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Politics of Ethnicity and Religion and its Impact on Nigeria's Election: The Case of Jos North Local Government Area 2008 Election

Borok Andrew Maren
Department of History and International Studies
Federal University,
Lokoja, Kogi State

Titus Aliyu
Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies
Federal University, Lokoja,
Kogi State

Abstract:

The paper examines the reasons for the 2008 Local Government Election violence in the Plateau state 2008 Local Government Election. The paper is important in the sense that the crisis claimed hundreds of lives and property worth millions of naira was destroyed if this was not enough, it further created an enduring political dichotomy between the Hausa and the "indigenes" or between the Christians and the Moslem. To achieve its objectives the study employed the use of social cubism as a theory and historical methodology using many sources which include both primary and secondary data to help study and analyze the historical phenomenon. In the end, the research submits that the crisis was a product of the long struggle over the control of the socio-economic cum political resources of the physical, economic, and political geography of the area Jos-Plateau

Keywords: Election Violence Socio-political Control, Religion, and Ethnicity

Introduction and the Background to the Study

This study intends to look at intergroup politics and election violence in Nigeria using the case of the Jos North Local Government election in 2008. To achieve this, the study employed the use of primary and secondary sources in presenting the narratives. To avoid bias, the research employed thorough fieldwork and oral interview. Even at that, the research was cumbersome as most of the dramatic personae are still alive and active in the area's politics. As late Dr. Yusufu Bala Usman observed that the problem of reconstructing contemporary history is not the paucity of sources but numerous sources that a historian has to confront and analyze and most of the actors are still living and ever ready to protect and justify their actions[1] The study discovered that the Jos area has for long, been under political tension over the control of Jos political

[1]Usman Y.B. Factors and Actors : *A study of the Nigerian Civil War 1967 -1970* ABU Seminar Papers 1989 pp 1-2

and economic enclaves that today metamorphosed into Jos North Local Government. Since 1932, when the impact of the Great Depression was felt in the area and the colonial businesses were almost packing creating an atmosphere of hope that European businesses will be left for the Africans to manage. This possibility created tension as the Hausa population was jubilating that they will send away the southern groups who then dominated the skilled labour in the Colonial businesses in Jos, that the exit of the white will pave way for the Hausa to take over the economy of the area. In 1945, there was also a similar incident when one Hausa man killed an Ibo man in Kasuwan Doya behind the Jos main market.[2]) In fact, this development is recorded as the first recorded killing in the history of intergroup relations in the area. These two developments in the colonial period made the area to become a dormant political volcano until the creation of Jos North Local Government in 1991 by General Ibrahim Babangida's military administration in Nigeria. The fragile peace was broken with the return to democracy in 1999. Shortly after the return to democracy, the electioneering campaign of the area became tense as the Hausa group which is represented by an association called the JASAWA ie the Hausa people of Jos, and the 'indigenes' struggled to control the LGA. This tension could not allow Governor Dariye to conduct an election in the LGA in the 2004 Local Government Election conducted. Jang on coming to power as the Governor of the state in 2007, the election was conducted in Jos North LGA in the 2008 Local Government Election. This election ended up being one of the bloodiest in the history of Local Government Elections in Nigeria.[3]

Conceptual and theoretic analysis of Causes of Conflict in Africa Rural and Urban Settlements

To understand the complexity of election violence in Jos North Local Government it is appropriate to approach it from social cubism perspective. As a theory, social cubism has been adopted in fetching out challenges encountered in communities where violence has erupted and in assessing the appropriateness of the interventions invented to reduce the problem, Byrne & Carter, Social cubism was mostly used in explaining territorial conflicts, but this does not mean that it cannot be employed in explaining conflicts as a result of tussles between two antagonistic groups because of control over a geo-political space. It is a theory that posits that to have a critical understanding and interpretation of any phenomenon; it will have to be seen from different angles or perspectives[4]

This approach is necessary for the understanding of the Jos North Local Government Area election violence in the 2008 Local Government Election

[2]Ishaku, Jonathan *The Road to Mugadishu*: Jos 2012 p.32
[3]Borok A.M. *Intergroup Relations in Nigeria: A Case Study of Jos and Its Environs 1900-2013* Phd Thesis University of Port Harcourt, 2017 111-117
[4]Byrne S, and Carter,N "*Social Cubism: Six Social Forces of Ethno territorial Politics in Northern Ireland and Quebec* . Peace and Conflict Studies Vol. 3 (2) (1996)

because it explores conflict from historical, demographic, economic, psychological, religious, and political perspectives. Byrne and Carter posit that social cubism contains six interrelated aspects. These are also as follows:

The historical aspect of social cubism: That history is a powerful framework for understanding almost everything about human existence. As one aspect of social cubism, understanding historical factors helps people understand some of the reasons behind intergroup dynamics and relationships. The Jos North LGA election violence is the product of the long intergroup conflict that started during the colonial period and reached its outburst in the 2001 crisis. That the election crisis is a result of long intergroup tension between the JASSAWA and the major ethnic groups in the area- the Berom, Afizare, and Anaguta over the ownership of Jos North.

The religious aspect of social cubism:- Religion is one of the most polarizing things known to man. For centuries, societies have fought and died because of religious differences. Concerning social cubism, exploring religious dynamics helps people comprehend how religious beliefs affect an intergroup relationship. This theory helps us to understand why election violence escalated. The 2001 and religious crises before 2008 built up dichotomous societies based on religion. In the 2008 LGAs election in Jos North, it was a Moslem candidate vs a Christian candidate the two religions did a massive mobilization for the election in churches and mosques thereby giving a picture of the war between the Crusaders and Saracens. It was this divide that gave the post-election violence the ideology it thrived on.

A demographic aspect of social cubism:- Demographic factors are a crucial aspect of exploring ethnic conflict. At the center of demography is the issue of population composition, especially the issue of who is in the minority or majority. The demographic expansion of the Hausa population was a serious challenge. One it was not given the status of indigene and the population needed housing infrastructure to house itself. The only way to do that was to have political control over the LGA so that policy will be favourable to its growing population the indigene never wanted to sell land to the Hausa and there was the tendency of revocation of landed property that was not properly acquired by the Hausa during the colonial period.

The political aspect of social cubism:- The political landscape in any given society affects the way people and societies see each other. Societies, where political institutions are dominated by ethnic politics, run the risk of ethnic divisions that, if not dealt with properly, could eventually lead to ethnic conflict. There was desperation between the groups to have political control over the LGA because it is the oldest, the richest, and located in the heart of the state commerce. In addition to that is the group that produced the chairman that can claim ownership and also the majority. This drive made the election turn bloody The economic aspect of social cubism: economic differences among ethnic groups have immense results on political stability in any given society. It is known that economic disparity exacerbates tension among people,

communities, societies, and even nations, particularly among political institutions that practice favouritism and/or ethnic patronage. Just like the Marxists will say it is the material condition of a place that determines its political worldview. The desire to control the economic resource of the richest LGA by the two antagonistic groups contributes to the constant political tension in the area thus its manifestation in the 2008 election.

The psychological aspect of social cubism:-Ethnic tension and emotions are known to escalate during conflict or crisis. Concerning ethnic conflicts, psychologists often try to analyze how changes in people or societal behaviours and actions affect intergroup perceptions of others during tense moments. This theory is apt in trying to comprehend the development in the area. The psycho-cultural theory of conflict indicates that religious, psychological, and other cultural incongruities are the origin of war some scholars claimed that psycho-cultural conflict takes a long to solve. In this type of conflict, desire for the culture overwhelms motive and fuels conflict behaviour. It is the theory that expresses that conflict is made by the mission to defend one's identity. Cultural identity is an unshakable sense of self-esteem that makes life significant and consists of the feelings that one is socially, psychologically, physically, and spiritually safe. The intergroup conflict in the Jos area is one of the manifestations of this. This is[5] because the claim for cultural and religious superiority has marred intermarriages thus furthering the cultural and religious competition which is mostly reflected in any electioneering period in the area.
To be fair to Byrnes and Carter, their concept did not suggest that every conflict could be analyzed using these six metrics of social cubism. Instead, they acknowledge the fact that different situations contain factors that relate differently. However, the use of this concept in the research carried out in the place of study ensured that conflict exploration was approached from different points of analysis. Again, the adoption of social cubism seems to be driven by a variety of factors. Therefore the use of social cubism theory in this study makes the research identify specific reasons that lead to the constant crisis in the area.

Location of Jos Plateau and its People

Jos is located in the middle belt of Nigeria. Geographically, the Jos Plateau lies between latitude 9 and 10 N and longitude 9 and 10 E and is in the central part of Nigeria. The geographers Buchanan and Pugh(Buchanan and Pugh 1955:23) were one of the earliest to identify it with the topographical description "the Jos Plateau". Because of its excess cold, the people were said to keep themselves warm at night by burning charcoal under their constructed mud beds. The Jos Plateau has different geographical and climatic features, which give it a different outlook from the immediate regions to the east, west, south, and north of it. It is a high plateau bounded on all sides by sharp escarpments, 450 – 600 meters high above the surrounding plains of the Bauchi Plateau and former Gongola. It has an average height of 1,142 metres above sea level with the highest peak of 1,828 metres on the Shere hills. The lowest point varies from

[5]*Borok, ocit p.10*

600 - 900 metres above sea level. The topographical features made it difficult to climb the plateau, except for a few passes via the escarpments to the east, west, and north. The geological formation consists basically of a Cambrian basement complex with granite rocks that have cassiterite minerals and tin. The plains of the plateau are dotted with lateralised basalt flat-topped hills, which add scenic beauty to the plateau. Jos and its environs were important sites for tin mining.[6]

Groups Party Loyalty in Jos and its Environs 1970s to 2000

Political survival in Jos during this period led to the formation of ethnic associations in Jos. These ethnic associations served as formidable fronts used by the elite of each ethnic group to contest for socio-economic and political power in the area. In this discussion, attention will be given to how in the course of political struggle each ethnic association or group tended to give its political allegiance to a particular party it felt will project its interest better. This political development stemmed from what was inherited from the nature of how different ethnic groups accepted the different political parties that emerged during the anti-colonial party formations. In the Jos area, the Hausa ethnic group became pro-Northern People Congress (NPC) and Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU), the Igbo and other South-Eastern groups became pro-National Council Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), the Yoruba became pro-Action Group i.e. the Southern Yoruba while the Northern Yoruba some were pro-NPC and the Plateau people were pro- United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) and later MBPP (Middle Belt People's Party). This type of political formation continued up to the 1999 national elections.

Before the general election of 1979, the then Obasanjo military government planned a transition to democracy and in the process, new political parties were formed. Some of these political parties included the Nigerian Peoples' Party (NPP), National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Great Nigerian Peoples' Party, Peoples 'Redemption Party (PRP), etc. The coming of these political parties in Plateau state was a mere reflection of the earlier politics going on. For NPP took the place of (UMBC), NPN of NPC, AG of GNPP, and PRP of NEPU. This development produced the kind of political formation that was obtained during the nationalist movement party politics and post-independent politics before January 15, 1966, military junta[7]

During this period, the "indigenous" Plateau groups gave their loyalty to Nigeria Peoples Party (NPP) because it was a party followership that was predominately Southerners and Christians, Azikwe was its presidential flag bearer. Chief Solomon Lar was its gubernatorial flag bearer and he, with other party stalwarts was able to gather support for the party. According to an informant, the coup against Gowon and the courter coup by Plateau Boys in the army i.e. Bukar Sukar Dimka, Bisalla, and a host of others damaged the relationship between the Plateau people and the Hausa groups in Jos. Gowon

[6]*ibidem*
[7]*ibidem*

being a Plateau boy having fought to sustain the unity of the country, only for him to be removed by another Northern military officer they interpreted this development as an attempt by Hausa Northerner to relegate the non-Hausa Northerner that if Gowon were a Hausa Chap, that coup could not have been staged. On the other side of the coin, the Hausa population was aggrieved with the action of the Plateau military boys that led to the assassination of Murtala Mohammed whom they saw as a visionary leader who was determined to flush out neo-colonial influences in independent Nigeria and Africa at large. During this period, they pressed for the punishment of the Plateau military officers and that was carried out by Obasanjo who perhaps did that to appease the Hausa North and also have Northern political acceptance. The killing of the Plateau officers' coup planner resulted in the loss of prominent Plateau officers in the Nigerian army and thus creating a big gap in terms of their representation in the army. All these issues affected the political formations of the area in the politics of transition to civil rule in the late 1970s in Jos and its environs. For some of these reasons, the "indigenes" of Plateau rallied around NPP whom it Gubernatorial candidate in the course of his campaign, added the slogan of "emancipation" of the Plateau people. The question to ask is emancipation from what? Of course, an average Plateau man saw it then as 'emancipation' from the long Hausa and core- Northern marginalization.

On the other parts, the Hausa group embraced NPN which was seen as a continuation of NPC ideals. NPC, in one of its campaign promises, was to see the creation of Jos Emirate or the creation of a Hausa traditional institution in Jos. The support enjoyed by NPC from the Regional Government made the Hausa population embrace NPN when they saw that most of the NPC members are the ones that formed NPN. After 1979, elections, a stalemate could be said was made in the politics of Jos. NPP won the governorship election in Plateau state while at the national level, NPN won the presidential election. This situation gave the Hausa population another advantage for the NPN now was using them to make an en route to plateau politics and that could only be achieved by getting them empowered. For some of them that were in PRP – a child of NEPU had to go to Kaduna and Kano for political sustenance because these two states were won by Peoples Redemption Party whose leader was the Great Mallam Aminu Kano[8]

The NPP Government on the Plateau, to contend with Hausa's influence in the political arena, started to adopt a policy where the Hausa were being denied an indigene certificate for that single act will expunge them from the Federal and state electoral constituency. This tension continued until the military junta of 1983. Though before then, just as was the case between NCNC and NPC at the independence election in the late 1950s, NCNC and NPC forged a coalition against AG In the second election that voted for Shagari for the second term, NPP and NPN forged a coalition in the senate that made an NPP senator from Plateau state John Wash Pam become the Deputy Senate President of the

[8]*ibidem*

Federal Republic of Nigeria[9] The coup de tad that brought democracy to a halt, and suspended party politics in Nigeria for the Buhari government saw the second Republic's politicians as corrupt and highly unserious who sacrificed the interest of the nation on the plate of the party and regional jingoism. These particular feelings against a politician, made Buhari declare a War against Indiscipline (WAI), and the rate at which politicians were arrested and detained, they became quiet and withdrew to their cocoons[10]

By the beginning of the 1990s, Babangida started his transition rule to democracy, and politicians were asked to form political parties thus NRC and SDP emerged as the two political parties in Nigeria. The political guideline was that only two political parties were allowed to operate and canvass for people's support. Coming to the Plateau, most of the first and second Republic politicians went for SDP, and in that manner; the majority of the Plateau populace gave their political support to SDP. In Jos town and other local government areas where the Hausa population was predominant, their loyalty was to NRC. Whether NRC was Northern base or not, since most of its presidential flag bearers are core Hausa, it was seen as a Hausa party and on the other side of the coin, the Hausa population embraced NRC and pushed it for acceptance among the Hausa population of Plateau state[11] (Borok, 2017)

Creation of Jos North Local Government Area

By 1991, the then military government made it a matter policy to create more states and local government areas. This development led to the creation of Jos North LGA. The formation of Jos North in 1991 has remained a cancer worm in the annals of the political history of Plateau State. The General Babangida administration created Jos North alongside 88 others nationwide. Unfortunately, rather than engender the gains of grass-roots development, the outcome of this exercise has ironically constituted to be a nuisance to the state. The reasons are not far-fetched. Apart from the peremptory military fiat deployed in creating the LGA, the exercise was something similar to the circumstance that gave birth to the Richard constitution of 1946 – 7 (without the consultation of Nigerians). The exercise was seen by the "indigenous" ethnic groups as diabolically executed towards the actualization of the long-nurtured hidden agenda of turning Jos metropolis into a Hausa enclave (it was also seen as the Hausa in Jos took advantage of belonging to the same religious faith with the head of state). One major feature of the exercise was the excision and lumping together of the "indigenous" ethnic groups into Jos South LGA, a scenario that gave the Hausa in Jos enhanced political leverage. The closest Native of the area the Anaguta, Berom, and Afizere upheld that the surreptitious manner in which the new LGA was created was meant to alienate them from their land. To further demonstrate their perceived control of the land, the Hausa, in Jos ascribed to themselves a very strange name of "Jassawa" (the

[9] Intervi*ew : Wash J.P.Interview, Jos June* 2013
[10] i*bidem*
[11] *Borok A.M---p,117*

people of Jos) to the embarrassment and discomfort of the three "indigenous" ethnic groups. By this act, a seed of discord was sown as the battle for the soul of the new LGA began in earnest. These emerging opposed positions had prepared a cake of gun powder and paved way for successive show-downs between these contending parties. It did not take long for the problem to boil over.[12]

In the year 1994, the state government under Col. Mohammed Mana constituted a caretaker committee for Jos North LGA and appointed one Alhaji Sanusi Mato, a recent Hausa immigrant to Jos as Chairman. This was the last straw that broke the camel's back as a strong protest was mounted by the Anaguta, Berom, and Afizere which caused the Jos uprisings of April 12, 1994. The Col. Mana administration constituted the justice J.A. Fiberemosa Commission of Inquiry into the uprisings, the reports of which never saw the light of day, clearly because the commission's findings turned out to be against Col. Mana's expectations. The position of the commission justifies being cited in full for the aim of emphasis.[13] …… an "indigene" of Jos is one whose descendants were an inhabitant of Jos, beyond living memory. This does not consist of any individual who may not recall from where his grandfather or father left his indigenous home for Jos as a permanent home, resident there as of choice; or who is unaware about from where his family relocated to Jos forever in search of better living or the course of his trade. But a "citizen" of Jos may be credited the position of a citizen of Jos who is eligible to the qualified pleasure of rights benefited by an "individual" of Jos. Considering the above careful thought or consideration, we allow the right of the Afizere, Anaguta, and Berom tribes, and to state that they are "indigenes" of Jos. But as to the Fulani – Hausa people's supposition, we make bold, on the proof at our disposal, to instruct them that they can be eligible only as "citizens" of JosNo wonder! In 1991, local government election, Alhaji Inuwa Mato a Hausa man in Jos won the chairmanship election under the platform of NRC.

This singular victory strengthened the Hausa NRC loyalty for they saw it as an opportunity to carve their political boundary which they will always use to have political control of the heartbeat of the state. As far as an indigene of Jos was concerned the Hausa and their allies are not indigenes of the state they came to the Plateau during the WWI and WWII labour conscription by the mining companies therefore in as much as Plateau man cannot go to Kano or Katsina to vie for any election, is a misnomer for a Hausa man to do so in his state. Based on the report above, a Hausa man is never an indigene because his descendants were brought by a colonial business, not beyond living memory. But this report seems to negate the constitution which says any person that stays in a place for more than ten years qualifies to be an indigene of that place.[14]

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[12]Egwu S.G., *Ethnicity and Citizenship in Urban Nigeria: The Jos Case 1960-2000*. PhD Thesis Department of Political Science 2000-p. 61
[13]*ibidem*
[14]*ibidem*

Average Monthly Size of labour Force Per Annum on Tin Mines

Year	Amount	Year	Amount	Year	Amount
1911	5,832	1921	14,982	1931	20,763
1912	12,037	1922	13,512	1932	18,089
1913	16,883	1923	19,129	1933	14,911
1914	17,316	1924	22,702	1934	20,138
1915	14,316	1925	31,375	1935	21,390
1916	19,250	1926	37,115	1936	24,390
1917	21,817	1927	29,959	1937	36,142
1918	25,568	1928	38,578	1938	31,805
1919	22,289	1929	30,072	1989	34,074
1920	22,976	1930.			

Source: Nigerian Mines Department Annual Report, 1939.

Racial distribution of mines, Jos Division,1930 Based on the 1931 Census Tabulation

Tribe	Amount	Tribe	Amount
Hausa	6,981	Munshe (Tiv)	153
Beriberi	1906	Bolewa	151
Bagirmi	1677	Nupe	151
Fulani	1097	Asaba	66
Tera	649	Berom	55
Kerikerii	590	Other Southern Province	165
Arab (Shuwa)	429	Native foreigners	16
Igbo	249		
Yoruba	225	Total	14,817
Babwe	221		
Zaberma	154		

Source: Bill Freud p. 85

From the tables above it is clear that there was massive labour conscription to the mining camps and the Hausa group and other Moslem populations formed the largest conscripts and it is this population that formed the JASSAWA in Jos today. It appears that the common bond of the JASSAWA is a religion, not even ethnic affiliation. This is because Kanuri, Nupe, Tera, Fulani, Zabarma, Bagirmi Shuwa, etc today all accepted the Hausa identity. It does not even stop there the plateau people that long converted to Islam and are staying among the Hausa are today seen and accepted as among the Hausa group. A good example is the family of Yahaya Kwande a Goemai man from Quanpan LGA of Plateau who

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settled in the Jos LGA amidst the Hausa. In the 2011 general election, his son was overwhelmingly voted by the Hausa when he contested for election to represent Jos North/Bassa Federal Constituency in the National Assembly.[15] This victory generated tension as the indigenous group saw it as a situation equal to traditional war defeat. By 1993, the democratic government under the military rule of Babangida was over and by the end of 1993; a new military leadership emerged, under General Sani Abacha. This leadership appointed new military administrators to man the states and also appointed new chairmen to man the local government areas. In the case of Jos North, a Hausa man was appointed as the caretaker or sole administrator of the council as we have mentioned elsewhere, which led to a big political fracas in the Jos metropolis.

In 1997, like a thunderbolt, the tinder-box exploded when the Bukuru/Gyero crisis erupted between the Berom and the Hausa with very devastating consequences on lives and properties, these continued to 2001, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2010, and the up to date daily insurgence. The death of Sani Abacha in 1998 ushered in a new political dispensation in the account of Plateau state and Nigeria at large this was because Abdulsalam, Abacha's successor, promised a transition to civil rule. In the process, new political parties came up with PDP whose pioneer leader was Chief S. D. Lar a Plateau man, AD – predominantly a Yoruba party, and All Peoples Party (APP) with a strong base in the core north. In 1998, in the local government election, PDP in the Plateau won an overwhelming majority for it was seen as a party controlled by one of their own, Chief Solomon Lar. This victory continued up to the National election where PDP won almost all the positions in the state. In fact, at this point, PDP did not seem to have much opposition in Plateau state. Even among the Hausa population, the opposition was there but minimal.[16]

No wonder! Jos North Local Government election was won by a PDP candidate Hon. Frank Taddy a Christian from the Anaguta ethnic group. Though, after the general election of 1999, APP won some principal Northern states i.e. Kebbi, Sokoto, Borno, Yobe, Jigawa, Zamfara, and Gombe that was not able to impact much on the Hausa population of Jos. The reason was simple, Kano which they respected as the centre stage of Northern politics was the PDP and also a place they visited often for their businesses. Two, Bauchi state neighbouring Plateau state was also a PDP state. These reasons helped in maintaining balance followership of APP and PDP among the Hausa population of Jos[17]

By the year 2000, there was a massive political change in the entire Northern region. This was due to the ushering in of the Sharia legal and political system by Governor Alhaji Yerima Bakura of Zamfara state. This political development promoted the party of the governor in the Northern region. By 2002, all individuals who wanted to vie for political offices started making political formations and planning against the 2003 general election in that trend,

[15]*Field Note Report in Jos 4/2019*
[16]*ibidem*
[17]*Field Note Report on Jos 6/2019*

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General Mohammadu Buhari declared his intention to vie for the presidency under the platform of APP on coming on board, changed the nomenclature of the party to ANPP i.e. All Nigerian people's party and the symbol of the party was a peeled cob of maize.[18]

The coming of Sharia and Buhari gave ANPP a boost in the Plateau, it was seen by the Hausa as a party that has reverence for Islam and its holy book Qur'an, as it was an APP Governor that brought the issue of Sharia as a code of state jurisprudence and Buhari, was also seen as a non-nonsense leader owing to his WAI policy of 1983 – 84 and the role he played as Petroleum Trust Fund boss during the Abacha regime. These reasons boosted the activities of ANPP. In the Plateau, ANPP became stronger as Mr. Jonah David Jang having felt being denied the PDP flag to contest for Governorship decided to move to ANPP; this time, the Berom and the Hausa formed a political marriage. The Hausa for Buhari and Sharia in the North, the Berom for Jang to become the next governor of Plateau state, a post a Berom man never held before. In this marriage, the Hausa population supported Jang's candidature but he lost the election to governor Dariye by a gap of only about 6000 votes. The Berom on their part supported the candidature of a Hausa man for Jos-North Bassa Federal constituency Alhaji Salihu Nakande who won the election. To further strengthen the winning chances of Jang, the Berom conceded the seat of senator of Plateau North District to a minority Amo man Senator Timothy Adudu. A post never before held by a non-Berom man owing to their dense population in the District. At the end of the day, the political alliances turned not in the favour of the Berom because Jang lost the gubernatorial election to the incumbent governor [19]

After the 2003 general election, by 2004, a timetable was designed for local government polls. This time around, the Hausa group was determined to produce the next chairman of Jos North L.G.C. While the other groups i.e. the "indigenes" were also determined to avert that. The Hausa population felt that since they won the federal seat of Jos North – Bassa constituency, they can still do the same come LGA polls. Aside from that Jos had already witnessed the 2001, 6 September crisis that claimed many lives, and mutual trust was now long gone. These made them rally around to see that they won the chairmanship seat of the Jos North LGA. The state government under the leadership of Governor Joshua Dariye saw a potential danger as the contending forces are all determined to win the election. On the part of the Berom, they needed compensation because they came out virtually empty in the 2003 political alliances and needed something to fall on. On seeing the desperation on all sides, the government decided to suspend the election in Jos North LGA and appointed Mr. Danladi Atu an Afizere man to man the council[20]

By 2007, it was another time for the general election. This time around, the governor was illegally impeached and a Berom man his deputy became the

[18]*ibidem*
[19]*Field Note in Bukuru 12/2013*
[20]*Field Note Report in Jos 12/2013*

governor. All governorship aspirants on opposition parties in the 2003 election now came back to PDP to vie for the governorship. By this time Plateau state had witnessed uncountable crises apart from that of 2001, there were 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2006 crises. The Hausa population in Jos and Bukuru and Barkin Ladi because of their proximity to the Berom ethnic group felt the Berom who were the closest to the mines camp and the present towns were their big adversary and therefore they should not support any Berom candidate in the election race. But after the PDP primary election in December 2006, Jang a Berom man emerged as its gubernatorial flag bearer. In ACN, Pam Dung Gyang another Berom man emerged as its flag bearer and these were the two strong political parties. This left them with no option but rather be apolitical to the governorship election but made sure the seat of Jos North – Bassa Federal Constituency is maintained and that they did under the platform of a different political party, DPP. After the 2007 election, Jang won the seat of the governorship of Plateau State [21]

Before coming to power, his campaign slogan just like that of Lar in the 1970s was "Redemption 2007". On coming to power, the Jos North Local Government Secretariat was shifted from the Hausa-dominated area to Pankshin Street, the former Jos Metropolitan Development Board office. This act was interpreted by the Hausa to mean he wants to keep them off the L.G.C., the second move was the reallocation of the office of Gbong Gwom Jos from where it had been to Christian-dominated area and the third issue was the proposal of implementing the Jos master plan this act will require demolition of houses built out of the plan and also land acquired illegally or without Certificate of Occupancy This policy is seen as an attempt to destabilize the Hausa settlement.

In 1924, Jos Divisional officer wrote a memo to the resident of Bauchi demanding whether there is compensation for the land used to settle the mining company labourers and Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba migrants, the resident answered there was no compensation. In 1954, a colonial surveyor came to the Gangare settlement and discovered that it was illegally occupied by Hausa immigrants. [22] Such issues instill fear in the minds of the Hausa people and treated the government policy with suspicion – a grant attempt to get them evacuated. This development made them begin to see the slogan "Redemption" during Jang's campaign to mean annexing their "land"[23]In a letter dated 5/2/1924, the Divisional officer in charge sent a correspondent letter and raised the matter with the President of Bauchi:[24] "I can find no record in my office or that of the station magistrate that any compensation has ever been paid to pagans for the land now forming the Jos government station. Still, you kindly inform me if there is any record in the Bauchi office".[25]

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[21]*INEC, Jos Office Plateau Election 2007*
[22] *Borok 2017 opcit p.112*
[23]*Field Note March 2014*
[24]NAK Jos Pro Lay/20 Vol I/ PCJ TOU/534 *Tour of Minister of Land and Survey to Jos* ,September, 1959 Vide
[25]*ibidem*

In confirmation of the fact that the compensation was not paid, Resident Bauchi wrote in a memo No. 13/1903 para 4 18/2/1924 to the District Officer of Jos to say that "… in the meantime, I am not very disturbed myself because the pagans so much appreciate the benefits they derive from the development at Jos that I think they regard themselves well compensated for any loss of land".[26] In 1959, a reference is made to an extract from PCJ. Tou/534. Tour of the minister of lands and survey to Jos September 1959, this tour, glaringly depicts that during the colonial state, most houses were built without the land being bought by the builders.[27]

"..The minister was shown Gangare – Jos where an unauthorized settlement has sprung up on a mining lease, but the lease had done nothing about it. As the law stands, it is very difficult to eject squatters. Part of the settlement has spread into the township and one householder had built his house over a beacon…"[28]
With this mentally perceived prejudice among the Hausa groups, the election became a survival matter when the government decided to conduct a Local Government election in Jos North. A Berom man was filled in as chairmanship candidate for PDP and the Hausa elements who were in PDP felt the process that made him emerge was biased and therefore undemocratic. This time around they were determined to produce a chairman; perhaps this will help them avert the governor's policy proposals for Jos Town. To do this, they filled in a Hausa candidate under the platform of ANPP. So Timothy Buba a Berom man stood for PDP while Aminu Baba a Hausa man was for ANPP thus a battle line was drawn because the outcome of the result will show the cultural group that has the highest number of the electorate. In the case of the Igbo and Yoruba, they never went for chairmanship posts and instead filled councillorship candidates in the wards they knew they constitute the majority in terms of electoral power.

The Local Government election was slated for 15th March 2008 the election was conducted but along the line, a broadcast was made annulling the election that it was full of irregularities, therefore, it lack credibility. This action by the state electoral body, PLASIEC generated heated arguments from different quarters as some political opponents accused the government that it was the fear of eminent defeat that made the Governor quickly do that. The Hausa community of Jos was of the view that it was the clear emerging victory of their candidate in Jos North that made the governor decide to buy time and enable him to prepare better and ensure the defeat of the Hausa. As if this criticism were not enough, some further said that the PLASIEC staff were the former governor's boys ie Joshua Dariye who at the creation of the Electoral body, were

[26]PIDAN: *The History, Ownership, Establishment of Jos and Misconception about the Recurrent Jos Conflicts* Agapson Modern Prints Jos 2010
[27]*ibidem*
[28] NAK Jos Pro Lay/20 Vol I/ PCJ TOU/534 *Tour of Minister of Land and Survey to Jos* ,September, 1959 Vide.

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employed that made them Dariye's appointees and thus manipulated the election to bring back the political class that employed them to relevance by winning the LGA election in the state. This might be the reason why when the election was canceled, it took the state government eight months to re-conduct the election and before that was even done; all the staff of PLASIEC employed by Governor Dariye were transferred from the commission to other agencies, and ministries and new ones were employed to ensure their loyalty. Be that as it may,, Local government in Nigeria since the return to democracy in 1999 has been the business of the governors to make sure that their puppets are put in place to ensure the continuity of the so-called Joint Account policy which has made our LGAs to become the milking cows of the governors. For that, local government election is usually a mere manipulation of the Governors together with the state electoral bodies to achieve that. This and the ethnic cum religious conflicts could be said to be the reason de tre for the cancellation of the election. To explain further what transpired after the election, the views of the Jos Muslim Umma Information Desk a media interview committee presented a fact file on the Jos-North 28/29/November 2008 post-election genocide which is given below

"Jos North the commercial nerve centre of Plateau state one of the most cosmopolitan Local Government Areas in Nigeria woke up on the early morning of November 28 to the sound of gunshots. Moments later most of us wandering what the gunshots were, we later understood it was full flesh mayhem. A day before 28 November 2008 Local Government elections were held statewide. It seemed the most peaceful conducted ever in the history of Local Government until that Friday morning the sky was covered in smoke, the city's air had a louder order and the sound of gunshots mixed with the crisis of help provided a soundtrack reminiscent of the holy wood movie Hotel Rwanda about the Rwandan genocide of 1994. Indeed this one two was a genocide another government-backed genocide like its counterparts of September 7, 2001, and May 2004 in Yelwa Shendam. The clear reading thing about it is that the targets were the "non-indigene settler communities of Hausa Fulani Muslims". Government involvement became glaring as the corpses came coming in. Most of the corpses carried bullet wounds, police bullet wounds. For the duration of the uprising, the police who were constitutionally burdened with the duty of defending property and life and maintaining law and the order went on the rampage in the predominately Hausa – Fulani neighbourhood. Ali Kazaure, Abdulsami street, Anguwan Rogo, Anguwan Rimi, Anguwan Keke, Katako-Shagari Kona, Jos Central, Massalacin Juma'a street, Sabon Fegi, Nassarawa, Rikkos, Tudun Wada and Gangare. The Local Media Plateau Radio and Television Cooperation (PRTVC) should receive a year's award for a heated radio for providing the assai lance with gingering music and giving a high bias coverage of the crisis, afterward. Lives were not the only casualties' properties running into billions of Naira belonging to the same Hausa Fulani were stolen and destroyed subsequently; including schools, business premises, Mosques, residential buildings, and markets. What could be seen as serious after warranting the elimination of a whole student population –in their dormitory and classrooms who apart from being helpless know nothing about what

happened in their political ward except for their social studies lesson? There is just one answer to this, a grant plan to annihilate the Hausa Fulani population and other Muslims who constituted 70% of Jos North population. This annihilation started coming to a long term ago with the government denying them the right to indigene ship, employment in the Plateau civil service, and scholarship awards. It further goes to denying them Federal appointments as non-indigenes.

Elections were held peacefully but surprisingly collation and counting of votes which was to take place at Jos North Local Government Secretariat along Ibrahim Dasuki Street in central Jos were taken at the last hour to kabong village (A Berom dominated area) at the outskirt of the city. Kabong village incidentally is a Berom settlement under Du District where both the supposed winner and the governor hail from. Votes were collated and during counting Aminu Baba a Hausa Fulani led the count which the "indigene" was not comfortable with it, hence they began assaulting them in their presence. The rest is a story of The Hausa community having presented this information before the whole world started winning the sympathy of certain sections of the global community. To counter these assertions the state via its various media agencies i.e. Plateau Radio Television Cooperation PRTVC and the STANDARD News Paper by arguing that the crisis was not triggered by the elections, that the Hausa communities started showering abuses and even got to one of the agents of PDP pieced him with a knife before the results of the election were made public. What if the results were announced before the Hausa began their assault against Berom and the Christian community this could have justified the political cause of the crisis. Since that was not yet done and the crisis was sparked by the Hausa community, this depicted the point, that the Hausa community had a granted Islamic agenda on the ground before the day of the election. Therefore, the Hausa community started the crisis on religious grounds. What if it were not a religious uprising why the attacks against Igbo, Yoruba, churches, and Christians instead of government establishments like schools, judiciary outfits, etc. (This was the position of the Government)[29]

The argument never stopped there in an attempt to ascertain what led to the crisis, the Federal Government under the late President Umaru Musa Yar Adu'a decided to set up a judicial commission of inquiry to try to unravel the prongs and cons of the matter. But the state government quickly reacted by establishing its judicial commission of inquiry rejecting the decision of the president on the ground that is a local government matter which is enshrined in the residual list of the Federal Constitution and therefore, the presidency lacks the constitutional and legal merit to do so. The crisis now tore the state government and federal governments apart as to who had the legal backing to do so. On the side of the Hausa community, they felt it was only when the federal government comes in that the truth will be made known. On the side of the Berom and other communities, they felt, the Hausa want to take the advantage of their ethnic and religious affiliation with the president and put

[29]*Borok 2017:175 opcit*

blame on Jang and his government. Last, there were two commissions of inquiry that of the federal government which was stationed at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies in Kuru Jos South L.G.A. and the state government commission situated at Azi Nyako Youth Centre in Jos. The controversy never ended there, as the Hausa community recognized the Federal commission and went and testified before it, and on the other side, the Berom and Christian community recognized the state commission and went and testified before it[30](Invariably, the report of the federal commission concluded that the crisis was caused as a result of government political plan to impose it political toadies and associates to man the L.G.C. which the other commission concluded that it was an unprovoked crisis triggered off by religious fanatics among the Hausa community and this has been the position of the state government who always eared out via its information commissioner and Director of Research and statistics government House, GNS Pwajok.[31]

Since, the 2008 post-election violence, the Jos environment had been witnessing incessant crises ranging from Fulani attacks, unknown gunmen attacks, church bombings, and attacks on the Muslims at open prayers during the 2011 Sallah Eid El-fatir open prayer in Rukuba road Gada biyu in Jos[32]

In conclusion, we can deduct from the forgoing narrative analysis that the need to have control over Jos and its environs made individuals and groups jump into politics in an attempt to do this, the elitist class from the economic group, ethnic groups, religious groups, political party group devised ways of dividing the people to attain their political ends. This very political game which was aimed at having control of the richest local government in the state has been bedeviling the area from the colonial era to the present. The benefits of the colonial elite, the religious elite, the ethnic elite, and the party elite always accrued to these elitist formations while the masses were and are always left in a perpetual state of poverty that at any slightest provocation, crisis often erupted.

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