

# Curbing the Challenges of National Integration with Alfred Schutz's Intersubjective Phenomenology

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## Abstract

The peoples of Nigeria have been in one boat since the amalgamation of 1914. Yet, from all indications, national integration remains a mirage. This paper applies Alfred Schutz's notion of intersubjectivity to solve this problem. Schutz's phenomenology is phenomenology of the natural attitude. For him, the essence of the social world is its commonness; a world shared by a multiplicity of individuals living and acting within it in mutually interlocking activities. The world of daily life is a reality experienced within the natural attitude by the alert adult who acts within, and upon it; amidst his or her fellow human beings. This natural attitude is the state of consciousness in which one accepts the reality of everyday life as a given. From the onset, the world is not the private world of the solitary individual but an intersubjective world in which we act in co-existence with others. The other is a psycho-physical ego, which is experienced as another 'I' and not as an object to be used. In this light, the world is more of a community of interdependent beings; and none can afford to be an island. Therefore, it seems counter-productive that in a country like ours, certain groups continue to work against integration in spite of obvious negative effects. This paper argues that the knowledge of any other conscious ego as another 'I' can minimise the barriers of national integration in Nigeria and foster a sense of belonging for all.

**Keywords:** Intersubjectivity, Integration, Nigeria, Phenomenology, Schutz

## Introduction

Alfred Schutz's intersubjective phenomenology has Husserlian roots. Schutz had hoped that Husserl will succeed in solving for him the problem of intersubjectivity at the transcendental level but discovered that Husserl's efforts in the fifth of Cartesian

Meditations could not adequately address the question of intersubjectivity. Husserl was limited by the fact that his idea of intersubjectivity has to do with the constitution of the consciousness of the transcendental ego in the way my own psycho-physical 'I' is constituted. This will then mean that the other has sense only in reference to me – the problem of the absolute 'I' (Solipsism).

Schutz could not agree with Husserl's transcendental intersubjectivity which is the study of other minds. For Schutz's particular concerns, the problem of intersubjectivity is primarily intra-mundane. Explaining Schutz's view, Natanson notes that, human beings, are born into a distinctively social world which precedes any epistemic effort of consciousness to create the being of the "relationship."<sup>1</sup> This is the pregivenness of sociality which can be explained phenomenologically but never be used to establish the primordial fact of intersubjectivity. Schutz maintains:

Intersubjectivity is not a problem of constitution which can be solved within the transcendental sphere, but it is rather a datum of the life-world. It is the fundamental ontological category of human existence in the world and therefore, of all philosophical anthropology. As long as man is born of woman, intersubjectivity and the we-relationship will be the foundation of all other categories of human existence.<sup>2</sup>

This shows that sociality is always an already existent milieu of man in relation with other men in both spatial and temporal terms. Schutz's intersubjectivity is therefore, an *a priori* type which has to do with the pregivenness of sociality and not a study of other minds as in Husserl.

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1 Maurice Natanson, "Alfred Schutz Symposium: The Pregivenness of Sociality", in *Selected Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*. Edited by Don. IHDE and Richard M. Zaner, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1977), Pg. 110.

2 Alfred Schutz. *Collected papers, Vol. III. Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*. Edited by I. Schutz with an Introduction by Aron Gurwitsch, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), Pg. 82.

### **Intersubjectivity as an Intra-Mundane Problem**

Schutz divided the world of social reality into multiple spheres which he calls finite provinces of meaning.<sup>3</sup> But what he considers to be most important is the stratum of reality of the world of daily life, which he calls paramount reality.<sup>4</sup> It is the world of the natural attitude of daily life in which the wide-awake, grown-up man acts in it and upon it amidst his fellow-men and experiences it as a reality. Schutz notes that the “world of daily life shall mean the intersubjective world which existed long before our birth, experienced and interpreted by others, our predecessors, as an organized world.”<sup>5</sup> It is not anyone’s private world but a realm of existence peopled with others from the onset; a historical space which predates my existence and will subsist after my death. This world of daily life is both historical and cultural. Schutz maintains that “it is a world of culture, because from the onset the life-world is the universe of significations to us; that is, a framework of meaning which we have to interpret, and of interrelations of meaning which we institute only through our action in this life-world.”<sup>6</sup> Hence, it is an intersubjective world where we live, as men among other men, bound to them through common interest, aims and objectives; understanding others and in turn, being an object of understanding by others.

Another significant characteristic of the world of daily life is that it is a world taken for granted. Richard M. Zaner observes that “the world in which I live, work and act is taken for granted by me as my reality; so far as I must come to terms with it and take my bearings within it, I must understand it, and to this extent it is given to my experience and interpretation.”<sup>7</sup> This our physical interaction with others in the world, and the environment tends to be taken as a common reality, and thereby

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3 see Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Edited by Maurice Natanson, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), Pg. 207.

4 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 226.

5 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 208.

6 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 113.

7 Richard M. Zaner, “Theory of Intersubjectivity: Alfred Schutz”, *Social Research*, Vol. 28. No. 1, Pg. 73.

taken for granted. It is given to one's experience and interpretation but not exclusively because of its character as an intersubjective world. It is a socio-cultural world organized and interpreted by our predecessors, contemporaries and of course, our successors.

The world of daily life also known as the world of working is at once the framework and the object of a person's actions. A pragmatic attitude towards this world makes one to constantly act on it and also experience its resistance to one's actions. These actions towards the world are located within the spatio-temporal framework. In this light, Zaner explains, "the world is my world and it is organised into a hierarchy of zones within my actual, potential and restorable reach, within which is my immediately available 'manipulatory sphere' with its own typical spatio-temporal 'horizons'".<sup>8</sup> These zones of interlocking actual and potential experiences are taken for granted by many as the unquestioned, but always questionable matrix of their actions. However, our actions are inter-actions due to the nature of the world as the world of relations.

The world of daily life in which the wide-awake individual lives and acts within it is intersubjectively constituted from the start. It is a social and a pregiven world existing before we are born. According to Natanson, "sociality consist of man responding to his fellow man within the taken-for-grantedness of the intersection of parts of their biographical situations and their reciprocity of perspectives."<sup>9</sup> The face-to-face relationship is the systemic root of a shared world, but the direct encounter with a fellow man occurs within the frame of social inter-action. In the face-to-face relationship a 'we-relation' is constituted. Schutz makes it clear that:

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8 Richard M. Zaner, "Theory of Intersubjectivity: Alfred Schutz", Pg. 74.

9 Maurice Natanson, "Alfred Schutz Symposium: The Pregiveness of Sociality", in *Selected Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*, Pg. 110.

The basic we-relationship is already given to me by [the] mere fact that I am born into the world of directly experienced social reality. From this basic relationship is derived the original validity of all my direct experiences of particular fellow men and also my knowledge that there is a larger world of my contemporaries who I am not now experiencing directly.<sup>10</sup>

The directly experienced social reality which Schutz refers to here is similar to what Scheler call the pregiven sociality. However, the former's thoughts about intersubjectivity were not geared towards a study of other minds as was the case in Husserl.

In his concept of person where Scheler presented his idea of intersubjectivity, he made the community so essential to man that the social dimension became equated to the very constitutive factor of man's being. Man is social *a priori*. Scheler argues that "a man tends, in the first instance, to live more in others than in himself; more in the community than in his own individual self"<sup>11</sup>. In a similar way Owens lays emphasis on the community, "man begins life completely integrated in a life community (Gemeinschaft) and only gradually marks off more and more clearly the boundaries of the self"<sup>12</sup>. In this pregiven sociality a face-to-face situation of 'Thou-orientation' is constituted. That is, social relations proper are characterised by Thou-orientation with reciprocity of perspectives. For Schutz, the "Thou-orientation presupposes the presence of the fellow-man in temporal and spatial immediacy. The essential feature of the Thou-orientation is the recognition that a fellow-man is before me; the orientation does not presuppose that I

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10 Alfred Schutz, *Phenomenology of the Social World*. Edited by George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert, (St. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1967), Pg. 165.

11 M. Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, trans, Peter Heath, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954), Pg. 247.

12 Thomas J. Owens, *Phenomenology and Intersubjectivity: Contemporary Interpretations of the Interpersonal Situation*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), Pg. 90.

know what are precisely the particular characteristics of the fellow-man".<sup>13</sup>

The formal concept of Thou-orientation refers to the pure experience of another self as a human being, alive and conscious, while the specific content of that consciousness remains undefined.<sup>14</sup> This means that one cannot have the pure experience of another self in terms of the content of one's consciousness but can understand one's actions as they occur in a vivid present. This Thou-orientation can either be one-sided or reciprocal. However, it is the reciprocal Thou-orientation which takes place within a face-to-face situation (known to Schutz as a pure-we relation) that constitutes genuine intersubjectivity. This is an intra-mundane ego co-existence (intersubjectivity) which takes for granted the reality of the fact that the world is our common manipulative sphere. We exist with others within the world of directly experienced social reality.<sup>15</sup>

The world of directly experienced social reality is the basis of the convergence of man with fellow man. For Schutz, the foundation of face-to-face relationship is sharing of time, both inner and outer, with the other. In playing together, marching together, dancing together, or making music and love together, there is presupposed a "turning-in relationship" – the ground of all communication. It is this communication that gives the outer world its paramount character.<sup>16</sup> This is because communication can occur only within the reality of the outer world, that is, within the everyday "working" world.<sup>17</sup> This mundane world of social reality is paramount and intersubjective reality. It is the world in which we live and interact with others as subjects. This inter-action is possible through communication.

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13 A. Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*. Edited by Arvid Broderon, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1976), Pg. 24.

14 A. Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*, Pg. 24.

15 Alfred Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*, Pg. 24 – 25.

16 Alfred Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*, Pg. 173.

17 Richard M. Zaner, "Theory of Intersubjectivity: Alfred Schutz", Pg. 76.

### **The General Thesis of the Alter Ego's Existence and Meaning Constitution**

Schutz defines "the world of daily life as a reality experienced within the natural attitude by the alert adult who acts within it and upon it amidst his or her fellow human beings. The natural attitude is a state of consciousness in which we accept the reality of everyday life as a given".<sup>18</sup> Though Schutz had taken the reality of the world of daily life for granted, he was still concerned with the general thesis of the alter ego's existence. He was not concerned with how the 'thou' is constituted in the other's ego but rather with the intended meaning of the other's actions in the vivid present. Schutz's major preoccupation in his intersubjective phenomenology was the study of man. According to Schutz "the object we shall be studying, therefore, is the human being who is looking at the world from within the natural attitude".<sup>19</sup> Man is born within the social world with fellow men and takes their existence for granted without questioning. He understands others as existing as psycho-physical alter egos who share with him both a community of space and time.

Schutz notes that "the Thou (or other person) is conscious, and his stream of consciousness is temporal in character, exhibiting the same basic form as mine".<sup>20</sup> This means that my conscious acts can as well be the conscious acts of any other psycho-physical ego. Any conscious ego is capable of selecting and performing intentional acts and bestowing this acts with meaning. It also lays down meaning - contexts in layers, building up its own world of experience open to interpretations. Accordingly, Schutz notes that "the Thou interprets its lived experiences, it gives meaning to them, and this meaning is intended meaning".<sup>21</sup> It is therefore, important to note that, though the other is present before one's consciousness as a psycho-physical unity, his immediate presentation to one is his

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18 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg.208.

19 Alfred Schutz. *Phenomenology of the Social World*, Pg. 98.

20 Alfred Schutz. *Phenomenology of the Social World*, Pg. 98.

21 Alfred Schutz. *Phenomenology of the Social World*, Pg. 98.

body. And since one cannot live through his consciousness, knowledge of the exact intended meaning of the alter ego is difficult. What one can observe as the intended meaning of the other is his actions and the meanings one may input in the other's actions.

Apart from mental telepathy (if it does exist) knowledge of the other or any encounter with the other is possible only through the medium of events occurring in and produced by the body. Zaner noted that Schutz believes that appresentation provides the clue for understanding how the other is first constituted as such in one's experience. The other is given to one as a psycho-physical entity. His body is given to one's experience originally, immediately, as a purely physical thing, as an object of sensuous perception. His mental life, however, is only co-present, that is, it is appresented as the psychical component of the concrete psycho-physical unity.<sup>22</sup> This means that, the other is not given to one just as a consciousness but as a psycho-physical unity. More important to Schutz, as Zaner notes, is the fact that "by means of this appresentational reference through which the other is first constituted as other, "a common communicative common environment" is established".<sup>23</sup> This elicits the thinking that once the other is apprehended as other, it becomes possible for higher-level connections to develop. And it is precisely this environment that Schutz has described as paramount reality.<sup>24</sup>

It is now evident that the subjective meaning of another person's actions need not be identical with the meaning which his perceived external behaviour has for me as an observer. What seems to be open to one's interpretation is the motivational context of the other's actions. Schutz defines "actions as motivated behaviour".<sup>25</sup> These actions have in-order-to-motive and the because-motive. For Schutz, "in-order-to-motive means the state of affairs, the end, which the action has been

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22 Richard M. Zaner, "Theory of Intersubjectivity: Alfred Schutz", *Social Research*, Vol. 28. No. 1, Pg. 79.

23 Richard M. Zaner, "Theory of Intersubjectivity: Alfred Schutz", Pg. 80.

24 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 226.

25 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 68.



undertaken to bring about." From the point of view of the actor this class of motives refers to the future. This in-order-to-motives is however, motivated by the because-motive.<sup>26</sup> Schutz defines the because-motive as "that project of the action which motivates the action itself".<sup>27</sup> Thus, from the point of view of the actor, the because-motive refers to his past experiences.

It is then, important to note that though, the existence of the other person is taken for granted and accepted naively as we accept the reality of the natural attitude, the reality of the other existing with one within the social world affects one's existence. His motives and actions have a multiplier effects on the intersubjective human community. This life-world presents itself for interpretation by oneself and others. This means that one belongs to the life-world of others as others belong to one's life-world. A person posits meaningful acts with expectation that others will interpret them meaningfully. Thus, according to Schutz, on these reciprocal acts of positing meaning and of interpretation of meaning, a person's social world of mundane intersubjectivity is built; it is also the social world of others, and all other social and cultural phenomena are founded upon it".<sup>28</sup> It then means that, the alter ego (the other) is to one another "I" because he is a psycho-physical ego existing within a common life-world with the capacity to create meaning and interpretation as one does. The other is not a tool or a mere object to be used.

### **Schutz's Intersubjectivity and National Integration in Nigeria**

Having proposed the general thesis that the alter ego's existence is the experience of the other person in a vivid present within the natural attitude, Schutz has also sought to establish that man is intersubjective *a priori* (Pregiven Sociality). With this pregivness of sociality, the subjective meaning of group membership is constituted. Schutz maintains that, "the

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26 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 69.

27 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 70.

28 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 135.

subjective meaning of the group, the meaning a group has for its members, has frequently been described in terms of a feeling among the members that they belong together, or that they share common interests".<sup>29</sup> Even though Schutz never uses the term national integration, it may be inferred that his idea of intersubjectivity is akin, at least in one sense, to the notion of national integration. That is, a shared space where none can afford to stand alone.

On the other hand, Bello-Imam has adopted a structural approach in his definition of national integration; he views integration in terms of "the extent to which parts interact and complement each other in order to constitute a viable whole".<sup>30</sup> It is within this framework that national integration is considered as involving a process of holding tightly together the various nationalities or ethnic groups and institutions in a dovetailed manner through the bonds of conceived structures, norms and values. Bello-Imam notes that this kind of national integration is the process by which hitherto distinctive and autonomous peoples and cultures [are] incorporated into a multi-national state [which] can achieve higher levels of mutual trust, cooperation and independence, shared values, common identity and national consciousness"<sup>31</sup>.

From the foregoing, national integration may be said to entail the situation where multi-ethnic, multi-interest, and generally heterogeneous groups, come together to form a nation based on mutually agreed principles. In the case of Nigeria, the Constitution, together with other instruments of nation building, are supposed to guarantee unity, equity and justice for all. Ideally speaking, everyone in Nigeria is supposed to have a sense of belonging. However, national integration in Nigeria is encumbered by grave challenges such as tribalism, nepotism, religious bigotry, selfish or clannish political interests, corruption and several others.

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29 Alfred Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*, Pg. 251.

30 I. B. Bello-Imam, "The Problems of National Integration in Nigeria", *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48, No. 2, (Apr – Jun, 1987), Pg. 266.

31 I. B. Bello-Imam, "The Problems of National Integration in Nigeria", Pg. 266.

In *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Achebe captures the Nigerian condition:

Nothing in Nigeria's political history captures her problem of national integration more graphically than the chequered fortune of the word 'tribe' in her vocabulary. Tribe has been accepted at one time as a friend, rejected as an enemy at another, and finally smuggled in through the back-door as an accomplice.<sup>32</sup>

However, it is important to note that the word 'tribe' itself has no negative connotation. It is good in itself, especially because it confers personal, socio-cultural, and ethnic identity. The mere mention of one's tribe can tell a lot about their origin, lineage, and socio-political background. Thus Njoku, in his *Echiche: Struggles of a Mind*, notes that the term "tribe is a commitment and [an] emotional attachment of one to his or her roots".<sup>33</sup> He also observes that "while it is seen as a good thing for a westerner to be strongly committed to his or her roots, it is almost a crime for an African to do the same. The simple difference here is that the tribes (ethnic nationalities) are denied the rights to form legitimate political entities, even when many of these so-called tribes are big enough to constitute independent countries and are in fact bigger than many European countries".<sup>34</sup> The denial of the existence and relevance of the tribal entities led the architects of present day African states to lump groups of people together without questioning their compatibilities and without giving them the voice to decide.<sup>35</sup> As a result, the Nigerian state is a forced union which came about in spite of the "expressed fears of the minorities..."<sup>36</sup> who are at the receiving end of all forms of marginalisation and suppression. To worsen it,

32 Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd, 1983), Pg. 5.

33 Uzochukwu. J. Njoku, *Echiche: Struggles of a Mind*, (Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd., 2007), Pg. 86.

34 Uzochukwu. J. Njoku, *Echiche: Struggles of a Mind*, Pg. 86.

35 Barigha Amange, *Road to Peace in the Niger Delta*, (n.p: Mojek Press, 2008), Pg. 2.

36 P.O. Idomigie, "Niger Delta Development History and Appraisal of Legal Regime", in *Journal of Niger Delta Studies*. Vol. 2 No. 1, (2000), Pg. 12.

successive governments have failed to create the necessary conditions that would engender true national integration.

One may however, disagree with Njoku who seems to hold that tribalism in Africa is simply a creation of the Western world. Africans are also guilty of perpetuating negative tribalism; hence, their inability to stop what the Europeans started. Achebe is right when he argues that our nationalists (and even our present political leaders) do retreat to their ethnic enclaves whenever it suits their purposes. As a matter of fact, Nigeria was first called "a mere geographical expression", not by the British, but by its very own nationalists.<sup>37</sup> Tribalism, defined as, "the discrimination against a citizen because of his place of birth",<sup>38</sup> is a major cog in the wheel of Nigeria's march towards national integration.

Successive governments have made efforts to tackle the problem without success. The creation of the Federal Character Commission under Act No. 34 of 1996 by General Sani Abacha was meant to implement and enforce the federal character principle of fairness and equity in the distribution of public posts and socio-economic infrastructures among the various federating units of the country. It was an attempt to quell the cries of marginalisation emanating from minority and disadvantaged groups. The establishment of the Commission held much promise and hope, but its performance after the Abacha era (due largely to lack of political will from successive governments) has been an abysmal failure.

Religion is another challenge towards our attainment of national integration in Nigeria. The Nigerian state is polarized into two main religious groups; but intolerance and religious exclusivism have continued to widen the gap between Christians and Muslims by the day. This is evident in our voting system and the distribution of appointments into the federal tier of government. The same anomaly has been replicated in all spheres and states of the federation; where minorities suffer

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37 Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Pg. 5.

38 Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Pg. 7.

all forms of injustices in the hands of majority religions (and or tribes).

Even law enforcement seems to suffer the same fate. Security operatives of one tribe or religion tend to overlook the crimes of their fellow adherents. Thus, security challenges in the country are mostly caused by religio-ethnic biases in law enforcement. In fact, the Nigerian security forces have been accused of colluding with Boko Haram, Fulani herdsmen killers, kidnappers, and robbers of their ethnic extractions. They have also been accused of aiding and abetting genocide in several parts of the country. For instance, in the United Kingdom, parliamentarians indicted the Buhari-led federal government together with the army of aiding Fulani herdsmen to occupy seven Benue communities and over forty-four Plateau villages.<sup>39</sup> An earlier report by Amnesty International contained similar indicting evidence; showing in graphic details, failures of the Nigerian authorities to investigate communal clashes and prosecute perpetrators which has escalated the conflict; resulting in more than three thousand deaths in three years.<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, clannish leadership has a long history in the country. Almost every form of leadership in Nigeria, from independence in 1960 to date, has failed to give the people a sense of belonging; thereby deepening divisiveness rather than integration. The result is a state of continual ethnic (and religious) agitations which, according to Benedict Michael, have adverse social, economic, religious, and political effects on the polity.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, lack of national integration has led to a dysfunctional state where secessionist agitations, armed

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39 All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion (APPG). "Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide?" Available online at <https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/nigeria-unfolding-genocide-new-appg-report-launched/>. (accessed on 15 June, 2020).

40 Amnesty International, "Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria", (Abuja: Amnesty International, 2018). Available online at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/9503/2018/en/> (accessed on 10 Jan, 2019).

41 Benedict Michael, "Ethnic Agitations, Social Justice, Conflicts and Democracy in Nigeria: The Imperative for Convergence Communication", *Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria*, Edited by Tsuwa, John Tor, (Makurdi: Bookworks Publishers, 2011), Pg. 98.

conflicts, and calls for restructuring of the polity have continued to grow by the day.<sup>42</sup>

As demonstrated above, lack of national integration has led to so many negative effects that the country's security and unity have been threatened at several times in its history. The problems of national integration in Nigeria can be addressed with Schutz's intersubjective phenomenology. The question which remains to be answered at this point is, 'how'?

Schutz's intersubjectivity presents the subjective meaning, which a group has for its members, as consisting in their knowledge of a common situation, and with it a common system of typifications and relevances.<sup>43</sup> A group has its history in which the individual members' biographies participate; and the system of typification and relevances determining the situation, forms a common relative natural conception of the world. Here individual members are "at home", according to Schutz, that is, they find their bearings without difficulty in the common surroundings, guided by a set of recipes that help them come to terms with beings and fellow-men belonging to the same situation.<sup>44</sup> Schutz notes that "the system of typifications and relevances shared with the other members of the group defines the social roles, positions, and statutes of each".<sup>45</sup>

Unfortunately, in Nigeria, we typify people's actions in negative stereotypes, and this has been the bane of all efforts towards national integration. We therefore, have to accept our common system of relevances. This acceptance of a common system of relevances leads the members of the group to a homogenous self typification. But this can be done only in the we-relation within a community of space and time. It is only here that the other's self can be experienced and interpreted

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42 Terzungwe Inja, "Citizenship in a Dysfunctional State: A Positivist Examination of the Nigerian Experience", in *MAJAC*, Makurdi Journal of Arts and Culture, Vol. 11, No. 2, (May 2013), Pg. 104 – 105.

43 Alfred Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*, Pg. 251.

44 Alfred Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*, Pg. 251.

45 Alfred Schutz, *Collected papers II: Studies in Social Theory*, Pg. 252.

within the natural attitude. It is within this we-relation in the vivid present that the other appears as another 'I' and not just an instrument to be manipulated. In this natural attitude, therefore, the world is not a private world of the solitary individual from the outset – it is an intersubjective world to which we all are accustomed and in which we do not have a theoretical but a practical interest.<sup>46</sup> In this intersubjective world we act and inter-act in co-existence with our fellow human beings through a 'mutual tuning-in' relation which Schutz refers to as reciprocity of perspectives.<sup>47</sup> This mutual tuning-in of reciprocal concern is common-sense thinking. This common-sense thinking overcomes the differences in individual perspectives. When this common-sense thinking is constituted what results is the we-consciousness which is capable of breaking both ethnic and religious barriers to achieve national integration.

At this level of intersubjective consciousness, the different ethno-religious groups can find a common ground for interacting with mutual respect. This is not by any means a claim that a Schutzian intersubjectivity will destroy all our differences, it is rather a worldview that would guarantee a common sphere for tolerance, respect, equity, and justice. At this level, the rule of law, the Constitution, and mutually beneficial values can be upheld over and above all divisive tendencies.

It is worthy of note here that national integration cannot be achieved without the active participation of both the leaders and the led. Nigerian leaders must completely expunge the destructive tendency of exploiting tribalism, religion, and even the law to pursue their selfish and clannish goals. It is also time to stop playing politics with human lives and properties.

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46 Jochen Dreher, *Alfred Schutz, The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Major Social Theorists*, Edited by George Ritzer, Wiley-Blackwell, (2011), Pg.495.

47 Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Pg. 12.

### **Conclusion**

The above discussion has projected the thesis that national integration can be achieved by applying Alfred Schutz's notion of intersubjectivity. The main arguments of Schutz's thought were exposed, followed by an account of the various barriers against national integration in Nigeria and their negative effects on the polity and its stakeholders. Finally, it was shown how exactly the adoption of Schutz's thought as an ideological guide, could be useful in bringing about the desired unity, equity, and justice –which are the fruits of national integration. This paper adds its voice to the many others that call for a truly integrated Nigeria in which every stakeholder will feel at home; and where every confederating group will realise its potentials in an intersubjective community devoid of fear and rancour. This is an achievable vision, and all believers in a greater Nigeria should not rest until it is realised. A better Nigeria is possible, but without true national integration, it remains wistful thinking and nothing more. The leaders and the followers of all confederating units in the country must engage within an intersubjective worldview, and exercise all political will; then and only then can a truly integrated nation called Nigeria be born.

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