Separatism or federalism: a sovereign empowerment

Over the years, multi-disciplinary studies have been conducted to examine the phenomenal transition of governments and the rise of political powers. The deepening examination on the phenomenon of separatism, secession, autonomy, federalism are implied by political historians as brought about by colonialism, in which the native people in a colony refuses the political system of the colonizers. The civil disobedience of the native people from certain ruling of the conqueror preserves the racial or ethnic practices.

However, the assimilation of races through cross-cultural interactions in the colony has patterned the emergence of new society and transition of governmental functions. The societal transformation has impacted the socio-cultural, economic, political, and religious beliefs. Sociological findings reveal interracial marriages and collaboration of several natives with their colonizers to subsist the way of life. In contrast, many natives continuously adopt their indigenous practices varying on ethnic and tribal form of governance that consequently affected the colonizers' government centralization.

In the " Separatism and Empire Building in the 21st Century," James Petras stated that " Divide and Conquer" has been the vital component to control the population and resources of a colony. In every British officer in India, about 50 Sikhs, Gurkhas, Muslims and Hindus serve in the British Army. The European occupations of Africa and Asia have been fought by its own natives as commanded by white officers. The socio-cultural-religious practices were converted and subjugated by punishing the vigilant natives.

Petras implied the correlation of the European conquest to the ' divide and conquer' method of the United States that strategically promoted the establishment of its foreign enterprises, democratization, and approaches to militarism with the alliances of nations (Petras 1). In character, separatism is a continuous struggle towards self-determination through hostile withdrawal from a normal societal function and governmental sanction. The withdrawal for independence seeks to establish a new structural pattern in the society.

The new archetype of autonomy is central within its socio-political-cultural-religious functions for independent governance. Separatism is broadly correlated with civil disobedience and armed struggle. The acts of separatism are mostly reacted by governments for the rationale of political stabilization and upholding national security. In contrast, the issue on separatism has varied historical basis as brought about by culture, religion, and ethnicity.

It may be also viewed as a transitional and transformational conflict in the society. The examination on separatism espouses the question: Why do Separatist movements succeed in some countries and does not in others? On the other hand, we may further examine the relationship of separatism to the transition of federalism. Through that examination, we may pose a similar question: How federalism and national integration work in some countries and not in others?

These questions shall be the hypothetical derivative of study on how separatism or federalism could be a sovereign empowerment. Methodology This paper aims to discuss the phenomenon of separatism, and federalism. It

also intends to examine the findings on how the phenomenon that is prevalent in various countries has proven to be successful or failure. The review of available and substantially researched literatures will be the bases of examination to analyze whether separatism or federalism empowers the sovereignty of people.

Literature Review Why separatism? We may first expound the essentialities of separatism aside from its definitions. As discussed in the introduction section, separatism has been aptly described with the historical background. In Petras' work, separatism is viewed as an archetype of diverse political ascendancy. Petras' pointed out the organizing of various political organizations, people's movements and groupings in Kosovo. The diversity varies in socio-political beliefs and much more with ethnicity and religions.

However, Petras' examination revealed the backing and supporting of the US to mostly separatist or secessionist as " beleaguered" movement to install a " de-facto" government, wherein Christians clash with Muslims (Petras 3). It may be viewed in Petras' work that the question " why separatism" has been answered by finding that the US has utilized various humanitarian organizations in dealing with the conflict but covertly supporting the Serbians against the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

It was clear the declaration of Kosovo's independence recently in 2008 has separated the cultural-religious identity of indigenous Muslims from Serbia (Petras 3). In a similar review from the works of Stephane Lefebvre, author of the journal: " Perspectives on Ethno-Nationalist/Separatist Terrorism," published by the Conflict Studies Research Center in 2003, separatism has

been entangled in the religious ethnicity. In Lefebvre's work, a new breed of ethnic separatism and Muslim secessionism has risen from the old Judea-Christian-Muslim conflict.

The new breeding was called by Lefebvre as " ethno-nationalism. " The ethno-nationalist separatists are more indoctrinated by the ideals of global separatism (Lefebvre 1). According to Lefebvre, the new genre of ideals in ethno-nationalist/separatist movement is pursued with the beliefs of eliminating the barrier of social strata, specifically the Islamist thoughts of Christian domination. In her findings, Lefebvre pointed out the extremist or fanatical indoctrination which she believed had caused vulnerability to be proliferated and as a doctrine of terrorism.

As cited by Lefebvre, the ethno-nationalism has propagated from the Christian-Muslim conflict in Kosovo that inspired much the Al-Qaeda who continuously developed the doctrine and reached out among Muslim countries throughout the world (Lefebvre 1). The validity of Lefebvre's findings could be confirmed through the occurrences of ethnic wars instigated by the so-called " holy war. " Her findings can also be observed in Al-Qaeda's extremist struggle that brought about the 9/11 US tragedy.

As further explained by Lefebvre, liberalist concepts have classified the state of separatism in two kinds of understanding: civic nationalism and cultural nationalism. The former refers to a non-ancestral and general understanding of territories and social status of people, while the latter is mythically permeated and ancestral-driven, in which religion, culture, and race support

the declaration of independence, autonomy and self-government (Lefebvre 2).

From that explanation of Lefebvre on the liberalist concept classifying the state of separatism, we can theorize that civic nationalism (as non-ancestral and a general understanding of territories and status of people) applies the separatist notion according to the partitioning of territorial limits or boundaries where the social status of people within those territories has vital role in the state of separation.

We may reconsider, although Kosovo separated from Serbia as a result of an ethnic war between Christians and Muslim, the occupation of economic territories and re-establishment of social status of Muslims in Kosovo have not been remotely taken out from the issues of ethnic conflict. With this reconsideration of theory, the application of concept that regard cultural nationalism could be perceived as highlighted in the classification of Christian-Muslim ethnicity and religious barriers. We may add the perception that ethnicity correlates within the economic base.

Defending the source of economy is a civic nationalism that constitutes the preservation of the community as part of ancestral domain, like how Kosovo has remained to be a domain of the Muslim ethnic minorities. By discussing further the state of separatism pertaining to territory, Pal Kolsto from the Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages at the University of Oslo has made similar study. In Kolsto's journal, entitled: " The Sustainability and Future of Unrecognized Quasi-States," published by the

Journal of Peace Research in 2006, the " quasi-states" is partitioned by political boundaries.

Based on Kolsto's study, the quasi-states comprise de-facto government units within one internationally recognized country. However, the international recognition to the government units are referred to as " failed states. " Like the former socialist country of Yugoslavia that comprises the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro has eventually partitioned the territories. Thus, Serbia and Montenegro are recognized as countries. Period of time followed upon the separation and declaration of Kosovo as independent state being a former province of Serbia.

This historical development of territorial split and separation from a mother state or country was also described by Kolsto as " pseudo-states or nation's states". In Kolsto's description, he argued that partitioning of territory (commonly known as separatism) is more of political-economic reasons than being focused at the logic of ethno-biography. In support of Kolsto's argument, it may be perceived that the end of World War II and the settlement of Cold War between US and Socialist Russia, significant occurrences of quasi-states establishment or the phenomenon of separatism have prevailed in Europe, Africa and Asia.

It may be theorized that the settlement of Cold War has brought postmodernist politicization to various people and governments worldwide. This theory could be indicative of the " populism" pertaining to people's conscientiously seeking of democracy. The fall of Berlin Wall in the 1990 that unified East and West Germany has rippled a global effect. The calling for

restoration of global democracies re-echoes the sentimentalism for cultural

identity.