Modernism and Secularization: Towards a Reconciliation of Religious Freedom and National Security in the Realization of Peace in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines religious violence in some Northern parts of Nigeria and its effects on national security. It argues that Modern religiously motivated violence has affected the balance between individual religious liberty and national security in this country. The paper attributes this to modernism and its feature of secularization particularly as it displaces some religious values such as love, peace, concern for others, the fear of God and so on. The paper underscores the need for peace in Nigeria and for government to address the conflicting duties of allowing people to exercise their religious freedom and maintaining national security. It draws on W.D Ross's prima facie and actual duties to argue that when duties conflict, there is need to arrive at a substantive duty after a fully considered deliberation. Unfortunately, one cannot be allowed without it having a negative effect on the other. In order to avoid a situation whereby attempts at resolving conflicting duties on the part of government degenerates into a more intense violent conflict, there is need to reconcile religious freedom and national security. The paper concludes by stressing that since religious freedom and national security are crucial elements in the functioning of the society, there is need for Nigerian government to reconcile both without one necessarily affecting the other in a negative sense; this will give room for peaceful co-existence in this country.

Key words: Violence; Peace; Security; Secularization; Modernism; Religion

INTRODUCTION

Religion has been identified as one of the forces behind several attacks in many Northern parts of Nigeria. However, government has made series of attempts to reduce religious conflicts in this country. On one hand, legislation intended to protect national security threatens the religious liberty of some religious groups. On the other, lack of such legislation is an indication that people are legally free to practice their religion the consequence of which may cause violent religious attacks which threatens national security. But virtually every religious tradition is permeated with certain fundamental values relating to peace, love, sacredness of human life and human security. For many religious scholars, the essence of religion is life and the law is love. Unfortunately, these religious values have been displaced by modernism and its emphasis on secularization. The consequence is that the modern religious universe is being subordinated to partial group and individual values, instead of standing above them. It is against this background that the paper examines the effects of religious violence on national security in Nigeria. It argues that modernism has displaced certain fundamental religious values hence the need for Nigerian government to reconcile religious freedom and national security without one necessarily affecting the other in a negative sense. It draws on W.D Ross's Prima facie and

actual duties to explain that sometimes when prima facie duties conflict, arriving at the actual duty may generate conflict for government, hence the need for reconciliation. This becomes imperative because government must determine how they can reconcile both in a way that makes it possible to simultaneously enjoy both and also bringing about peace.

People often claim to be religious because the feelings connected with religious experience are correspondingly ambivalent, that is, it has a double cultural existence. Hence (Bogomilova, 2009), opines that there are two kinds of religion, each of which has a separate definition: traditional, authoritarian, communal on the one hand, and personal, exalted, mystical on the other. The two types also have different bearers: the people, the group, the community for the first, and the religious virtuoso, the person with an "ear" for religion, the Romantic, the mystic for the latter. Each type is related to a predominant type of experience and satisfies specific needs. The first type of religion is concerned with negative emotions and illusory means of overcoming them: the feeling of fear, dependence, limitation, subordination, and submission. The second type is concerned with positive emotions: love, freedom, faith in one's own force. The first type corresponds to bureaucratic ecclesiastic institutions, to a system of dogma, and ritualized collective action; the second, to ecstasy and spiritual enthusiasm, to vibrant and captivating prophetic speech (Bogomilova, 2009, p. 84).

For some scholars, this ambivalent description of religious feelings can be traced to the fact that religion, which had been confined to the private sphere of human life, has re-acquired an important role in the public sphere of human life. By leaving its assigned place in the private sphere, 'religion had thrust itself into the public arena of moral and political contestation . . . challenging, in the name of religion, the legitimacy and autonomy of the primary secular spheres, the state and the market economy' (see Ferrari, 2004, p. 357). The consequence is violent conflict. Violent conflicts are inevitable when religion enters the public arena. Once it becomes clear that there are roles religion can play in the public arena, politicians begin to use religion to motivate and mobilize people for political, national, and ethnic struggles.

Recent violent attacks in the Northern parts of Nigeria have demonstrated not only the roles religion can play when religious divisions overlap with national and ethnic differences, but also how eager religious authorities are to exploit religion for political reasons. Religiously-motivated political struggles in this country provide the foundation for religious terrorism to develop. In fact, new breed of terrorists have recently appeared: terrorists who are religiously motivated and kill in the name of God. In many cases, hope of a supernatural reward makes religious terrorists indifferent toward their own lives; they are prepared to die because they are persuaded God will reward their sacrifice with eternal life. This is quite contrary to what obtained in the past when religion had occasionally been a component of political, ethnic, or national secular terrorism. It is on the basis of this that Mayer (2013) explains that the most hideous form of violence, directed against defenseless people in Nigeria, is inextricably related to religion. This is evident in many violent attacks in the Northern parts of this country. Many scholars have debated whether religion is the true motivation for terrorism or whether it is a ploy for recruiting followers and a medium by which to amplify the impact of terrorist actions. For other scholars, religious violence can be attributed to modernism and its feature of secularization which has led to a decline in religious values such as love, peace, concern for others and so on.

MODERNISM AND SECULARISATION

Modernism describes the world given to us by the Enlightenment and Romanticism. It is what is often referred to when people think of 'modern' American/ Western culture's basic assumptions: secular, democratic republics, civil liberties and equality, a belief that nature is beautiful, the increasing roles of science and technology, disenchantment, individualism and so on. The Enlightenment call for greater civic freedoms and the Romantic call for increased individual freedoms further led to a culture of alienation. Freed from the social constrictions of the church, Modern man found himself freed from both community and recourse to faith. In other words, in times of need, the Modern man found himself alone. Freed from the constrictions of formal religion, Modern man was freed from the comforts of ritual and forced to figure out life's existential questions alone. Freed from the village and farm, Modern man was freed from the security of family, common culture and community. The alienation and disenchantment from the natural world bemoaned by the Romantics only deepened as societies increasingly urbanized. Industrialization further alienated Modern man from the product of his own hands (www.class.uidaho.edu).

However, because modernism is characterized by so many features, the emphasis in the context of this work will be on secularization. Secularization theory explains the whole process of change occurring in modern society, with special regard to religion. It is a sociological theory that explains that as society advances in modernity, religion retreats. Since the rise of science in the 17th Century, some sociologists have commented that religion may be on a permanent decline while others have proposed that science and intelligence, both rooted in the Enlightenment, are anathema to religious faith. Karl Marx (1818-1883), Durkheim (1857-1917), Max Weber (1864-1920), the founders of sociology, and William James (1901-1902) are four eminent scholars who noted

this decline (See Crabtree, 2008, p. 3). Intellectual and scientific developments have undermined the spiritual, supernatural, superstitious and paranormal ideas on which religion relies for its legitimacy. Hence, 'religion becomes more and more "hollow", surviving for a while on empty until loss of active membership forces them into obscurity' (Crabtree, 2008, p. 2). This feature of secularization commonly known as desacralisation, is the idea that the social and natural worlds have become progressively 'demystified'. In the natural world, for example, sciences like chemistry explain the world in a rational way that leaves no room for metaphysical (religious) explanations. Social sciences (for example sociology) provide explanations for individual and group development that similarly leave little or no space for religious explanations. On a political level, desacralisation involves the removal of religious authorities and religious laws from secular affairs (www.sociology.org).

The relative decline in religious participation can be explained in terms of a general 'process of withdrawal from the public sphere' in modern societies. Secularization theorists have argued that the 'decline of religion' can be traced to modernity. As a result of this decline, religions gradually come to lose their 'supernatural' preoccupations; 'accommodating themselves' with secular society and turning their attention and ministry to looking after secular needs rather than disappearing completing. This explains conformity as a feature of secularization. Consequent upon the features of conformity and desacralisation, Reinhold Niebuhr (2012) explains that:

> The fact is that we are living in a completely secularized civilization. The secularization of modern civilization is partly due to our inability to adjust the ethical and spiritual interests of mankind to the rapid advance of the physical sciences. However much optimists may insist that science cannot ultimately destroy religion, the fact remains that the general tendency of scientific discovery has been to weaken not only religious but ethical values. Humanism as well as religion has been engulfed in the naturalism of our day. Our obsession with the physical sciences and with the physical world has enthroned the brute and blind forces of nature, and we follow the God of the earthquake and the fire rather than the God of the still small voice (Niebuhr, 2012).

Because the world's modern trend is gradually destroying the world's spiritual order, the modern self assumes an autonomy that seeks to reject the claims of authority, religious tradition or religious community. This has become a passionate fear of clerics and believers worldwide. In fact, there are indications that secularization promises a less unified and less advanced spiritual order. Consequent upon the series of recent violent religious attacks in the Northern parts of Nigeria, one can conclude that secularization has gradually permeated the Christian and Muslim world for according to Momen (1999), religion no longer play a role in the shaping of political and social life. This is so because other considerationsand secular ideologies have taken over. Following the loss

of social and political influence, religion becomes increasingly irrelevant to the lives of ordinary people also. Since religion loses its influence over various spheres of social life as a result of secularization, institutionalized churches no longer play the central role they once did in education, welfare or politics. It is the modern day values of profit and consumerism that are now replacing concerns about salvation (www.markedebyteachers.com). As a result of this modernist tradition, religion loses its unifying force and becomes a dividing force; 'the divided God has lost his sacral, absolute immunity and is drawn into involvement as a collaborator and participant in various human enterprises, strivings, and yearnings. This tendency reflects the essence of the much debated notion of secularization' (Bogomilova, 2009, pp. 86-87).

However, when reduced to an ethnic, political, or state emblem, religious affiliations to Judaism, Islam, Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism have become and still are tools for the sacralization of military and political conflicts. In religiously-motivated conflict situations in Nigeria, opposing parties de-sacralize their Sacred Books as their acts contradict the books' moral content. The ethos of major religions, presented in their Sacred Books (particularly in Christianity and Islam) is mostly linked to ideas and recommendations that support humility, patience, non-resistance, love for one's fellow men, especially the weak and poor. The Bible for instance promotes love for one's fellow men, one's enemies included, as a supreme Christian value (Apostle Paul). Similarly, in the Qur'an, the poor, the weak and those suffering, in the Qur'an the poor, weak and suffering enjoy particular care and respect. At the same time, it is repeatedly pointed out that national, ethnic and sex differences cannot be a basis for division and opposition wherever people are united by the same creed (Christianity or Islam). Of course, this does not mean that Sacred Texts do not contain other accents that render absolute the rightness of one's own faith, drawing a line of division between virtuous and sinful, expecting the latter to be punished, and so on. But the first line (that of humility and patience) is stronger and it determines the emphases in the moral consciousness of the religions in question. The issue of punishment and violence is left at the disposal of the supreme force and is usually expected beyond earthly time and history (Bogomilova, 2009, p. 87).

For early Christianity, the moral commitment was of paramount importance. The specific features of the Christian ethos then was acceptance of suffering, non-resistance to evil, resignation, humility, leaving it to God to mete justice, and so on all of which are incompatible with violence over others. In modern times, the cultural area of this type of morality has been severely reduced. The cult of human activeness, the implementation of control mechanisms and regulations in all spheres of activity, the emphasis on the present, are all modern

values which have gradually turned Christian and Muslim morality into a marginal, rarely encountered phenomenon. This is largely true for all modernizing countries (including Nigeria regardless of the religions prevailing in them) where the type of Christian morality is rather a question of personal character and choice rather than a matter of religious or social culture. This type of morality is not amenable to group regulation and mobilization, for it implies both a certain type of behavior and a corresponding motivation and feeling. This personal spiritual commitment of the doer is in line with the completely regulated culture of modern times (Bogomilova, 2009, pp. 87-88).

As a result of what can be described as a wide range or faces of religious phenomenon, Georg Simmel (1858–1918) explains that

> The sources and essence of religion are concealed in a deceitful semi-obscurity. Things do not become any clearer, if, as earlier, no more than a single problem is perceived here, requiring a single solution. Today, no one has succeeded in proposing a definition of religion that be not vague and imprecise, yet that encompass all the phenomena and tell us what religion is… religion is not clearly distinguished, on the one hand, from metaphysical speculation and, on the other, from faith in providence. The indefinite essence of religion corresponds to the multiple psychological motives that are recognized to be its sources (As quoted in Bogomilova, 2009, pp. 95-96).

Is religion truly concealed in a deceitful semi-obscurity? Is there a link between religion and violence? Is there a bond uniting religion and violence? Can violence be religiously justified? Is Violence is an expression of modern man's emancipation from dependence on God? What is the essence of religion?

RELIGION AND ITS RELEVANCE

Religion has always acted as guide and shaped entire life not only of individuals, but also of communities. Hence it promotes social good of the highest value. It has been the greatest source of consolation to millions of sorrowing and suffering people. Religion does not consist in merely refraining from evil, but in a persistent performance of noble deeds. True religion does not come from the teaching of men and the reading of books but the awakening of the spirit within us as human beings. Therefore human progress is a consequence of the action of the human spirit (Reddy, 2013).

Also, religion helps provide a sense of emotional security, acting much like the security blanket from which a small child derives comfort when distressed (Barber, 2013). The security blanket idea succeeds in explaining why some situations evoke a religious response. It encompasses the known physiological effects of religious rituals and beliefs. It also helps us to understand why religion is in decline in most developed countries where citizens enjoy an exceptionally good standard of living.

Like a child's security blanket, religious prayers offer comfort when people are distressed. World religions generally offer peace of mind. Recent research shows that they can deliver, although the same benefits are available through secular techniques of relaxation and meditation (Barber, 2013).

Again, religion helps in stress reduction. Researchers have shown that religious prayers function as anti-stress mechanism. They have also demonstrated that individual prayers as well as attending church services reduces blood pressure, a reliable index of reduced psychological stress. Elevated blood pressure causes heart disease and heart disease is the number one killer in many developing and developed countries. This buttresses Marx's political idea of religion as a calming opiate of the people (See Barber, 2013). The implication of this is that prayers and rituals may contribute directly to health and long life. Moreover, the availability of an effective stress-reduction mechanism helps people to feel more confident and optimistic about their lives, a frame of mind that yields health dividends (Barber, 2013) .

Additionally, religious beliefs promote positive personal behaviors which can lead to a sound social morality, although the relationship between religious adherence and responsible social behavior is not statistically clear. Unfortunately in modern times, religion has not been allowed to play the roles it is meant for in human lives. This is because people's conscience, their sense of sympathy, empathy and deliberation are gradually dying. There is therefore need to establish love in human relationship. Religious maturity makes for tolerance, understanding and acceptance of other religions. Only the immature evince bigotry and intolerance. As the human mind becomes enlightened, it perceives more and more the essential unity of all religions. Every man is potentially divine; every man has within him/her the latent gift of learning what constitutes truth. As quoted by Reddy (2013) Swami Vivekananda emphasized that "Each religion represents a particular excellence - something which is its soul" (see Reddy, 2013, p. 1). In fact that all the old religions are living today proves the point. It has kept their missions intact, their ideals high and their souls alive.

Furthermore, religion is the manifestation of the content or element of human experience; the institutions, traditions, convictions, sacred writing, are observables open to inspection. For the individual as for the community, religion could be a cultural phenomenon transcending ego and ethno-centrism, mono-cultural tendencies. But in situations of internal differentiation and disintegration of these entities, the universalizing, binding role of religion is partialized and determined by various social groups, who are often in opposition to each other due to their economic, political, ethnic, psychological features. This process is usually related to the invalidation of universally uniting religious-moral bonds and values

and intensification of differences: power, property, doctrinal differences (Bogomilova, 2009, p. 83). This explains why there are aspects of organized religion that are unquestionably destructive to a peaceful and improved social order. The problem is that the fundamentalist sects of Christianity and Islam incorporate a "my way or the highway" belief system accompanied by very competitive evangelism. The result can be an intolerance that severely impairs rational efforts at compromise and instead creates social division and sometimes even violence (www. newsbatch.com).

However, when violence erupts, government is confronted with the duty to restrict religious liberty in order to promote national security. But doing this may degenerate into another religious violence after all, Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights makes provision for religious liberty by stressing that 'everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance' (www.un.org). If this is the case, then Nigerian government is faced with conflicting duties: the duty to guarantee national security and the duty not to violate people's rights to religious freedom. W.D Ross has provided a detailed account of how conflicting duties can be resolved.

W.D ROSS ON PRIMACIE AND ACTUAL DUTIES

According to W. D. Ross (1877-1971), *prima facie duties* can be employed in order to determine what we ought to do in a given circumstances. A prima facie duty is a duty that is binding (obligatory) other things being equal, that is, unless it is overridden or trumped by another duty or duties. Another way of putting it is that where there is a prima facie duty to do something, there is at least a fairly strong presumption in favor of doing it. An example of a prima facie duty is the duty to keep promises, "unless stronger moral considerations override, one ought to keep a promise made" (Garrett, 2004). In contrast with prima facie duties, *actual* or *concrete duty* is the duty a moral agent should perform in the particular situation of choice; what a person must do after balancing all the conflicting *prima facie* duties he/she may have. When deciding what to do, a moral agent needs to consider all the *prima facie* duties that are relevant. Since *prima facie duties* often conflict, they need to be weighed and balanced. Whatever one decides to do in a particular circumstances, such action constitutes the actual duty. Whatever one's actual duty is, one is morally bound to perform it. *Prima facie duties* relate to *actual duties* as reasons do to conclusions of reasoning (Garrett, 2004). These *prima facie duties*

include fidelity, reparation, gratitude, non-injury, harm-prevention, beneficence, self-improvement and justice. In the context of this discourse however, the *prima facie duties* confronted by the Nigerian government include: not violating the right to religious freedom and guaranteeing national security.

Other prima facie duties that apply in this context include: respect for freedom, care and non-parasitism. *Respect for freedom* explains that as far as possible, we should avoid coercing others and, insofar as we are able, provide conditions of empowerment especially to those who radically lack them. *Respect for freedom* requires, negatively, that we do not enslave or kidnap others or force them to participate in the activities of our particular religious group. It also requires, positively, that, if we can, we should support efforts to ensure basic health and educational opportunity for those unable to secure them for themselves (Garrett, 2004). The duty to *care* reflects concrete relationships such as those that occur within families or between close friends or even members of a particular society to which one belongs. The duty to care has been described by Velasquez as entailing exercising special care for persons with whom we are concretely related, attending not only to their needs and values but also responding positively to the needs of the most vulnerable (Velasquez 2002, chapter 2). *Non-parasitism* is the principle of not being a "free rider." This guideline asserts that, as a general rule, we should do our part to abide by the rules of an institution in which we willingly participate and from which we willingly accept benefits (Garrett, 2004).

It is important to note that on several occasions, duties conflict and when this happens, it is important to be wary of misuse. A pertinent example of such conflicting duties is that which can be found in the duty to save a friend's life by providing information about his where about to unknown hired assassins and the duty to tell the truth. Prima facie duties by themselves are often not enough to determine what we should do. We have to deliberate over which prima facie duty have priority in the situation we face, and which do not. Here, moral intuition plays a crucial role. It tells us when one prima facie rule, which at first seems to apply or does not apply because another overrides it. This type of moral intuition requires sensitivity to the morally significant aspects of the situation in which the chooser is located. Also, moral intuition tells us what the prima facie duties themselves are. We just see, by moral intuition, that generally, non-injury is a good rule to follow. Again, moral intuition tells us what the priority rules are. We just see, by moral intuition, that generally, non-injury takes precedence over beneficence. These moral intuitions come from our abilities to have correct moral perceptions and having correct moral perceptions depend upon our moral upbringing, the moral habits we have formed (Garrett, 2004).

However, sometimes, prima facie duties are misapplied. For instance, the prima facie duty of beneficence is misapplied when the desire to promote happiness (or to "save souls") leads one to violate an actual duty to respect persons' freedom or an actual duty not to physically or psychologically injure them. The prima facie duty of beneficence is misapplied if we allow the intention to promote the pleasure of others to override an actual duty of non-injury, respect for freedom, or promotion of moral development and intelligence. Since the duty to respect people's religious freedom and the duty to ensure national security are prima facie duties that are conflicting, in order to avoid misapplication, it is imperative for Nigerian government to reconcile both duties. This can be done by stressing the individual and social values of religion and peace. It is important to note that in an attempt to ensure national security, Nigerian government may limit religious freedom and this may further threaten national security. For instance if the government proscribes a religious sect, this sect may be unsatisfied with government's action because it amounts to a limitation of religious freedom. On the other hand if granted too much religious freedom, this may threaten national security as a result of abuse.

By implication therefore, the duty not to restrict people's religious freedom and to ensure national security are both binding on the government; both are important and none should override the other, hence the need to reconcile both. Just as Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights makes provision for religious freedom, so also do articles 3 and 22 make adequate provisions for Human security. Article 3 for instance holds that 'everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person' (www.un.org). Also, Article 22 says that 'everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality' (www.un.org).

However, if not handled with caution, many legal provisions that enhance national security will threaten to intrude into religious beliefs. There is a need to prevent people from thinking that violence can be religiously justified and to break the bond uniting religion and violence once that bond has been established (Ferrari, 2004). Since Nigerian government is confronted with the duty of allowing people to exercise their religious freedom and the duty to ensure national security, government is likely to face the problem of how to know which duties apply in which cases, and which are stronger. In order to avoid misapplication, it is imperative for government to reconcile these two duties.

BALANCING THE DEMANDS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA

The need for Nigerian government to balance the demands of religious freedom and those of national security becomes imperative particularly when one takes the statistics of religious violence in this country. Religious liberty helps develop the integration and tolerance that lie at the foundation of a stable and safe society (Pope John Paul II, 2003). But a democratic society must also ensure that religious liberty does not exploit fundamental human rights. In fact, Article 29 stresses that 'in the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society' (www.un.org). Also, there is the clause that says that 'these rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations' (www.un.org).

Religious movements that have threatened public safety and security have raised some concerns in the past few years in Nigeria. Hence past experience with these types of problems should provide guidance in dealing with security issues in this country. Mass suicides and violence in the Northern parts of Nigeria has made many people to conclude that some religions can be evil. Because they believe that some religions can be evil, a few European states have overreacted and behaved as though all new and non-mainstream religious movements are dangerous sects. Fortunately, a more measured approach is gradually emerging in the West, where the consensus is that more must be learned about these "new" religious movements so that generalizations are avoided (Ferrari, 2004, p. 359).

Because legislation intended to protect national security threatens the religious liberty of some religious groups, one can argue, following Ferrari (2004, p. 361) that while states must pass legislation to protect national security, states can temper this new legislation to minimize intrusions into religious liberty. Legislation meant to protect national security must be passed with caution otherwise restricting the religious freedom of people in a state may result into another form of violence. We must remember that proscribing a religious organization involved in terrorist activity can interfere with the free practice of that religion by its guiltless members. We should imagine a situation where the proscribed religious organization is the sole organization legitimized within the religious system. This cannot be replaced by another; the consequence may be another form of violence (Ferrari, 2004).

Again, since state officials in charge of national security increasingly focus on inter-religious

confrontations and conflicts on the grounds that these disputes degenerate into violence more frequently than they had in the past, preventing religious strife is considered an effective way of enhancing security. This can be achieved by enacting new laws that repress religious hatred. For example, the United Kingdom Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001 extend the provisions concerning incitement of racial hatred to also include religious hatred. The Act extends the racially aggravated offenses of assault, public order, criminal damage, and harassment to cover attacks aggravated by religious hostility (See Ferrari, 2004, p. 369). But events that have occurred in some countries have shown why enforcing religious tolerance through state laws can be dangerous. One can imagine a malevolent state official picking an appropriate passage of the Bible or the Qur'an and then interpreting it as condoning religious strife or violence. If this is the case, one can conveniently argue that religious organizations could repress religious hatred more effectively than the states. Religious organizations could develop codes of religious harmony or common guidelines as is the case in Singapore (See Ferrari, 2004) that is then applied to controversial religious issues.

In addition, security agencies in Nigeria should be given more mobilization funds, to enable them work more effectively in intelligence gathering, and pre-empting religious riots. If need be, SSS, Police, and proposed ethnic and religious offences commission officials should infiltrate mosques and churches to gather evidence against religious leaders instigating sectarian violence. This will allow for early detection and control of impending religious violence in the country.

Fighting religious hatred is primarily the responsibility of religious communities. If religious organizations are unwilling or unable to fight religious hatred, states take the problem into their own hands. States' approach inevitably focuses on political rather than religious interests, which could result in further repression of religion (Ferrari, 2004, p. 369-370). Therefore, once states have done what they can to combat religiously motivated violence, religious communities and their leaders must complete the rest of the task. The religious communities' difficult task requires them to interpret religious texts in a way that transcends the texts' violence; requires them to carefully reconsider the dignity afforded the "other," the non-faithful or the faithful of another religion; and requires advocating a political theology that looks sympathetically to the secular character of the state and civil society (See Ferrari, 2004, p. 282). Religious organizations provide the best hope of spreading the message of tolerance and reconciliation that will help ensure an individual's right to practice his or her religion in peace in whatever country he or she resides without this acting as a threat to national security. A consultative council of religious leaders, comprising Muslim and Christian leaders should be created. This council should meet regularly to dialogue exhaustively on how to find lasting solutions to religious violence in Nigeria.

Sometimes national security can be affected by religion, and attempt to curb such actions on the part of a religious leader could interfere with religious freedom. For example, imagine that a religious authority, basing his statements on the sacred books of his religion, asks part of the population of a country to secede because that population is not entitled to live according to its religious law, or urges soldiers professing a particular religion to desert so they are not obliged to fight against soldiers belonging to the same religion but residing in a different state, or demands that a "holy" war be waged against another state. These examples illustrate how national security can be affected by religion, and they illustrate how any attempt to curb such actions on the part of a religious leader could interfere with religious freedom (Ferrari, 2004, p. 371-372). Manifestations of religion may be repressed only if they are intended to and are likely to incite imminent violence. Religious manifestation may be punished as a threat to national security only if a government can demonstrate that the manifestation is intended to incite imminent violence, it is likely to incite such violence; and there is a direct and immediate connection between the religious manifestation and the likelihood or occurrence of such violence (Ferrari, 2004, p. 373).

It is important to sound a note of caution here. Religious activities should not be beyond the cognizance of government. As a matter of fact, since religions have recently lost their innocence because they no longer live in the Garden of Eden (Ferrari, 2004, p. 376), government should have a legitimate interest in what religions affirm and practice. More importantly, the state may intervene to prevent religions from being turned into instruments of violence. There is therefore need for religions to prove that they can benefit civil society or at least prove that they are harmless. The lost innocence of religions is not something absolutely new in Nigeria particularly when one takes a statistics of several cases of religious violence in this country. The December 1980 Kano riot is an instance of religious violence in Nigeria. Because of its bloody nature and level of destruction, it has come to be referred to as the first religious and bloody riot in Nigeria. However, according to the report of the Tribunal of Enquiry set up after the 1980 riot, prior to the outbreak in Kano, there had been over 30 violent incidents of religious riots in the Northern states (Uka, 2012).

Similarly, the burning of Christian Churches in October 1982 is another example of religious crisis in Nigeria. This was the first open and violent religious conflict between Christians and Muslims. The action of the Muslims was probably fuelled by the laying of the foundation for a Christian Church near a mosque in Kano. As noted by Matthew Uka, "although there was

no evidence of hostility visibly shown by the visit of the Archbishop to Kano, it was not accidental that the site where he laid the foundation stone for the building of the new Church became the scene of the violence that erupted in Kano six months after the visit. The violence was targeted at Christian Churches in Fagge, Kano Metropolis" (Uka, 2012). Another instance of religious violence is the Kano riot of 1991 which was a case of an inter-religious conflict. It was reported that a group of Muslim youths attacked people in Sabongari and the Fagge area of the metropolis. The attack was a protest against the religious crusade organised by the state chapter of Christian Association of Nigeria with a German Christian preacher in attendance. What offended the Muslim youths most were what they describe as anti-Muslim policies in the state. Earlier in the year, they had asked for permission to invite a Muslim fundamental preacher to Kano but the government refused. When permission was granted to Christians to invite the preacher from Germany, they interpreted it as anti-Muslim policy (Uka, 2012).

Recently is the series of Boko Haram religious attacks in several parts of Northern Nigeria. As Boko Haram attacks increases, death toll rises. Many innocent families and individuals have been wiped out, many others maimed and thousands rendered homeless while schools market, churches, media houses have also received bitter doses of Boko Haram tragic attacks. In spite of government conceited efforts toward nipping the situation in the bud with huge yearly budgetary allocation on security, the Boko Haram terrorist attacks seemed to have defied all logic. Report and survey put the number of deaths in the last three years of Boko Haram insurgency at 3,000. The Human Rights Watch, a global human rights monitoring group, said recently that killings by the dreaded Islamist Boko Haram sect is nearing 1,000 people since it launched its initial attack two years ago (Balogun and Sessou, 2012). As reported by Balogun and Sessou in the Vanguard of 1st December, 2012, the campaign of violence by the militant Islamist group, Boko Haram, including attacks on Churches and suicide bombings in the first three weeks of 2012 that killed more than 253 people, is an indefensible attack on human life.

More than 935 people have been killed in about 164 suspected attacks linking Boko Haram since it launched its campaign of shooting and bomb attacks in July 2009 (Balogun & Sessou, 2012). Human rights Watch has reported that Boko Haram has carried out increasingly deadly attacks, including suicide bombings, which killed at least 550 people in 115 separate attacks in 2011. In the first three weeks of January 2012 alone, more than 253 people have been killed in 21 separate attacks," the rights group said. It has also tracked media reports of attacks by suspected Boko Haram members over the past two years, adding that the recent Kano attacks is the most deadly, making 2012 the worst in Nigeria's Boko Haram history

(Balogun & Sessou, 2012). Human Rights Watch noted that the sect has lost all sense of humanity because of its complete disregard for humanity claiming that in the first three weeks of January 2012, more than 253 people have been killed in 21 separate attacks (see Balogun & Sessou, 2012).

Reporting Ambassador Orike in the Vanguard newspaper of 18th January, 2013, Jimitota Onoyume explains that Boko Haram is more political than religious. Boko Haram wears the face of religion the ambassador said, 'they don't want anything Western, though this religious sect gives the impression that such injunction is the teaching of Islam, behind it is more of politics' (Onoyume, 2013). Obviously, it is an opposition element that does not agree with the present regime. Ambassador Orike was of the opinion that in democracy, there must be opposition in order to keep the government in check but opposition does not mean war or warfare and the destruction of lives and properties which are reflected in instances such as blowing up schools, churches, police station, government parastatals, hospitals, killing and maiming people (Onoyume, 2013).

While attributing the cause of such religious violence to corruption, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) president, Dr. Ayo Oritsejafo explains that Boko Haram thrives because of corruption as people are being paid off to look the other way while members of the sect continue to do what Nigerians are experiencing now. Other Nigerians link the causes of religious violence to factors such as poverty, religious fanaticism, land issues, vengeance, unemployment or under-employment especially of youths, wrong interpretation and/or understanding of the tenets of the holy books, misinformation/ignorance, perceived feelings of marginalization, relative insecurity, increased politicization of religion, ethno-religious reasons and other conflicts clothed in religious "garments" (Oloyede, 2011).

Islam and the "new" religious movements in Nigeria are the religions raising the most acute security worries. "Radical Islam" and "dangerous sects" are regarded as potentially troublesome groups. Nearly everybody will admit that not all Muslim communities are radical and not all "new" religious movements are dangerous, but when security is discussed in Nigerian media, Islam and the new religions (Boko Haram) are always mentioned in the newspapers and television talk shows. It is important to correct the erroneous assumption that religious violence is peculiar to Muslims alone. Religious violence is not confined to Muslims only; all religions are inherently revolutionary. The Qur'an does not contain violent passages any more than other religions. Islam is a peaceful religion. As a matter of fact, most Muslims do not support violence. Islamic terrorism should be studied by analyzing Islam's historical roots, which may explain why some Muslim groups justify their violent acts by claiming those acts are the result of a religious obligation.

The same approach can also help explain non-Muslim religious terrorism. By understanding the historical roots of religious violence, we may be able to remove the social and cultural motivations for terrorism and break the link between religion and violence.

The historical root of Jihad (to strive, to struggle) can be traced to the persecution Muslims and Muhammad (S.A.W) suffered in the hands of the infidels in Mecca which made them to migrate to Medina. While in medina, they were being constantly threatened from within by the envious non-Muslims in Medina and by enemies from Mecca who took advantage of this situation to stir internal troubles for the Muslims. They were driven to a point where they could not stand any more persecution and threats. Their families were separated from them by force, their blood was shed, and their properties were confiscated. They were forced to leave their dear hometown in three waves of migration: two to Abyssinia and one to Medina. They endured for over thirteen years. With the new tactics of the Meccan enemies, there was no choice for the Muslims except to either await their final annihilation in a plural massacre or defend themselves against oppression and persecution (Abdalati, 1975, p. 145). Then the Qur'an was revealed saying that: to those against whom war is made, permission is given to fight because they are wronged; and verily, God is most powerful for their aid; they are those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, for no cause except that they say:' our lord is God'. For verily God is full of strength, exalted in might, able to enforce his will (Q22, pp. 38-41). It was under these circumstances that the Muslims had to fight, and it was with these principles and instructions of God that they in the end achieved decisive victories (Abdalati, 1975, p. 146). Such striving/warfare is known as Jihad in Islam.

Jihad in Arabic simply means struggle - striving to one's utmost to further a worthy cause (Khanam, 2000). Islam recognizes war as a lawful and justifiable course for self-defense and restoration of justice, freedom and peace. The Qur'an makes it clear that whether we acknowledge it or not, war is a necessity of existence, a fact of life, so long as there exist in the world injustice, oppression, capricious ambitions, and arbitrary claims. As realistic as this sounds, Islam does not encourage aggression from its own side or from any other side nor does it entertain aggressive wars or the initiation of aggressive wars (Abdalati, 1975, p. 142). For instance Qur'an 2 Verse 190 say: 'Fight for the sake of God those that fight against you, but do not be aggressive'. Islam allows only defensive war hence the believers are allowed to fight in self-defense. Initiating hostility is not permitted for Muslims. The Qur'an 9 Verse 13 say: 'They were the first to attack you'. War is not an objective of Islam nor is it the normal course of Muslims. Muslims are not permitted to initiate hostilities. Except in cases where self-defense has become inevitable. It is only as a last resort and it is used under the most extra-ordinary circumstances when other measures fail. This is the actual status of war in Islam. Islam is the religion of peace. 'Muslim' means peace; 'peace is the nature, the meaning, the emblem and the objective of Islam. Every being is entitled to enjoy the peace of Islam and the kindness of the peaceful Muslims, regardless of religious, geographical or racial considerations, so long as there is no aggression against Islam or the Muslims' (Abdalati, 1975, p. 143).

Unfortunately, modernism has altered the cause of events. In the past, when the sword was the only weapon of war, militancy did not lead to mass loss of life and property such as we have in modern times. In the past also, fighting was confined to the battlefield; the only victims were those engaged in the battle. But today, the spear and the sword have not only been replaced by megabombs and devastating long range missiles, killing and destruction also take place on a shocking and extremely unpleasant scale. It is the entire human community which has now become the global arena of war. Even the air we breathe and the water we drink in Nigeria are left polluted in war's aftermath. As a result, people find Islam outdated and irrelevant today precisely because of its militant interpretation (Khanam, 2000). There is need to discard the militant and political interpretation of Islam, and to adopt the original 'old' version of Islam based on peace, mercy and the love of mankind. The so called Muslim fundamentalists have been exhorting their co-religionists to do battle all over the world. But the Quran says: "...and God calls to the home of peace." (Q10, p. 25)

Pointedly, because Christianity and Islam are part of the historical, cultural, and social heritage of Nigeria, these religions should be practiced in a civil way. An increasing number of people think that security cannot be effectively granted without social cohesion and a strong collective identity. Both Christians and Muslims are central part of the Nigerian identity and heritage. They should be called on more and more to help preserve the Nigerian cultural heritage and to provide the principles and values for building some kind of Nigerian civil religion, that is, a set of values shared by a large segment of Nigerians that unites believers and non-believers, Muslims, Christians be they Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, and so on. Civil religion should be truly inclusive and play a cohesive role. If it is divisive, it will create new divisions thereby exacerbating the feeling of exclusion in some religious sects, consequently raising precisely the security problems that should be avoided. Such a division would make it more difficult to conceive of ones country as a common place where everybody can feel at home irrespective of his or her religious convictions (Ferrari, 2004).

Unfortunately, even as religious people living in Nigeria, aggression still survives in us today. It is rather strange that even after attaining the maximum possible security in Nigeria, people still cannot live peacefully.

There is therefore need to strengthen inner values of warm-heartedness and compassion; this benefits both believers and non-believers in leading a happy and meaningful life. According to Crabtree (2008):

> Love and compassion attracts, hatred and anger repels. [...] Peace does not mean absence of conflicts. Differences will always be there. Peace means solving these differences through peaceful means; through dialogue, education, knowledge; through humane ways. A universal ethic is better than one based on religion. Secularism asks us to keep our religion to ourselves, which enables us as human beings to share what unites us rather than what divides us (Crabtree, 2008).

For the concept of 'one Nigeria' to make any sense, no Nigerian should be made to feel unsafe anywhere in this country due to religion, tongue or tribe. The continuing failure of security agencies to secure life and property in Nigeria is a failure of government. When governments fail to live up to its responsibility in matters like this, the people are provoked to take laws into their hands and severe peace. Just like corruption, religious and ethnic violence constitute another major impediment to national development, unity and cohesion (Nwobu, 2006), hence the need for peace in Nigeria.

THE NEED FOR PEACE IN NIGERIA

Because violence is gradually becoming a cultural phenomenon in Nigeria, there is need to transform the culture of violence into the culture of peace in this country. Peace is conceptually opposed to violent, antagonistic conflict, such as that manifesting threats and accusations, hostile quarrels, angry boycotts, and riotous demonstrations. Peace can also be conceptualized in terms of absolute harmony, serenity, or quietude; that is, as opposed to any kind of conflict, antagonistic or otherwise (Rummel, 2012). Peace has always been among humanity's highest values and for some people, it is the supreme value. This is reflected in sayings such as: 'peace at any price', 'the most disadvantageous peace is better than the most just war', 'peace is more important than all justice', 'I prefer the most unjust peace to the most just war that was ever waged', 'there never was a good war or a bad peace' and so on (See Rummel, 2012).

Vajpeyi (2000-2012) identifies six dimensions of peace. They include: individual peace through meditation, peace in the family between man and woman, child and parent, peace in society, between various communities; peace in the nation, peace on the planet and peace among nations. Peace has individual, economic, social and political values. On the individual level, peace is the ultimate of life. It is a combination of positive feelings of happiness, calmness, contentment, love, compassion and harmony with nature, with the absence of negative ones like pain, conflict, hostility and imbalance with nature. We may attain this peace when the inner self and the outer environment are in balance and harmony. One who experiences peace would depict a healthy physical and mental state, which needs nourishment from inside and outside, that is, spiritual and material needs.

Peace also has economic values because it allows people to enjoy economic activities – both production and consumption. It is common for people to estimate costs of wars and conflicts but seldom do we measure the economic benefits of peace (Kameel, 2011). The social and economic effects of religious violence are often grave. They include: mass killing or what one can describe as wanton destruction of lives and property, displacement of citizens and so on. Both on the social and economic levels, the cost of absence of peace can be huge. All these problems arising from the absence of peace can be avoided if there is peace and tranquility in Nigeria. For example, to prevent burgling one's apartment, Nigerians install burglar alarms, keep dogs, pay for security guards, and keep lights on when they go on vacations. All these involve cost. Victims of burglary and violent crimes not only incur economic costs but also psychological costs. It is against this background that Vajpeyi, 2000-2012) highlights the psychological and social consequences of the absence of peace. According to him, dynamic psychology deals with the problem of the absence of peace from the individual and social perspectives. Competition, diffidence and personal glory are what make men aggressive or violent, apart from the innate destructive tendency in man. Social factors include power politics, morality and the tremendous technological progress the world has made recently. Since faith has been replaced by reason, religion by politics, conscience by military strategy, personal courage by mechanical adventure, God by party boss and the individual by group-stupidity, Vajpeyi enjoins that individuals had better focus their fight against these usurpers (Vajpeyi, 2000-2012).

On the political level, there is also huge public cost incurred by Nigerian government for the prevention of crime and maintenance of peace. This includes costs of maintaining the police force, both development and operational costs, costs of judiciary to try criminals in the courts and also costs of prisons that includes operational costs and maintaining the convicted inmates. Hence criminals incur cost to the society whether they successfully carry out their crime or caught and convicted (Kameel, 2011). Not only does it cost a lot of money to mobilize the police force, the country incurs losses as a result of reduced economic activities. In situations where there are rallies, such rallies often end up in violence, destruction of public property and filthy streets. Ironically Nigeria is blessed with so many natural resources yet there is less peace, tranquility and security in this country.

In order to achieve peace therefore, there is need for every Nigerian to endeavor to become a better person on a daily basis, to try to settle their differences peacefully,

and to support the organizations and institutions that are trying to foster an international culture of peace. Through these various commitments, each person may succeed in transforming reflexes and habits of hatred, violence, intolerance and greed into reflexes and habits of love, understanding, sharing and generosity. Indeed, establishing a culture of peace requires that Nigerians go beyond superficial changes, which only maintain the status quo, and make in-depth transformations (www. unac.org). By so doing, a gradual value shift will take place, a shift that will make peace an attitude, a daily way of living. Shifting our values to construct a culture of peace means realizing that people have the power to influence their culture and to determine what Nigerian society will be like tomorrow.

Again, because certain values which are sometimes thought to be universal and eternal are opposed to the culture of peace, Nigerians must learn to unlearn. Some examples of the values Nigerians must unlearn are: individualism and an every man for himself attitude, which restrict good neighborly relations and make us turn away from human misery, economic logic and rationale, which are at the base of our economic system and which have led us to sacrifice nature in the name of profit and have pushed us to always produce more at any price without really knowing why. additional values are nationalism which sometimes justifies the killing of human beings in the name of the nation and religious fundamentalism which sometimes justifies the killing of human beings in the name of God. Nigerians should unlearn these values because we sometimes believe that these values are part of human nature and that we cannot change them. However, they have not always existed and are not shared by all (www.unac.org).

If shifting our values to build a culture of peace in Nigeria corresponds to opening up to other ways of community living and taking the environment and human relationships into account, then a well-established culture of peace should take the form of active tolerance. This means acknowledging the value of practices and opinions that are different from our own and considering our culture not as a way to exclude, but rather as a way to reach out and appreciate others and their differences. Indeed, culture is too often used as a way of differentiating and, when all is said and done, rejecting certain people. The culture of peace should invite Nigerians to "listen to understand" and "rediscover solidarity (www.unac.org). Nigeria should be transformed to a country where the members of a community are linked by a strong sense of solidarity and where money is not the main measure of personal success. This is not to say that a society based on the culture of peace is an entirely peaceful society. Rather, in such a society, people take negotiation seriously and want to resolve conflict through consensus or compromise instead of through violence.

Wanting peace is the first step in creating the conditions for it to exist. This entails trying to reduce elements that are the sources of violence and which are contrary to the establishment of peace. It is a general, day-to-day attitude, applied to all aspects of life, and is not limited to looking for solutions when violence is on the verge of erupting (www.unac.org). Forced peace cannot last. Peace must come from within the self. For this to happen, the basic necessities of life must be guaranteed for Nigerians (food, clothing, shelter, health, education, transportation and religious freedom). If Nigerians enjoy the minimum of these, they are not likely to revolt or cause violence. As a national policy therefore, Nigerian government and citizens alike should pursue social cohesion rather than social integration where each race respects the language, culture and religion of others, that is, pursue unity in diversity. In this way, Nigerians can enjoy lasting peace in their country.

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