal weight to the interests and evaluative orientations of everybody can influence the outcome of practical discourses; and because of the absence of (iii) deception and (iv) coercion, nothing but reasons can tip the balance in favor of the acceptance of a controversial norm. Finally, on the assumption that participants reciprocally impute an orientation to communicative agreement to one another, this 'uncoerced' acceptance can only occur 'jointly' or 'collectively'.[76]

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[72] Ibid.,p.120.

[73]Ibid.,p.121.

[74]Ibid,,p.122.

[75]Habermas Jürgen, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998),p.44.

[76]Ibid.

The hallmark of Habermas' discourse ethics above is that in practical discourse, that is, open discussion in the background of equality of all, freedom of all, sincerity of all, without any form of coercion apart from the rational force of better reasons of argument; that people can harmoniously live together without much tension occasioned by pent-up unresolved differences having talked out their grievances and being listened to as well. Indeed Africans in different African countries need this form of genuine dialogue in order to live peacefully among themselves. It is the absence of this kind of quality dialogue that has kept the continent where it is till date.

Indeed, there is no gainsaying the salutary effects of this dialogical method if employed in tackling the problem of political marginalization in Africa. It will help to resolve our problems amicably having carried everybody along after thorough discussions that must have allowed all to voice their grievances. These positive effects of Habermas' discourse ethics notwithstanding, one will not hesitate to point out that its major flaw lies in the fact that it is overtly relied on reasoning alone as a means of conflict resolution. And this rationality dependent of discourse ethics is far from being objective and universal as Habermas would make one believe. His discourse ethics is purely western oriented and exclusive of other means of conflict resolution that can be found in other worldviews outside of the west.In the view of Mechthild Nagel, there is a ring of unobjectivity in Habermas's discourse ethics. For him, discourse ethics is alien to African way of discussion in terms of settling disputes or conflict resolution but only oriented to the western style of democracy. "..., discourse ethic insists on the primacy of democratic institutions and values and therefore, it is only applicable in communities and states where 'pure' western style of democracy is enforced."[77] In the same vein, quoting Ali Mazrui as claiming that the complex histories of African nation-state are beholden to a "triple heritage,"[78] Nagel argues that "..., a far more complex social ordering occurs in the post-colonial world than in the global North", and that "Habermas's discourse model could be considered monological in so far as the intersubjective equality demand concerns only a community of scholars who share a precise hermeneutic and cultural background."[79] Against Habermas's sole dependence on rational arguments or

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[77] Mechthild Nagel, "What if Habermas went Native?" *Peace Studies Journal* Vol.1. Issue1. Fall 2008 p.7.
[78] Mazrui, A.A. *The Africans: A Triple Heritage (BBC)*. Quoted in Mechthild Nagel, op.cit., p.8.
[79] Mechthild Nagel, op.cit., p.8.

better reasons winning in discourse, Nagel poses the question "…, what of the claim that 'non-rational' arguments might win out in subaltern discourses?"[80]

Using the account of adjudication in Navajo (Diné) Peacemaking Circles given by a criminologist Hal Pepinsky, that is, mere narration by each party to a case's point of view, Nagel maintains that these peacemaking circles are equally termed healing circles for they resolve conflict and not administer punishment or establish a win-lose judgement. In essence, what appears as non-rational to a western observer is ingrained in a cultural-spiritual world-view.[81]That is to say; the reality of this non-rational approach counters and vitiates Habermas's sole reliance on rational basis. Coming to this angle of incompleteness (that is, exclusion of non-rational approach) of Habermas's theory, Nagel opines thus:

> Discourse theory presumes the cultural, homogeneous background of social contract theory, the Enlightenment and Western democratic ideals, which in fact are not universalizable. It is unfortunate that Habermas seems to forego the opportunity to shed light with the tools of Critical Theory onto subaltern histories of struggle at the same time that he ordains discourse theory to have universalizaiton import.[82]

The point raised by Nagel above simply buttresses our view that Habermas thought his discourse ethics to be objective and universal which it is not.Furthermore, Habermas has no room for violence in his discourse ethics. We are of the view that violence is another means of conflict resolution for those who can only be drawn to the table of negotiation through that means alone. The phenomenon of Niger Delta Avengers' use of violence in the form of destruction of oil installations -the mainstay of Nigeria's economy- and the Federal Government of Nigeria's new position in terms of calling for dialogue with the Avengers, is a good testament to the efficacy of violence as another veritable means of conflict resolution. But that should be used when the need for it arises.

With Habermas' rationality approach, non-rational approach as well coupled with violence as a method of conflict resolution, the researchers here firmly

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[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.,pp.8-9.
[82] Ibid.,p.9.

believe that the issue of political marginalization and issues around the inclusion of the other in Africa will be seriously addressed.

4. Concluding Remarks

In this piece, we made the case that the primary challenge to Africa's quest for greatness is the issue of political marginalization which breeds other forms of problems with it. It was abundantly made clear that this albatross to Africa's greatness is rooted in the colonial masters' use of divide-and–rule policy in Africa then. This fact as a common problem to almost all African countries was buttressed with instances from African countries that represent the sub-divisions of African continent. With that done the paper proceeded to buy into the logic of Habermas' discourse ethics as a good tool to resolving the problem under study. However, the researchers pointed out the over emphasis on rationality to the neglect of other means of conflict resolution as a major flaw in Habermas' efforts. In conclusion, categorically, we are of the view that with the combination of Habermas' signature of forceless force of better argument being allowed to prevail through genuine dialogue as he outlined, with the non-rational approach cum application of violence when the need arises; the issue of political marginalization as Africa's albatross will meaningfully be addressed thereby paving way for the much sought out greatness.