

## Religion, Politics and Democracy in Nigeria

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Received 25 November 2012; accepted 28 January 2013

### Abstract

The conflict between religion and politics in Nigeria is older than the Nigerian state. Religion formed the basis upon which the Fulanis invaded the Hausa homelands and established the Sokoto Caliphate. It also served as a forerunner of colonialism from the coast as it paved the way for the British to overrun the southern coastlands, exploit its economic resources, abolished the peoples' traditions and socio-cultural practices, and implanted Christianity. Nigerians therefore became religious before their unification into the modern Nigerian state in 1914 by the British. One way or the other, people do seek meaning in life, a sense of purpose that politics cannot adequately provide but can be provided by religion. However, religion itself cannot provide the organizing mechanism through which the society can deal with the perennial issues of power and the need to adapt to changing circumstances. This paper therefore examines how religious practices have endangered the development of democracy in Nigeria. It finds out that the multiplicity of ethnic groups in the country gives rise to social conflicts over resources, and that these social conflicts are cloaked under religion; and that religion is used as an instrument of internal colonization and disenfranchisement in Nigeria; and these have militated against the development and consolidation of democracy in the country which if unchecked would lead to the disintegration of the country. The paper therefore recommends the secularization of the state to guarantee the institutionalization of democratic practices in the country; and; guarantee fundamental rights of the citizens and the independence of and the survival of the state.

**Key words:** Religion; Politics; Democracy; Religious fundamentalist; Ethnicity; National question; Contending elites; Dominant elites; Political financier; Political client

Akwara, Azalahu Francis, Ojomah, Benedict O. (2013). Religion, Politics and Democracy in Nigeria. *Canadian Social Science*, 9(2), 42-55. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/j.css.1923669720130902.1236> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/j.css.1923669720130902.1236>

### INTRODUCTION

When there is a conflict within a group or between groups, an attempt is usually made for a negotiated settlement of the issues among the parties involved. This would involve the continuous adjustment of issues and dialogue and only in the last resort if deadlock cannot be broken that force could be applied by a legitimate arbiter to bring the conflict to an end. This can only be made possible through politics. Politics therefore arises from accepting the fact of the simultaneous existence of different groups with different interests and different traditions within a territorial unit under a common ruler (Crick, 1964). People have conflicting interests because they want several things at the same time and everyone cannot have his or her way. The way the society gets to resolve these conflicting interests simply means politics.

Religion has been defined by Kegley and Wittkopf (2004) as a system of thought shared by a group that provides its members with an object of devotion and a code of behavior by which they can ethically judge their actions. As a system of thought or belief, it provides its members with their main source of identity. This identification with, and devotion to a religion, Kegley and Wittkopf (2004) maintain, springs from the natural human need to find a set of values with which to evaluate the meaning of life and the consequences of their choices. Religion therefore is the belief in the supernatural and

the practices sustaining that belief. It is the ultimate superstition and a level of consciousness mostly centering on good and evil; God and Satan; gods, spirits, and deities. It arises from historical, socio-economic and political factors in a society (Igwe, 2004).

Democracy can simply be seen as government by elected representatives. Its evolutionary process in every human society has never been a smooth one. It has always been punctuated by crises and conflicts between dominant and contending elites and classes in the society as each group tries to create a balance of power in the society; and to create a balance between liberty and equality. The history of democracy has been more or less the history of taming democracy to make it safer for free trade, capitalism and protection of minority rights (Christenson *et al.*, 1974). As Christenson *et al.* (1974) rightly pointed out, democracy is no longer about imposing the rule of the majority, but about protecting the interests of the minority. Democracy depends on the participation of the people in their nations' socio-economic processes without discrimination based on colour, race, and religion. It involves the sincere commitment of national leaders to be transparent and accountable to the people. It depends upon the separation of powers in the arms of government; by the existence of an independent judiciary; and by the dedication of democratic institutions to the identification and training of present and future leaders (Christenson *et al.*, 1974); and by the commitment of the leaders to upholding democratic values. It thrives on the respect for the rule of law and the respect for the fundamental human rights of the citizens; free, fair, and periodic elections; transparency and accountability in governance; and free access to information, and access to political and economic processes of the country by all persons and groups in the country (Christenson *et al.*, 1974).

The failure of democracy in Nigeria cannot be attributed to the failure of the nation to develop economically alone; or to the artificiality of western democracy itself with its sets of institutions and practices; or to the absence of supporting values for democracy, and or, the relationship between the developed western nations and Nigeria, especially the effects of colonialism and neo-colonialism on the country (Ake, 1997); but on the negative effects of religious practices on the nation's political processes; engaging in the political process from a religious perspective, and turning political differences into ethno-religious conflicts.

The conflict between religion and politics in Nigeria is older than the Nigerian state itself. Religion formed the basis upon which the Fulanis invaded the Hausa homelands and established the Sokoto Caliphate and all other emirates all over Northern Nigeria<sup>1</sup>. The Fulani jihadists in Nigeria were on a state and empire building adventure; and in search for greener pastures or economic resources (Onwubiko, 1978). Religion also served as a forerunner of colonialism from the coast as it paved the

way for the British to overrun the southern coastlands, exploit its economic resources, abolished the peoples' traditions and socio-cultural practices, and implanted Christianity. The people therefore became religious before their unification into the modern Nigerian state in 1914 by Lord Lugard. Without this unification, the present day Nigeria could have been three or more geo-political entities; it could have been anything but modern day Nigeria. Thus, Nigerians have not only become very religious peoples due to outside influences but have allowed religion to play a destructive role in the politics of the country due to ethnic differences.

Ethnicity is a political concept and denotes the expression of ethnic sentiments or ethnic nationalism. It involves the practice of ethnic ideology which enables a group to exploit natural differences in nationality for specific purposes. As Igwe (2004) pointed out, it is an outward-looking chauvinistic attitude towards one's nationality and cultural group with a correspondingly suspicious and hostile attitude towards others, especially those held to be in competition with one's own ethnic group.

Ethnicity manifests in the political, economic and cultural processes of a country and is propagated by the family, economic groups, and political groups in the labor process. As Nnoli (1989) noted, it is determined by the size of a linguistic group, location of the group, strength and cohesion of its leadership, the nature and leadership of under-privileged classes, foreign influences and dominant ideology.

Ethnic conflicts had been in existence in Nigeria before the advent of colonialism just like religious conflicts had been. Ethnic wars were fought over natural resources, farmlands, grazing lands, water supply, fishing rights, hunting rights, items of trade such as slaves, ivory, gold, etc. Later, religious beliefs and power positions became issues keenly contested in and across the length and breadth of the country, leading to wanton destruction of lives and property across the country (Ifemesia, 1965; Aderibigbe, 1965; Tamuna, 1965).

Ethnic, political and religious conflicts in Nigeria are therefore generally caused by struggles for power, natural and economic resources; migration; state and empire building by migratory ethnic nationalities (Ifemesia, 1965; Aderibigbe, 1965; Tamuno, 1965). Because religion formed part of the basis for state formation process in Nigeria, it is extremely difficult to differentiate religious conflicts from ethnic and political conflicts in the country; and many people especially Muslims in Nigeria still believe that the state formation process is not over until the entire nation is Islamized and politically controlled by the Hausa/Fulani oligarchy. This is exactly why the middle-belt region in Nigeria where Usman Dan Fodio's jihad was checkmated by the Tivs has witnessed more ethno-religious and ethno-political conflicts than all other parts of the country put together.

The relationship between religion and politics has not always been a cordial one in almost all nations of the

world where both realms are headed by entirely different elites. As Elandi and Adel (1994) observed, people all over the world are alarmed about the latest development in religious practices all over the world – the rise of religious fundamentalism or religious nationalism – because it undermines the legitimacy of governments, democracy and good government; it disrupts cordial international relations and peaceful coexistence of nations; and undermines the development and progress of the human race. In some nations where religious fundamentalists are absent, religion becomes a source of peace and humanitarian concern. But if present, it becomes an instrument of provocation, persecution, domination, exploitation and intimidation; and has been at the center of many bloody ethnic wars especially in Nigeria.

According to Rourke and Mark (2003) the rise of Islamism and its subsequent expansion in the late 6th century and the reaction of Christians in Europe caused a series of clashes one of which was the Eight Crusades (1095-1291) between the two sects. The Protestant Reformation of 1517 that divided Christianity; and the rivalry between Protestants and Catholics was one of the causes of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and other conflicts in Europe (Rourke & Mark, 2003).

Religion played a role in the imperial era as Catholics and Protestant missionaries were among the early European explorers and colonizers of Africa, Asia, Australia and Latin America. However good the intentions of these missionaries may have been they ended up promoting and legitimizing the political, economic and cultural domination of the indigenous peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Australia by the Europeans (Rourke & Mark, 2003). The political conflicts between the Arabs and Israelis are more or less seen from a religion perspective – Muslims and Jews. And the division of India into religions lines on the nation's independence from Britain in 1947 has persisted till today; and the Indian-Pakistani relations have always adopted religions stance of Hindus versus Muslims, and their religious differences and skirmishes have undermined the independence of the Kashmir Province from India and Pakistan.

With the fall of communism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, religion came to dominate the political scenes of the Eastern European countries. The disintegration of Yugoslavia was more or less on religions lines – Catholic Croats, Muslim Bosnians and Orthodox Serbs. The same religion plays a role in the division between Serb and Muslim Albanians in Serbia – Montenegro province in Kosovo; and between Macedonians and Muslim Albanians in Macedonia. The Irish political landscape has been greatly influenced by religion, and characterized by bloody conflicts between Catholics and Protestants.

Lewis (1994) is of the opinion that communism failed in Eastern Europe because it attempted to provide an all-encompassing secular faith to regulate all aspects of man's relations to man, thereby making the idea of man's

relation to God superfluous and subversive; and maintains that in those nations where communism failed, there have been a revival of traditional forms of religion, showing a deeply felt need by man to believe in something beyond the evidence of everyday life; and that something is God. People therefore do seek meanings in life – a sense of purpose that politics cannot adequately provide but can be provided by religion. However, religion itself cannot provide the organizing mechanism through which the society can deal with the perennial issues of power and the need to adapt to changing circumstances (Lewis, 1994). That is why there is always an element of politics in religion, though this may be hidden in social life.

The issue of religion and politics is a very important one and has come to the fore this period for a number of reasons – crimes are being committed daily against humanity in the name of God and religion within and across national frontiers by religious fundamentalists; the globalization of democracy; and developments in communication, science and technology which makes the world a global village, thereby bringing the conditions of life of some other societies to our knowledge. We share their lives and feelings with them, and often reach out to give them helping hands, and, or use their experiences in solving our societal problems. However, the way religious faith glosses over to the political realm in Nigeria makes religion incompatible with politics especially to the development of democracy. The level of religiosity is so high that religion has acquired the capacity to impose and assert its perspectives in the country's political agenda and this makes secularization of the nation imperative. This paper therefore examines the effects of religion on the nation's political processes especially on the development and consolidation of democracy.

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## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

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Politics and religion are so interwoven that their separation in society is not impossible but problematic. The assertion of religious authority over secular authority for the democrat undermines the legitimacy of the state and the fundamental human rights of the citizens; and the assertion of secular authority over religion “questions” God's authority over his creations on earth and “undermines” the power and authority of God's representatives on earth. The questions that arise therefore are: what really gives rise to the incessant ethno-religious conflicts that characterize the Nigerian political processes as religious conflicts; does the gloss of religious beliefs and practices over to the nation's political process engender or endanger the growth of democratic beliefs and practices in the country; and; how can religious and political practices be reconciled to guarantee the institutionalization of an enduring democratic order in a multi-ethnic society as Nigeria.

## THEORITICAL ORIENTATION AND FRAMEWORK

Shields (1958); and Marx *et al.* (1975), are of the view that the state should be organized or ruled based purely on a secular creed devoid of religious implications. As Shields (1958) puts it, “democratic beliefs about the principles of political conduct are derived not from religious dogmas but from the practice of politics”. And Marx (1975) looks at religion as an optical illusion, and a smokescreen laid down by the oppressors among the oppressed, and as an opium of the people because once it is administered by the oppressor to the oppressed, it intoxicates and the intoxicated can go on any destructive errand including suicide bombing and arson.

For Marx *et al.* (1975), the inability of the proletariat to challenge the bourgeoisies (capitalists) gives rise to the belief in a better life after death, and beliefs in gods, devils, miracles and the like. Those who toil and live in want all their lives are taught by religion to be submissive and patient while here on earth, and to take comfort in the hope of a heavenly reward. Marx *et al.* (1975) therefore saw religion as opium of the people – a sort of spiritual booze in which the slaves of capital drown their human image, their demand for a life more or less worthy of man. Religion therefore should be a private affair so far as the state is concerned. Religion must be of no affair to the state; and religious societies must have no connection to the government authority. Everyone must be free to profess any religion of his choice, or no religion whatsoever. Discrimination of citizens on account of their religion is wholly intolerable. And no subsidies should be granted to the established church nor state funds be allocated to ecclesiastical and religious societies. There should be complete separation of the church and the state (Marx *et al.*, 1975).

## RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AND ITS DANGERS

One aspect of religion that appears to have gained strength in many countries is religious fundamentalism. A religious fundamentalist is one that holds conservative religious beliefs or values and wishes to incorporate those values into the secular political realm by making laws that would apply not only to their faithful followers but to everyone else in the society (Rourkela & Mark, 2003). As Kegley and Wittkopf (2004) observed, when religious groups are radicalized, politicized or become fanatically dedicated to the promotion of their cause, they oppose each other violently. They are also of the view that all radically politicized religious groups share these characteristics in common:

1) Militant religious groups tend to view existing governments as corrupt and illegitimate

because it is secular and not sufficiently rigorous in upholding religious authority or rigorously sanctioned social and moral values, (*especially if such governments are headed by elites from other religious or ethnic group*).

- 2) They attack the inability of governments to address the (*perceived*) domestic ills of the society in which the movement exists. In many cases, the religious group substitutes itself for the government at local levels and is involved in education, health and other social welfare programs.
- 3) They subscribe to a popular set of behavior and opinion that they believe the political authority must reflect and protect in all governmental agencies and social activities. This generally means that government and all of its foreign and domestic agencies and government activities must be in the hands of believers or subject to their close oversight.
- 4) They are universalistic – that is, they tend to see their views as part of the inheritance of everyone who is a believer. This tends to give them a trans-state motivation, a factor that translates their views on legitimacy of political authority into a larger context for action. In some cases, this means that international boundaries are not recognized as barriers to the propagation of their faith, even if this means the resort to violence.
- 5) They are exclusionists – that is, they relegate all conflicting opinions on appropriate political and social order to the margin – if they do not exclude them altogether. This translates as a class citizenship for any non-believer in any society where such a view predominates.
- 6) Finally, they are militants, willing to use coercion or violence to achieve their only true end.

The actions of the fundamentalists as Kegley and Wittkopf (2004) also noted, not only lead to violence but they also have five other specific national and international implications:

- a) If the religion is a dominant religion, or is practiced by a dominant ethnic group, there is always the tendency to lay claims to adjacent territories, or reclaim previously possessed lands from another ethnic region or group or state that controls it.
- b) They encourage secession – they always encourage the attempts by an ethnic or religious minority to break away from an internationally recognized state in a secessionist or separatist revolt if such ethnic or religious minority subscribes to their religion.
- c) Militant religious groups tend to incite migration – the departure of religious minorities from their countries of origin (either by force or by choice) to “escape persecution”. The migration leads to other consequences .
- d) The emigrants create diasporas or communities

that live abroad, and from their host communities maintain economic, political and emotional ties with their homelands.

- e) They sponsor national and international terrorism in support of radical co-religionists abroad or in their host and home countries.

There are some unfortunate facts about the two largest religious groups in Nigeria – Christianity and Islamism – both are internally divided though they use the same sacred texts. The acceptance of these sacred texts by the groups has not in any way prevented the growth of serious conflicts caused by different theological interpretations of the texts. Nevertheless, factional and sectarian differences linked to ideological, political and leadership issues seem to have had more far-reaching implications than theological differences; in other words, both religious faiths have fundamentalists (Christian and Islamic fundamentalists).

Both fundamentalists attack non-practitioners of their religions in their regional enclaves or neighborhoods, with the major purpose of converting them (Ebije, 2009). The basic difference is that while Islamic fundamentalists would use force, terror and human rights abuses to assert claims to state power and to force people to convert, the Christians would use charity, prayers and subtle persuasion saying that “the fight is the Lord’s”.

While the Islamic fundamentalists in Nigeria are found within such Muslim Brotherhoods as the Shiites, Tijaniyya, Wahabites, Qadriyya<sup>2</sup>, Taliban, Boko Haram and the Al-Qaida; in the Christian fold, they are the Pentecostals or the “born-again” who preach against what they consider as the corrupt churches in Nigeria, whose spirituality have been destroyed by pagan practices, hierarchical structures and alleged restriction of adherents to the scriptures. Unfortunately most of these Pentecostals preach prosperity and miracles rather than repentance and forgiveness, justice and peace, reconciliation to God, and love for fellow man. The character and content of religion as practiced by these fundamentalists have serious implications for the development of democracy in Nigeria and elsewhere.

Religious fundamentalists believe that their faith gives the basis for all necessary social regulations, and all functions of government. The religious fundamentalists believe and claim to know what God wants and intends for mankind, so any disagreement, rebuttal and opposition are not just against the religious fundamentalists who rule, but against the will of God Himself. The fundamentalists not only base their leadership of the society on scriptures but also are telling other people what they must believe. To the fundamentalist, just as the scripture is infallible, the fundamentalists who say what it means and how its instructions and denunciations are to be applied are also infallible (Lewis, 1981).

## ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

Islamism has been described by true and honest Muslims as a religion of peace and love. But judging from the way some of the practitioners of the religion use it for political purposes, especially in territorial acquisition and empire building in Nigeria and elsewhere, one may see it as an Arabian/Fulani colonial policy of using the religion to acquire political territories just as the Europeans used Christianity to acquire colonies during the imperial era<sup>3</sup>. As Hunwick (1965) observed, Usman dan Fodio who led the jihads against the indigenous Hausas kingdoms in Nigeria claimed to have had a vision instructing him to “unsheathe the sword of truth” against the Hausa ruling elites or dominant elites because they were unbelievers and corrupt, so, he embarked on the jihad.

By the end of the 18th century, Islamism had been firmly entrenched in Northern Nigeria and its effects were tremendous – the Fulani contending elites emerged as the dominant elites having toppled the Hausa dominant elites in the jihads. Secondly, the emergent Fulani elites intermarried with the indigenous Hausas to consolidate their hold on power and to reduce resentment against the Fulanis (Ofoegbu, 1976); Thirdly, the emergent Fulani elites became the dominant elites and used certain interpretations of Islam to impose a centralized government and a rigid class hierarchy on the defeated Hausa kingdoms, and used it to inculcate habits and attitudes of political deference and subordination (Colemann, 1960). This has been at the center of all the ethnic crises that are given religious camouflage in Nigeria, especially in the northern and the middle belt regions of the country. Power has been at the root cause of the crises and the essence is to control the economic resources available in the regions; and to dominate and rule the indigenous local population besides forcefully converting them to the Islamic faith.

The indigenous population became so critical of the leadership of the new elite in the society after the Jihads that in 1954, the Emir of Kano proscribed political activities by children (Sklar, 1963) probably to curtail resentment against the societal leadership which has been described as “customary authoritarianism” and undemocratic as the welfare of the people became worse under Hausa/Fulani leadership than it was under the indigenous Hausa leaderships.

The dangers of mixing the Islamic religion with politics have been seen in all its manifestations in Nigeria, and manifested in the bloody conflicts of the 1980s that occurred in the northern states. The conflicts that took ethnic lines were religiously motivated. The Kasuwa-Mangani communal crisis of 1980; the Zangon-Kataf and Gure-Kahugu crisis of 1984; the Kaganchan and Lere crisis of 1987; the Ilorin and Jere crisis of 1989; the 1991 crisis in Tafawa Balewa; and the Zango Kataf crisis of 1992; Bauchi crises of 2004, 2006 and 2008; and Jos

crises of 2008, 2010, and 2011 in which the migrant fulani settlers consistently persecuted the indigenous Tiv and non-indigenous, non-moslem groups in their midst. These are good pointers that Islamic religious fundamentalism is incompatible to peace, unity and development of democratic governance in Nigeria.

All religious/ethnic conflicts in the Middle Belt Region of Nigeria have been products of power struggles. The most recent Jos crisis where the Jos North Local Government election turned into an ethno-religious crises because the Hausa/Fulani settler (moslem) population failed to win the local government elections in the area and in some other local governments as Boko and Langtang where they had been in control before the elections point to the fact that struggles for political power have been the root causes of the conflicts. Though the other local government areas in the state remained peaceful but the Hausa/Fulani settlers in Jos North Local Government decide to riot against the election verdict and became violent. The Hausa/Fulani elites in the area believed that they were robbed of victory in the election because they are moslem minorities in the predominantly christian Tiv enclaves and reacted violently against the indigenous christian Tiv population. The Tivs did not take the attack lightly and retaliated. The violence that ensued left several people dead (The Nation, 29 Nov., 2008); and houses and property worth millions of Naira were burnt and destroyed.

The indigenous Tiv population has always resented the imposition of Hausa/Fulani settler elites on them by the Northern elites and felt the need for a change. They want to be represented by their own people and to have their own share of the national cake given to their natural indigenes, and they expressed their franchise. The Tivs cited the case of their being represented by Hausa/Fulani settlers in the region with the appointment of Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki Nakande (a Hausa/Fulani settler) as a Minister of State for Information under the platform of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) – a slot that would have gone to an indigenes Tiv; the representation of Jos in the then Northern House of Assembly by Alhaji Nakande's father; and the representation of Jos by Alhaji Inuwa Ali (Turakin Jos) in the House of Representatives in 1979-83; these men are all Hausa/Fulani settlers in Jos (Hameed, 2009). Democracy involves the representation of a group by a member of the group, and not by an alien to the group.

The representation of the indigenous majority Tiv population by the minority Hausa/Fulani settlers in the middle-belt region was made possible by the control of the then Northern Region by the Hausa/Fulani Islamic, feudal oligarchy that emerged after the jihads. This has always caused resentments among the indigenous Tiv population that has always sought for opportunities to reverse the anomaly. The opportunity for a change came in the local government elections in Plateau State and the indigenous Tiv population that dominated the Peoples Democratic Party in the State defeated the Hausa/Fulani

settler population in the All Nigeria Peoples Party. The victory set the stage for a bloody crisis that claimed lives and property. Democracy involves respect for majority opinion and decision.

The crisis that ensued became too bloody that the Plateau State Government decided to embark on a massive deportation of some of the Hausa/Fulani settlers to the core Hausa/Fulani States. The Tivs justified the actions of their governor and political leaders saying that it is extremely impossible for a Tiv to contest an election in any predominantly Hausa/Fulani State in the country what more representing the Hausa/Fulani in the National Assembly or taking a Hausa/Fulani slot of national appointments (Hammed, 2009).

As the crisis got bloodier, the Plateau State Governor ordered the law enforcement agencies to shoot at sight anyone involved in the crisis (The Nation, Nov. 30, 2008). The death toll was high and majority of the casualties were Hausa/Fulani settler elements as shown by the report presented by the Human Rights Watch to the Justice Bola Ajibola Panel that investigated the crisis. The head of the Human Rights Watch admitted under interrogation before the Justice Bola Ajibola Panel that he received the names of the 128 Hausa/Fulani casualties in the crisis from the Chief Imam of the Jos Central Mosque (Pam, 2009). The involvement of the Chief Imam and other Islamic leaders in the area in the compilation of the list shows the extent of the involvement of moslem leaders in the political crises in the region and goes to buttress the claims of the indigenous Tiv population that most of the crises in the region take religious undertone because that is the only way the Hausa/Fulani group gets the listening ears of the Federal Government and the support of other Hausa/Fulani elites within the corridors of power all over the country. And emerging facts show that the crises are the handiwork of well organized Islamic terrorist groups whom the governments have ignored (Emeruwa, 2004; Okumo, 2004; Ogunro, 2004).

As the crisis spread to new areas, the Plateau State Government intensified the deportation of the Hausa/Fulani settlers to the core northern states because the Hausa/Fulani settlers in Plateau State could not trace their ancestral roots to any community indigenous to Plateau State or the middle-belt region (Igidi, 2009; Aminu, 2009). This triggered off an uproar by the Hausa/Fulani elites all over the country, Retired General Jerry Useni – the Chairman of the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), a Hausa/Fulani socio-cultural group spoke out in condemnation of the deportation (Agbase, 2009). The deportation according to Kawu (2009) introduces a new dimension to the politics of indigenes versus settlers and warned that if the deportation is not reversed, it would give a new definition to Nigerian citizenship. The most noticeable thing about the condemnation is that it comes only from the Hausa/Fulani elites whose political and religious interests are served by the settler elements in the

middle belt region. The natural indigenes of the middle-belt region and the southern region want politics to be divorced from religion.

The Tivs and indeed all other ethnic groups in the southern parts of the country strongly condemn the colonization of one ethnic region by the other and see such acts as incompatible with democracy. This has also made many Nigerians to call for a discussion of the “national question” to put an end to the internal colonization and the exploitation of one ethnic region by the other that has been going on in the country for centuries. Nigerians in the Niger-Delta region for instance are predominantly Christians. They strongly believe that the exploitation of the natural/mineral resources in their region benefits only the predominantly Moslem north because the Moslem north has been in control of the nation’s political processes since colonial era to the present and no corresponding development projects have been carried out in the region that provides more than 75 percent of the nation’s resources. A discussion of the “national question” perhaps, will bring to an end, the Niger Delta crises and all other ethno-religious conflicts in the country today. If the Niger-Delta region had been a predominantly Hausa/Fulani Islamic enclave, the crises in the region may not have been there, or could have taken a different shape altogether.

Democracy involves the rule of law and the due process. If any other rule is substituted for the rule of law, then there is the absence of democracy. The introduction of Sharia Law in the northern states by state governors with extreme religious orientations brought about an unprecedented abuse of the rule of law and the due process of law in those states where sharia have been introduced and enforced. The penal code that had hitherto guided law and order in the region was relegated to the background and non-conformists to the Sharia Law got maimed and abused by the Sharia Law Implementation Squads popularly known as “Hisba” in the northern states of Nigeria.

The Hisba destroys anyone or group(s) it considers to be “anti-Islamic” without recourse to the law, the rule of law and the due process. In late February 2001, the group burnt an army truck in Kano simply because it was carrying beer meant for military games (CLO: 2002) and on April 11, 2001 burnt down a guest house in Nasarawa District in Kano in its routine attacks on hotels and restaurants in the state. Also in Kano, a Wurno Lower Sharia Court ordered the amputation of the right hand of one Aminu Tukur Dandaye for allegedly stealing a ram worth ₦16,000 (CLO: 2002). This took place barely a week after a Sokoto Upper Sharia Court gave a similar judgement (CLO: 2002). These offences, if properly tried under the Panel Code or the Criminal Code, would have attracted a maximum of three years imprisonment or a fine or both.

Zamfara State became notorious in the implementation of the Sharia Law as many citizens got amputated for

stealing. The amputation that attracted much publicity was that of one Lawal Isah who was amputated by the personal physician to the Zamfara State Governor at Gummi General Hospital for stealing 3 bicycles valued at ₦9,500. Another citizen that got publicity for losing a limb was Bello Jangodi who was amputated for stealing a cow worth ₦2,000. In Sokoto State, one Mallam Umaru Alliyu was amputated for stealing a sheep; while in Birinin-Kebbi, in Kebbi State, one Attahim Umaru (35) was sentenced to death by stoning for the sexual abuse of a 7-year-old boy in the Kebbi State capital. As reported by CLO (2002), Umaru’s trial lasted for 20 minutes. Umaru begged for leniency but the trial judge refused as his crime attracted capital punishment.

As CLO (2002) noted, the enforcement of the Sharia Law in most states involved got the approval of their Legislative Houses of Assembly that promulgated enabling laws, and their executives that supplied the enforcement groups with dangerous weapons and uniforms. Section 7 (1) of the Public Order Act prohibits the wearing of uniform by groups which in the opinion of the Commissioner of Police are offensive and likely to provoke a breach of the peace; while Section 7 (4) stipulates penalties for persons wearing uniforms and or flying flags prohibited by law. The Hisba groups violated almost all sections of the Public Order Act including Section 8(1) that condemns the carrying of dangerous weapons (CLO: 2002).

Despite the existence of the Penal Code in the northern states of Nigeria, (similar to the Criminal Code in operation in the southern states of the country), the northern states went ahead to introduce the Sharia Law. As the Christians saw this development as being against national unity, they embarked on peaceful protests over the Sharia law because Sharia law does not guarantee the fundamental human rights of muslims and non-muslims, and cannot guarantee the rule of law. The peaceful protest turned violent as the muslims mounted open confrontation against Christians in the north. This led to organized killings of Christians in northern cities and the burning down of churches and other places where Christians are found especially their homes and shops across the northern region (Asoya, 2004; Lawal, 2010). This however led to reprisal killings of Moslems in the eastern towns of Aba, Owerri, Port-Harcourt Onitsha and Asaba (Mohammed *et al.*, 2006). The reprisal killings made the Nigerian Government to step in to keep the peace in those areas where the killings had taken place. Without the reprisal killings, the government could have remained docile over the issue.

The problem with the mixture of religion and politics has been that it has always done by people who are intent on occupying positions of power and authority in the country without question, people who do not want anyone to challenge their authorities; and people whose spiritual and moral standards are far below the requirements of

what is necessary to faithfully and truthfully implement divine legal injunctions on earth; otherwise a Danish Newspaper cartoon which Muslims around the world considered blasphemous of Prophet Mohammed has no business in causing an ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria. The cartoon led Muslims to attack Christians in Kastina, Kano, Bauchi and Maidugiri in which churches were burnt and many Christians were killed; and recently, another Islamic fundamentalist group the Yusufiya (Boko Haram), struck in Maidugiri, Portiskum, Bauchi and Kastina in protest over western education, western medicine and secular political administration in Nigeria (Ola, 2009; Sun, July 30) and has been bombing innocent Nigerians all over the northern states till date. Islamic fundamentalism therefore endangers democracy and cannot make for an enduring democratic order in a multi-ethnic country as Nigeria.

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## **CHRISTIANITY, TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA**

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Christian fundamentalists found in the Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria make their adherents to look for the solutions to national economic, political and social problems; and personal problems in the spiritual realm irrespective of the nature of the problem. To the Pentecostals, every human problem is a spiritual problem (Bamidele, 2004). At the beginning of each year they would prophesy the mind of God for the nation (Olafioye, 2007; Adekoye, 2006; Ekenna, 2002; Agbaegbu *et al.*, 2002). No problem is environmental, political, social or economic, all are spiritual. In the face of dictatorship and tyranny in Nigeria under Generals Buhari, Babangida, Abacha, and Abdulsalami's regimes, many Pentecostal groups in the country saw the regimes as evil and had been purposely put in place by God to punish Nigerians for their sins. So, they fasted and prayed for the end of the regimes instead of challenging the authoritarian regimes to eliminate them.

The non-Pentecostals in Nigeria, especially the Catholics, adopted a liberation theology similar to those used by the Latin Americans to call the people to action – to stand up for their rights, to reject authoritarian regimes through peaceful protests, and civil disobedience; and for Christians to use their jobs and offices as callings to serve God and humanity and to make the country a better place. Thus, most of the Christian members of the pro-democracy groups that challenged the various military regimes in Nigeria were more of conventional Christians than the Pentecostals.

To most christians, the “stepping-aside” by General Babangida and the death of General Abacha were all miracles – God answered their prayers. Catholics also prayed for “Nigeria in Distress”<sup>5</sup> and “Against Bribery and Corruption in Nigeria”<sup>6</sup>. But it is worth noting that in

a nation under authoritarianism, the people need not rely solely on the spiritual realm for the solutions to temporal problems such as power play; for this cannot help the development of democracy in the polity. They need to confront the authoritarians because the authoritarians do not need votes to remain in power but blind compliance to their wishes. Though the non-Pentecostals and some of the Pentecostal christians united as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to openly condemn military dictatorships in Nigeria and called on Christians to resist all forms of intimidations by other religious organizations and authoritarian regimes; they also prayed for the despots.

The Christian fundamentalists or Pentecostals exercise undemocratic but charismatic authority in their religious organizations. Such authorities do not engender the growth of democracy and democratic practices. Those who establish Pentecostal groups exercise leadership on the basis of claims to have been “called” by God into His vineyard; to have received a special message from God. Thus the exercise of power in their organizations is highly personalized and autocratic, because direct messages from God supersedes earthly questions of democratic governance; and there is only one option open to the Pentecostals for dissent – quit if you want to exercise your own charismatic power. If you have your own special calling and cannot remain under the leader, quit and start your own. The exercise of authoritarian leadership in the Pentecostal sects gave rise to the power-play that characterizes the sects at the exit of their founder/leaders (Akhigbe, 2004; Onyekwere & Onoja, 2005; Akpaekong, 2002). Due to the absence of a “routinization of Charisma” (Webber, 1956), crises and disintegration that characterize the Christian Pentecostal sects overflows into the political process because they agree to disagree.<sup>7</sup>

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## **TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA**

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Traditional religion practitioners in the north are regarded as moslems by the rest of the country; so also are traditional religion practitioners regarded as Christians in the south. They are neither Christians nor moslems but observe traditional religious practices. Christians avoid them because they are believed to be worshipping the devil who gives them instant responses to their requests and instant punishment to offenders and violators of its rules. Because leaders of the pentecostal churches exercise charismatic authority which manifests in the “miracles” they perform, there are doubts in the minds of some Nigerians to the authenticity of such miracles. Some of the pentecostal leaders are believed to have acquired their powers from traditional religionists as the miracles they perform are seen by some as “magic” (Johnson, 2004; Abdulrahman, 2004). Therefore, the traditional religionists are more or less seen as part of the Christian fold in the southern states of Nigeria.



There have been intense struggles for political power in Nigeria between Christians and traditional religion practitioners especially in Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Lagos, Ogun, Edo, Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa, Anambra, Abia, Imo, Enugu and Kogi States in Nigeria where Christians are in the majority. The conflicts in these states manifest clearly during the nomination of candidates for various electoral posts (Ajero, 2006; Ekong, 2002); during elections; and in the appointment of people into the executive arm of the government. Sometimes it would involve the governors and their deputies (Ajero, 2004); political associates (Agbaegbu, 2007); political god-fathers or political-financiers, and their political clients or god-sons (Ajero, 2006); party loyalists; and, ruing parties and the opposition. These conflicts eventually end up in electoral malpractices and political assassinations that are rampant in the southern states of the country (Agbaegbu, 2006; Ajero, 2006; Onyemaizu, 2006; Azike, 2006; Dibiana, 2006).

Some of the conflicts centre more or less on oath-taking in religious shrines and negation of oath promises by political clients or benefactors; the use of traditional religious power (charms) provided by traditional religious shrines and deities to exact compliance from political clients by political-financiers or godfathers; and the use of violence (provided by political thugs who have been founded and funded by the political-financiers to enforce conformity to oath promise in cases of deviance or non-compliance; and the use of thugs and corrupt military and law enforcement agents by political-financiers to ensure the victory of political-clients at the polls during elections.

The conflicts between the former Governor of Abia State, Orji Uzo Kalu and his erstwhile (impeached) Deputy, Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe (1999-2002); and that between Governor Orji Uzo Kalu and his late Deputy, Dr. Chima Nwafor (2003-2006) are believed to have centered on the negation of oath promises made in shrines by the deputies. The oath issue arose again in Abia State when Onyema Ugochukwu, the Governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) alleged that the incumbent Governor of Abia State, Theodore Orji of the Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA) is a member of a secret cult. But some PPA members referred the oath taking as a religious practice, though the priests of the Ogwugwu Shrine in Okija denied that the incumbent Governor of Abia State, Theodore Orji patronizes the shrine.

In Anambra State, some deities and shrines in Okija, Anambra State meant for traditional religious practices were used by political-financiers to keep their clients (god-sons) in check, and to control participation in the political process by the electorate and contestants in the state<sup>11</sup> (Newswatch, 2008). Governor Mbadinuju of Anambra State (1999-2003) could not contribute anything to the socio-economic development of his state because he had to fulfill his bonded obligation at the shrines to his political financier, Chief Emeka Offor. Governor Mbadinuju's successor Chris Ngige negated on his bonded

obligation at the shrine to his political financier Chris Uba; and Chris Uba made Anambra State ungovernable for Governor Ngige (Mbah, 2004; Nwaokafor-Okafor, 2004; Arazu, 2004); and had him removed from office through an electoral tribunal judgment that upheld the election petition of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) candidate, Peter Obi.

Aspirants for various political posts are required to take blood oaths in almost all the states in southern Nigeria<sup>11</sup>. They undergo several rituals in shrines; and enter into bonded obligations to be faithful and loyal to their political financiers and not to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The political clients are not to question any decisions or actions of their financiers irrespective of the negative impacts of such decisions or actions on the wellbeing of the citizens of the states, and on the democratic process in the country before they are fielded to contest any political post. Victories at the polls are ensured by the political financiers through bribery, harassment and threats on the lives and families of the electoral administrators, and the electorate. This does not in any way engender democracy in the polity.

The incessant robberies, assassinations, hijacking of bullion vans and kidnappings rampant in the southern states especially in Abia State, are political strategies designed by the traditional religionists, political financiers and their political clients to keep the opposition at bay and to exclude them from the political process (Agbo, 2010). The kidnapping of expatriate construction engineers and development experts in the region is designed to embezzle the development funds tied to such development projects on the pretext that the contractors could not perform due to unfriendly and hostile environments at the construction sites. Honestly, no local community would oppose the construction of any development project in its locality unless such project is environmentally hazardous to the community. These criminal acts have succeeded in keeping the opponents of the regimes out of the states, thereby limiting their abilities to organize viable oppositions against the regimes, and limiting their abilities to participate effectively in the political processes in the various states.

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## THE NEED FOR THE SECULARIZATION OF THE STATE

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Because of the ethnic diversities of the Nigerian society and the multiplicity of religious beliefs therein, there is the need for a neutral arbiter – a secular state – to protect the rights of the various groups of people, faiths and religious beliefs. The way religious fundamentalists have intruded into national politics has become very dangerous to the development of democracy in Nigeria. This intrusion leaves a peace-loving but plain person to the question if there is any religious faith that is compatible to

democracy. Because of the dangers posed by the intrusion of religion into politics in Nigeria, Christians especially the Catholic Church, calls on every catholic to stand up against all forms of electoral malpractices and violence; and to cast their votes to people of transparent honesty, people of integrity, "God-fearing" Nigerians irrespective of their ethnic origins and geographical origins and religions.

The idea of separating the church from the state or religion from politics is an idea that arose out of the renaissance and reformation periods and was somehow propelled by the industrial revolution, and advancement in science and technology, which challenged religious faith at that time. Knowledge of the cosmos, physics, biology and chemistry; and developments in biotechnology, especially in genetic engineering, has come to challenge our religious faith and some social teachings of religious groups. The most recent developments in the area of genetic engineering for instance, has led to medical biotechnological researches using human embryos; extra-corporeal conception and cloning; and the production of genetically modified organisms as food crops that challenge our belief in creation. For these developments to be sustained, the state must be separated from the church. The possibilities of these did not exist before now; neither did questions about them exist. Today, are the answers to the questions raised by these developments to be answered by the state (through legislations), or by religious authorities, or individual choices? These are issues in society that cannot be solved by religious beliefs but by politics through the state and legislation. This therefore calls for a separation of the church and the state. The problems facing us today is not that religion and state cannot exist side-by-side, and remain within their spheres of interests, but the problem of each glossing over to the other. Religion does this through fundamentalism and politics does this through authoritarianism or totalitarianism. And it is only a secular democratic order that can create a balance between the two, keeping each within its limits.

The concept of secularization of the state rose from the works of social scientists that sought to establish rational grounds necessary for development and social change in a society. By secularization, the social scientists mean that it is a framework of rules rather than divine injunctions that should form the foundation of any given political community. The emphasis is on the rule of law, and political sovereignty where power belongs to the people rather than to the state or religion. Secularization in its proper sense emphasizes a decline in the membership, social influence, wealth and prestige of religious groups in the organization and leadership of a state or society. Some religious people in the society who have vested interests in religion and the state challenged this idea. They have refused to let the state be independent of religion, or limit their influences on the state because secularization limits their influences and vested interests in the state. These

people who, in the name of religion, refused to allow the secularization of the state are religious fundamentalists.

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has examined the concepts politics, religion, and democracy, and how religion and politics inhibit the growth of democracy in Nigeria. The entry of religious factors into Nigeria's politics was also examined and found to be responsible for the developmental crises facing the country today. The paper also found out that democracy cannot be associated with any religious faith, but is a secular creed, and warns that the adoption of any religion for the Nigerian state would lead to a challenge of the legitimacy of the state by the other religious groups because it will be used to serve the interests of those in power, the ruling religion or a faction of the ruling religion. There is therefore the need for the laws that govern the society to be religiously neutral to give everyone in the society a sense of belonging for it is an abuse of religious freedom for anyone to be forced to denounce his faith to avoid injustice being meted out to him in the name of religion. The Nigerian situation does not need prayer and fasting, but an affirmative action against the intrusion of religion into politics irrespective of the religious faith. Secularization of the state should not be seen as the withdrawal of the state from religious matters but as a device to ensure that the fundamental human rights of the people are protected especially freedom of religion. As Rodee *et al.* (1983) warned, any form of government that rules the belief and behavior of those who subscribe to any religions is manifestly authoritarian. So also is political authority that is based on the religious laws as interpreted by the clerical elites.

Certainly not everyone values democracy but those who do also cherish other values that democracy protects. Democracy is not a faith but all religious faiths preach God's special concern for his creatures and God does not need to make any hierarchical order of those that need his blessings. Democracy is just a way of enabling the society to function. It recognizes human feelings and propensity to error, and makes it easier for mistakes to be corrected peacefully, than systems that claim absolute righteousness (Lewis, 1984). This does not in any way advocate for a world without faith in God, as a world ruled by enlightened intellect, designed in a laboratory and cleansed of religion as Michnik (1984) says, is utopian and dangerous. It is utopian because there is no historical evidence to support such a belief. Secularization of the state is therefore the solution to the ethno-religious crises that disrupt the peace and development of the country.

There is an urgent need for the federal government to convene a sovereign national conference to discuss the "national question" as this is at the root of all ethno-

religious conflicts in the country. This will help to strengthen the basis for the continuation of the geo-political entity called Nigeria as a united country because the state formation process that was stopped by colonialism left a lot of unresolved problems which manifest today as ethno-religious crises in the country especially in the middle belt region. What is going on in the middle belt is a resistance to the legitimization of internal colonialism of some ethnic nationalities by the others in the region.

The federal government should also reject the call by traditional elites for the assignment of constitutional roles to the traditional rulers across the country. The assignment of constitutional roles to them would go to legitimize the traditional dynasties established through internal colonization during the state formation processes in contentious areas or regions, and would perpetuate ethno-religious conflicts in those areas where conflicts have been endemic, or start new conflicts in regions that have been relatively quiet and peaceful. And most of the conflicts would be over kingship, kinship and ancestral origins and roots, because no one would want to be ruled by an alien or a settler in his own land, which was the basis for the formation of nationalist movements against colonialism. The attempt by the Yorubas (Odua Peoples Congress) to install an Oba of Ilorin a few years ago is still fresh in our minds. The calamities that would have followed the exercise are only being delayed but not circumvented because the Yorubas still nurse a feeling of a legitimate claim on Ilorin and the entire Kwara State as part of their ethnic enclave, and are not very comfortable with an Emir of Ilorin.

There is also the urgent need for the government to re-examine the political boundaries of the various ethnic nationalities (states and local governments) in the country which were redrawn by the colonial masters to favour some traditional elites who clandestinely wanted to continue the state formation process through the colonialists. This would put people where they really belong and make for a lasting peace between the ethnic nationalities in the country.

## NOTES

1. It is believed by Onwubiko that Uthman dan Fodio that led the Islamic Jihad against the indigenous Hausa ruling elites in Hausa land embarked on the project for religious purposes. And that Uthman dan Fodio quit from the expedition when some soldiers of fortune joined the jihad for selfish and personal purposes, to conquer territories for themselves and to loot and acquire property in the process. (See Onwubiko, K. B. C. *School Certificate History of West Africa*. Onitsha: Africana Educational Publishers, 1973, pp. 18-19). But some other scholars are of the view that Uthman dan Fodio completed the jihad and established emirates all over Hausa land, and

appointed his sons and lieutenants as rulers over the emirates and these emirs or rulers remained allegiant to him and paid homages to him – he established a feudal dynasty or a feudal system of government. (see Ray Ofoegbu *Government for the Certificate Year*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976, pp. 31-41) But we are of the opinion that Usmans dan Fodio's position as the Sultan of Sokoto was made more secure through the appointment of his sons, close relations and lieutenants as emirs of the established emirates which in effect implied that the state formation exercise was completed by Uthman dan Fodio contrary to what Onwubiko and other scholars would want us to believe. We also believe that the jihad was embarked upon for political and economic purposes rather than religious purposes.

2. Uthman dan Fodio and several other jihadists were members of this Qadriyya Islamic sect before, during and after the jihads (see Onwubiko K.B.C. *School Certificate History of West Africa*. Onitsha: Africana Educational Publishers, 1973, pp. 13-34). The sect was interested in the overthrow of the dominant ruling Hausa elites during the jihad not only for religious purposes but for political and economic reasons. The members of the Qadriyya sect are always the contending elites where ever they are found; and in the northern states of Nigeria, they are found in the Hausa/Fulani regional enclaves as contending elites. They have not been properly and, or, adequately accommodated within the social structure and need to be properly accommodated hence, they employ violence in their challenge of the ruling elites in order to be accommodated. Mutallab's father has been identified as a member of this Qadriyya sect (see Tell, Jan. 7-14, 2010) and a member of the Izala Gorup (see Tell, Jan. 11, 2010).

3. Islam is not only an Arabian-Hausa/Fulani religion, but also a colonial policy (see Note 1. above).

4. Islamic jihadists in Nigeria made the religion anti-democratic just as the European colonialists made colonialism and Christianity anti democratic. As Hunwick (1965) pointed out, before Yinufa became the king of Gobir in 1802, islamism had been introduced in his domain. He however stopped further islamic conversion of his subjects as the Hausas were traditional religion practitioners. He forbade men from wearing turban and women from wearing veil just as the Franch Government has recently done, because this islamic action divided citizens into muslims and non-muslims and Yinufa did not want this to continue. Yinufa in effect wanted to uphold his citizens' fundamental right of freedom of thought, worship and religion. The settler Fulanis in Gobir who were basically moslems did not like this development as they wanted the Hausas to adopted the islamic mode of dressing and ways of life. The king was labeled a "pagan", and must be removed from power. Uthman dan Fodio led the revolt against the king with the sole aim of establishing a caliphate on the model laid down by islam in the time of Prophet Mohammed – a state in which God-fearing kings

ruled with justice instead of a pagan despot whose aim was tyranny. (Because the Hausa kings taxed the people – indigenous and settler elements especially the migrant Fulani cattle rearers heavily to maintain their kingdoms, the Fulanis hated them and wanted them eliminated).

5. Hunwick's discussion of the nineteenth century jihads confirmed this aggressive and colonial character of the Islamic religion when he noted that the Muslim jurist divided the world into two – the "Abode of Islam" that is all territories under the control of Muslims, and the "Abode of war" – that is all territories outside the control of Muslims and outside Islamic rule. That it is the duty of all Muslims to summon the unbelievers to embrace Islam; if the unbelievers accept Islam, they are treated as members of the Islamic community and their territories as part of the "Abode of Islam"; but if they do not, they should be fought against and if they are defeated, those captured in war shall become slaves and their goods become booties which go into the Muslim state treasury. But the ordinary citizens in the conquered society should be allowed to continue with their old religions. They are to pay "per-capita" tax, and are to be taxed on their lands for the protection that they receive from the Islamic state. The jihads are not embarked solely for religious purposes but are expansionist projects for the acquisition of territories by adventurists in the name of religion, and for the destruction of cultures and civilizations that are not of Islamic origin. It is therefore, a Hausa/Fulani colonial policy in Nigeria.

6. This explains the power play that led to the emergence of Mrs. Idahosa as the leader of the Church of God Mission at the death of her husband, Bishop Idahosa; and the power play that rocked the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star (alias OOO) in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria; and the Celestial Church of Christ (of the Jesus of Onyibo fame) in Lagos, Lagos State, at the death of their founders/leaders (Onyekwere & Onoja, 2005). But in the Catholic Church this is not so, the Catholic Church practices a bureaucratic authority. As Webber (1947) pointed out, Charismatic authority is outside the realm of everyday routine and is sharply opposed to both rational, and particularly bureaucratic and traditional authorities. Bureaucratic authority which is the form adopted by the Catholic Church is specifically rational in the sense of being bound to intellectually analyzable rules while charismatic authority is specifically irrational in the sense of being foreign to all rules.

7. Prayer for Nigeria in distress said in Catholic churches all over Nigeria ran thus; "All powerful and Merciful father, you are the God of justice, love and peace. You rule over all the nations of the earth, power and might are in your hands and no one can withstand you. We present our country Nigeria before you. We praise and thank you, for you are the source of the source of all we are. We are sorry for all the sins we have committed and for the good deeds we have failed

to do. In your loving forgiveness keep us safe from the punishments we deserve. Lord, we are weighed down not only by uncertainties, but also by moral, economic, and political problems. Listen to the cries of your people who confidently turn to you. God of infinite goodness, our strength in adversity, our health in weakness, our comfort in sorrow, be merciful to us, your people. Spare this nation, Nigeria, from chaos, anarchy and doom. Bless us with your kingdom of justice, love and peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord".

8. Prayer against bribery and corruption in Nigeria was also said in all Catholic Churches in Nigeria, and the prayer ran thus: "Father in heaven, you always provide for all your creatures so that all may live as you have willed. You have blessed our country Nigeria with rich human and natural resources to be used to your honour and glory; and for the well-being of every Nigerian. We are deeply sorry for the wrong use of these your gifts and blessings through acts of injustice, bribery and corruption. As a result of which many of our people are hungry, sick, ignorant and defenseless. Father, you alone can heal us and our nation of this sickness. We beg you, touch our lives and the loves of our leaders and people; so that we may all realize the evil of bribery and corruption and work hard to eliminate it. Raise up for us God fearing people and leaders, who are for us and who will lead us in the path of peace, prosperity and progress. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen".

9. The crises between the former Abia State Governor – Orji Uzor Kalu and his deputies were very complex that the Peoples Democratic Party could not settle them amicably. His (Governor – Orji Uzor Kalu's) late deputy Chima Nwafor should have been impeached before his death (see Chris Ajero (2004) "A Deputy Governors Suspended Burden" *Newswatch*, July 5, pp. 24-25).

10. Some political aspirants under some political parties particularly the PDP and PPA, were made by the party leaders (political godfathers) to enter into bonded obligations with them in religious shrines to be of "good behavior and not to question any decisions of the party and political godfathers. Having taken the oath at the shrines, the candidates are then fielded for specific political post under the party in the elections. With the parties private armies, thugs and corrupt electoral officials and law enforcement agencies, victories are secured for the political clients by the parties and political godfathers. The political clients are bound to toe the lines dictated by the bosses in making political appointments, in allocation of revenue, contracts, etc.

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