

Title of Article: Democracy and the Challenge of Ethno-Nationalism in Nigeria's Fourth Republic:
Interrogating Institutional Mechanics

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Abstract: Nigeria is an amalgam of rival ethnic groups in the contest for power and resources. These rivalries have reflected in the political processes that sometimes threatened the corporate existence of the country. Right from the constitutional conferences organized during the era of colonialism down to the ones organized after independence, the issue of fashioning out an acceptable system of co-existence has remained contentious. However, the intervention of the military in the political affairs of the country and their long duration in governance, succeeded in abating the full manifestation of ethno-nationalism. But the return of the country to democracy in 1999 has created conditions for suppressed ethno-national grievances to explode, throwing up issues beyond the capacities of democratic institutions. The nature and proliferation of these ethno-nationalism manifestations in the country, is a threat to the survival of the country's nascent democracy and its corporate existence. As a result, the democratic administration was compelled to resort to the tactics of the receded military administrations in management of these problems. The paper therefore, examined this emboldened ethno-nationalism that has accompanied the Fourth Republic dispensation and how state institutions are responding to them. These issues and their implication on the process of democratization were the focal areas in the paper.

