
Muslim Religious Violence and Terrorism against Christian Communities in Nigeria:
A Historical Critical Review/Response

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Abstract

The Problem facing the Christians in Nigeria Today is not that of Ethnic Religious crisis but that of Muslim Religious Violence and Terrorism against Christians. Therefore, this paper deals with the historical roots of how the two parallel world religions came into contact with each other and how they have related, especially since Nigeria gained independence from their British Colonial Master in 1960. The intention here is to engage the theoretical discourses through a case study of the literature on religious violence, especially between Islam and Christianity. The paper presents a historical review of the relationship between the two world Religions during the succeeding years when Nigerians assumed the leadership position in the country. The paper notes that the two religions have been “strange bed-fellows” with the Muslims always on the offensive against the Christians intending to subjugate them through violence and terrorism. The paper concludes with suggestions on how Christians should respond and the way forward.

Introduction

The state of Muslim persecution of Christians in Nigeria has passed the alarming stage and now entered its fatal stage. The problem here is the threat to Nigerian Christians’ right to religious freedom guaranteed in section 38 of the Nigerian Constitution which echoes Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Peoples Rights. Furthermore, Article 15 (2), of the Constitution states that “...discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, Religion, status, ethnic or linguistic association or ties shall be prohibited”. It goes on to echo Article 18 of the Universal Human Rights by stating that:

1. Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others and a public or a private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. No person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction, take part in any religious instructions ceremony or observance related to a religion other than his own, or religion not approved by his parent or guardian.
3. No religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any place of education maintained wholly by that community or denomination.

The Constitution upholds the fundamental right of people to believe or not to believe. It forbids anyone from suffering because of their religion or faith. The right to manifest what one believes or to practice one’s religion is also taking part in the law of the land. Notwithstanding this legal framework, Nigeria’s record of upholding religious freedom is wretched. Despite these provisions which ensure the secularity of the State, as it obtains in other democracies that are multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-cultural like the US, UK,

and India etc, the Muslim leadership in Nigeria flout these constitutional provisions with impunity and demand the implementation of Islamic legal code. They contend that the adoption of Sharia does not amount to adopting a state religion. This fact constitutes both the remote and immediate causes of Muslim persecution of Christians, especially in Northern Nigeria.

Background to Muslim Religious Violence and Terrorism against Christian Communities in Nigeria: A Historical Critical Review

This section briefly examines the background of the Religious Crisis in Nigeria as a by-product of British Colonialism under General Frederick Lugard. Before Nigeria was colonized by the British, we had a multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and even multi-political culture. As such, Nigeria was an extremely heterogeneous and complex entity. Despite the diversities in language, tribe, religion and culture, Nigeria was forcibly put together by the British West African frontier soldiers with firepower. General Lugard conquered each of the 14 Emirates within the Sokoto Caliphate. Unable to rule the expansive north with just 200 soldiers, General Frederick Lugard adopted Indirect Rule for the North. General Lugard found the elaborate Emirate system (established by Othman Dan Fodio) adequate for the governance of the North, so he empowered the Emirs to rule on his behalf, they were to collect Taxes on behalf of the British government. Lugard warned Christian missionaries not to preach the Gospel to the Hausa Fulani and must not try to change their culture. The missionaries were free to plant churches among the minority Ethnic groups of the north.

In the South, the British- under Gen. Lugard massacred Ethnic groups into submission to form the Southern Protectorate. Lugard applied Direct Rule in the South and weakened the Kings, Obis, and Paramount Chiefs of the South. He signed treaties with the weakened kings, obis, and paramount chiefs of the south, and applied direct rule over them, whereas Lugard empowered Othman Dan Fodio to rule on their behalf (Indirect Rule). There was no such consultation with any of the chiefs in the Southern Protectorate. All that happened was that as soon as Lugard observed that the total export from Southern Protectorate was 4,000,000 (four million pounds) and that the Northern Protectorate was 373,000 – (Three Hundred and Seventy-three thousand pounds), he decided to amalgamate the two Protectorates without any consultation with the Southern Protectorate. The aim was to use the surplus revenue from the South to maintain the North. (TUNON p10-p12).

According to one pundit, weakening the Nigerian Question captioned, “Towards the United Nations of Nigeria (TUNON), a colonial Master asked Lord Lugard what type of country he was expecting from the amalgamation of 645 different countries which comprised mostly Christian south and mostly Muslim north. It was reported that Lugard replied that he did not know, but assured the enquirer that when Nigerians had lived together for 100 years, they would decide what they would want to do with Nigeria – Now Nigeria has lived from 1914-2014- 100 years. The next question was, if in future the South discovers that they have been cheated in the scheme of things, how would Nigeria still hold together? The answer was simple:

- Concentrate all military institutions in the North and Encourage Northerners to Join the Armed Forces
- Presently Air Force Headquarters, Kano - North
- Army Headquarters in Kaduna - North
- Naval Headquarters in Baddani - North
- Nigerian Defense Academy in Jaji, Kaduna - North
- Nigerian Military University in Maiduguri - North
- National War/Defense College, Abuja - North (TUNON pp10-15)

The confession of legendary Harold Smith when asked who formed Nigeria. It was reported that Nigeria was formed in 1914 when Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was ten years old; Chief Obafemi was six years old and Sir Ahmadu Bello was five years old. So, the Trio-Zik, Awo and Sardauna were not the founding fathers of Nigeria. So, it is the British under Lugard that are the founders. And they promised the Fulani caliphate that as long as Great Britain existed, they would ensure that the North would always be at an advantage over the South. Legendary Harold Smith, one of the architects of colonial masters that midwife Nigeria's independence in 1960: said "Our Agenda was to completely exploit Africa and Nigeria was my duty post. When we assessed Nigeria, we found in the Southern Region – Strength, intelligence, determination to succeed, well-established history, complex but focused lifestyle, great hope and aspirations...the East is good in business and technology, and the West is good in administration and commerce, law and medicine, but it was a pity we planned our agenda to give power "at all costs" to the northerner. They seemed to be submissive and silly of a kind, our mission was to destroy the opposition on all fronts. The West led in the fight for independence and we punished them for asking for freedom. They will not rule Nigeria". (TUNON pp. 115-116).

Harold Smith confessed that the census results were announced before they were counted. Despite seeing the vast land with no humans but cattle in the north, we still gave the north 55 million instead of 33 million. This was to maintain their majority votes and future power bid. The North was seriously encouraged to go into the military. The Northerners were given accelerated promotions both in the military and civil service to justify their superiority over the South. Everything was planned to work against the South. We planned to destroy Awolowo and Azikiwe and sowed a seed of discord among them. We tricked Azikiwe into accepting to be president (honorary) having known Balewa to be the main man with power. Awolowo was to go to jail to cripple his genius plans for a greater Nigeria. The British let Nigeria down...Nigeria, a great Nation, was crippled not because of military Juntas or corrupt leaders alone, but by the British and American fear of Nigeria's great future...The colonial masters caused havoc while they were in Africa and planted timebombs when they finally left...now instead of detonating the time bombs planted by the British, the North is planting mines. Smith concludes: "Am sorry for the above evil done to Nigeria, I can't say sorry enough". Given the above confession of the calculated demonic injustice and brazen wickedness of the British against the "Christian South" and in favour of the Muslim – Hausa Fulani whom they gave the false impression that they were born to rule Nigeria albeit by force – What did –the British expect?

Constitutional Conference Preceding Independence in 1960

During the constitutional conference preceding independence in 1960, one vital issue for discussion was the national ideology of the emerging country. A nation's national ideology defines the character of the nation and its System of Governance. It was felt that due to the multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nature of Nigeria, an all-inclusive ideology will be required that would guarantee justice, equality, and fairness for all citizens. On this basis, Liberal Democracy has been adjudged the best national ideology for Nigeria with a Parliamentary System of Government. The Muslim North expressed a preference for a system of governance of which an essential ingredient would be Islamic law. The Colonial Government subjected Sharia to what Wilkin's commission in 1958 described as the '**repugnancy test.**' Sharia failed the test and it was rejected as a national ideology. Unfortunately, the sponsors of Sharia did not stop nursing the ambition of imposing Sharia on Nigeria and transmuting the Nation from a democratic nation into an Islamic Theocratic State with Sharia as the National Ideology. From October 1st the very day Nigeria obtained its independence, the battle line was drawn between Liberal Democracy and Sharia Ideology. The Sardauna of Sokoto late Sir Ahmadu Bello was quoted as saying on 1st October 1960:

The new nation called Nigeria should be an estate for our grandfather Othman Dan Fodio. WE must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We use the minorities in the north as a conquering tool and the south as the conquered territory and never allow them to rule over us and never allow them to have control over their future” (Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto Parrot Newspaper October 12, 1960).

While the likes of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Anthony Enahoro and other non-Northern Muslim leaders were thinking they were building a nation where ‘though tribe and tongues differ, in brotherhood we stand’, Another section of the nation was busy planting landmines and surreptitiously undermining liberal democracy so that Sharia will become the National Ideology. Of course, the ascendancy of Sharia signalled the death of democracy and by extension, Christianity. Walking through the military Heads of State most of whom were Muslims from the North, Nigeria was, in a clandestine manner turned into an Islamic state. It should be pointed out right from the outset that Nigeria is an Islamic state despite the unrealistic denials of some Christian leaders. Two factors can confirm any nation to be an Islamic state and both factors have been fulfilled in Nigeria:

1. Membership of the country in OIC and D8 (An organization of Islamic countries, made up of Egypt, Malaysia, Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh and now Nigeria, under President Obasanjo, Nigeria openly participated at the presidential level in the activities of the D8 by attending the 3rd summit of D8 in Egypt on February 24, 2001.
2. Inclusion of Islamic laws and jurisprudence in the constitution of the country.

In 1986, General Babangida, as the self-appointed military president of Nigeria, smuggled Nigeria into the OIC and it was kept out of public awareness until 1996 when Sultan Dasuki confirmed to Pope John Paul that Nigeria is a full Member of the OIC. In 1999, Abdulsalam Abubakar smuggled Sharia Ideology into the constitution thereby creating a dual conflicting ideology in the constitution of Nigeria. In 2001 Obasanjo on his own dragged Nigeria into D:

An earlier report on this subject shows that it was during the Nigeria-Biafra War (1967 – 1970) that General Gowon, backed by the British, and Russia wanted to secure the support of Arab countries for the war against Biafra, went and registered Nigeria as an observer member of OIC. Since the military and civil service promotions that Nigeria Federal Troops used in bombing Biafra towns, villages, marketplaces, churches, farms etc throughout the war period. Source: (Francis Anekwe Oborji. 19 June 2019. OIC Islamization Agenda in Nigeria and Buhari’s Inauguration Day “Sharia Law Bag).

How Christians are persecuted in Nigeria: Historical Record

Below are a few critical citations on the horrific nature of how Christians are persecuted through the instrumentality of the Islamic fundamentalists group called Boko Haram with the tacit support of President Muhammadu Buhari’s government has been enlarged to include: herdsmen with assault weapons, kidnappers, abductors of secondary school girls, attacks by unknown gunmen etc. These acts of brutality and cold-blooded murder cannot be described as social conflict since the victims carried no weapons and were not out to attack anyone.

Post-independence Crises (1960-1966)

Religious crises in Nigeria both in the pre-independence period and between 1960 and 1966, were for the most part, at the level of a cold war, characterized by mutual respect between Muslims and Christians. The mutual respect stemmed from the fact that none of the religions knew the strength of the other. Thus, mutual tolerance was merely out of fear of the other and not any genuine respect. Each one respected the other from a distance and never

dared to overstep its bounds. In 1961, the late Sardauna of Sokoto formed the Jamaatu Nasrul Islam (JNI), an Islamic movement charged with the special responsibility of propagating Islam. Some people thought it was the religious wing of the political party the NPC. However, some of the activities of the JNI were not acceptable to other Muslims, especially those who did not belong to the Northern People's Congress (NPC).

Religious Crises after the Civil War (1970-1975)

The first five years after the civil war were declared the period of reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. Despite the attempted reconciliation, the religious face of the civil war persisted even after the war had ended. It continued in the form of a religious cold war.

The Sharia Crisis (1976-1979)

The Sharia issue is as old as Islam itself in Nigeria. Othman Dan Fodio aimed to implement it in the northern emirates to reform what was perceived as the lax practice of Islam among the rulers. Matthew Kukah referred to this point: "The Jihad of Othman Dan Fodio was the establishment of an Islamic State based on the Sharia" (Kukah, Religion, Politics and Power ...p115). While the Northern Constituent Assembly was debating the issue, Muslims outside sought to enforce their argument by engaging in threats and riots to support the idea that if the Sharia was not accepted, they were going to make the country ungovernable. The Muslim Students Society (MSS) for example demonstrated at Ahmadu Bello University, pleading with the Assemblymen to "stop opposition to Sharia or take full responsibility for putting the entire nation in chaos'. In April 1979, protesters took to the streets in Zaria and Kaduna with such banners as No Sharia, No Peace, No Sharia, No Constitution, No Sharia, No Muslim, No Muslims, No Nigeria, etc ... (see Sylvanus Udoidem, "Religion in the Political Life of Nigeria", in F. U. Okafor 162). From what has been said so far about the Sharia issue, two conclusions could be reached namely:

(1) That the Sharia debate has both religious and political implications. On the religious front, it seeks the establishment of an Islamic state, where an ideal Islamic religion could be practiced. On the political front, the defenders and the opposers use the debate to gain a political following either as the defenders of Islam or the protectors of Islam from Christian domination.

(2) That the Sharia issue is the major source of conflict in the Nigerian body polity, is incontestable. It was this Sharia debate that set the stage for the prevalent religio-political conditions that existed at the time that Alhaji Shehu Shagari became the president during the Second Republic (1979-1983)

The Shagari Regime Religious Crises (1979-1983)

Although the Sharia provisions were not included in the 1979 Constitution in the same way the Muslims demanded, they at least saw the election and swearing-in of President Shehu Shagari as Allah's will for Nigeria. With Shagari, a Sokoto prince and a Muslim, Muslims felt that the stage was set for the achievement of the will of Allah: effective Islamization of the country.

Kano Riot (18-29 December 1980)

The December 1980 Kano Riot, because of its bloody nature and level of destruction, has come to be referred to as the first religious and bloody riot in contemporary Nigeria. However, according to the report of the Tribunal of Enquiry set up after the 1980 riot, before the Kano outbreak, there had been over thirty violent incidents of religious riots in the northern states. But these were nothing compared to the December 1980 event.

Burning of Churches in Kano (October 1982)

The burning of Christian churches in October 1982 is an example of an inter-religious crisis in Nigeria. This was the first open and violent religious conflict between Christians and Muslims. The action of the Muslims was probably fueled by the laying of the foundation for a Christian Church near a mosque in Kano. As noted by Matthew Kukah, "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 Christ Church in Fagge, Kano Metropolis" (Kukah 157).

The Buhari Regime Religious Crises (1983-1985)

The Buhari regime which overthrew the Shagari-led civilian administration did not do much to allay the fears of non-Muslims, especially given the peculiar nature of the composition of his government and their policies. Most of the members of the Supreme Military Council were either northern Muslims or Muslims from the south. This structure made Christians very uncomfortable. It was not only Christians that the regime offended. If anything, the Buhari regime incurred the anger of almost all groups in the country. For example, by drastically reducing the number of intending pilgrims', Buhari made himself unpopular even among Muslims. The religious riots that occurred during this period were for the most part political.

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Crisis (January 1986)

During the Babangida regime, information filtered out to the public that Nigeria had sought admission into the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). This raised a lot of anxiety among Christians who now believed that the federal government was systematically engaged in the process of Islamizing the country. A bitter controversy erupted between Christians and Muslims. The Christians based their argument on the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution, which upholds the secular state of the nation. They argued that Nigeria could not and should not belong to such an organization since it is a secular state. All Christians were unanimous in asking for the withdrawal of the country from membership in such an organization.

The Muslims, on their part, argued that just as it is accepted for Nigeria to maintain diplomatic relations with the Vatican, there was nothing wrong in it being a member of an organization that was essentially a cultural body with many economic advantages for the country. In June 1988, during the Student's Union elections at Ahmadu Bello University, violence erupted when it turned out that a Christian candidate would win the elections. Before the elections, one of the campaign slogans popularly used by the Christian candidate, Mr Stephen was 'a vote for Steve is a vote for Christ'. Such a slogan implied that the campaign for votes in the Student Union elections was being done based on religion. (Ahmadu Bello University Religious Crises (June 1988)). In January 1990, Christians in four northern towns protested against the marginalization of Christians in the country. Protesters carried placards with inscriptions such as: "We reject OIC", and "Islamization of the country is rejected." "We are ready to buy our rights with our blood". Christians were now determined either to fight for their rights or defend themselves whenever they were abused or attacked. Such preparedness was acted out in what came to be known as the Bauchi Riot.

Kano Riot (11 October 1991)

The Kano religious riot in 1991, was a case of an inter-religious conflict. 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 organized by the State Chapter of CAN with a German Christian preacher, Reinhard Bonnke, in attendance. What offended the Muslim youths most was what they saw as an anti-Muslim policy in the state. Earlier in the year, they had asked for permission to invite a Muslim fundamentalist preacher to Kano but the government refused. When therefore permission was granted to Christians to invite the preacher from Germany, they interpreted it as an anti-Muslim policy.

Obasanjo Regime 1999-2004

In January 2000, the Governor of Zamfara State Ahmed Yerima introduced the Sharia legal system in his state. Since then, several Northern States have followed suit. This has led

to several riots and the destruction of lives and property both in the North and in other parts of the country. (See E.M. Uka, "Ethnic, Religious and Communal Conflicts in Nigeria: Implications for Security", in *Security, Social Services and Sustainable Development in Nigeria* EdChidilkonne, University of Port Harcourt 2005 Pp. 115-127.)

The Presidential Election with Goodluck Jonathan on the Lead ...

As the early results of the presidential election showed that Goodluck Jonathan a Christian was leading, Islamists went on a rampage attacking churches, Christians and Muslims they perceived to have supported him. In Kaduna State, tension grew when the Muslim Governor was elevated to the Vice-Presidency of the country after the death of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua in 2010, and the then Christian Deputy Governor constitutionally became the Governor. Even though the Muslim Governor was appointed as the Vice-President of Nigeria, Islamists didn't want a Christian to become the governor of Kaduna State. Against their wish, he became the Governor and went ahead later to win a term through a highly polarized election in 2011. Later he died in a helicopter crash to the open jubilation of the youths who rejoiced that power had returned to a Muslim.

Some References to Christian Persecution by Islamist Fundamentalists in Nigeria:

Vanguard 31 May 2013. Nigeria: Boko-Haram Still Killing Christians CAN - The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) raised alarm over the continuous killings of Christians and burning of Churches by the deadly Islamic sect, Boko Haram, in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States. The President of CAN, Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor's statement read in part ..."Last Friday, for instance, an executive member of CAN in Gwoza Local Council, Rev. Luka Bazhigila and a member of the COCIN Church, Yohanna, both of whom were in attendance at a Christian fellowship were shot dead by gunmen who alighted from a tricycle. The gunmen, apparently angry that they missed their target, the Medical Director of Borno State Hospital, who was out when they arrived at his residence, shot and killed his stepmother." "A Muslim guard, employed by a Christian Architect in Abuja to watch over his house was mistaken for a Christian and shot dead. One COCIN Church on the Mandara Mountain was burnt by members of the Boko-Haram sect on a Sunday morning"

On February 26, 2012, a Boko Haram suicide bomber killed six Christians during an attack at a Church in Jos, Plateau State.

On March 11, 2012, a Boko Haram suicide bomber killed three civilians in a bombing outside of a Church in Jos. The suicide bomber was stopped before he could enter the premises of the Church.

On April 8, 2013, Boko Haram killed 36 people and wounded dozens more in several bombings outside of a Church in Kaduna on Easter day.

On June 3, 2012, a Boko Haram suicide bomber killed 15 people in an attack on a church in Bauchi.

On September 23, 2012, a suicide bomber killed a woman and a child in an attack at a Catholic Church in Bauchi.

On October 28, 2012, a Boko Haram suicide bomber drove an explosives-packed Jeep into a Catholic Church in Kaduna, killing at least eight people and wounding over 100.

On November 25, 2012, a Boko Haram suicide bomber killed 30 persons in an attack at St. Andrew's Protestant Church, located in the Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Kaduna.

On December 1, 2012, four Churches were attacked throughout Borno State, including arson attacks on the EYN Church, COCIN Church and Deeper Life Church. A Church security guard was killed. On December 24, 2012, gunmen suspected to be Boko Haram elements attacked a COCIN Church during Church service before setting it on fire. This attack happened in Potiskum, Yobe State. Five persons, including the Pastor, were killed.

On January 2, 2012, Boko Haram called on all Christians and southerners (because they are presumed to be Christians) to leave Northern Nigeria within three days or face death. In the

week following this declaration, more than 30 Christians were shot dead. Boko Haram continues to target and kill individuals Christians and southerners.

On August 7, 2012, Pastor Ali Samur was shot and killed in Maiduguri, Bornu State.

On November 18, 2012, a retired COCIN Church Pastor Reverend Elisha Kabura was killed while he and his family were preparing to go to Church in Maiduguri, Bornu State.

On November 25, 2012, a Christian couple and their son were shot dead on their way to Church in Kano, Kano State.

On December 1, 2012, Christians' throats were slit and their houses burnt during a series of Boko Haram attacks on four Churches. This happened in Bornu State.

On December 28, 2012, fifteen Christians were killed in their sleep in Musari, Bornu State.

On May 14, 2013, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) secretary in Bornu State, Reverend Faye Pama Musa was murdered in Maiduguri, Bornu State.

On June 10, 2013, Reverend Jacob Kwizer of the COCIN Church was killed in Gwoza, Borno State.

On July 30, 2013, four bombs exploded in the Christian area of Sabongari where at least 45 persons were killed and two Churches (Christ Salvation Pentecostal Church and St. Stephen's Nigerian northeastern state of Yobe, killing the pastor and his two children before setting fire to the building and fleeing.

November 2, 2013, members of the Boko Haram sect ambushed and killed wedding guests numbering 30 people along the Bama-Mubi-Banki Road in Borno State. The United Nations Human Rights Office condemned the attack....300 people have been displaced after a pre-dawn deadly Boko Haram attack in Maiduguri, the Borno State Capital. The homes of the victims were destroyed in the attack. The sect has claimed responsibility for several attacks in which more than 1, 500 people, including women and children had been killed since 2009 when it launched violent attacks in northern Nigeria. (The NATION Thursday, Dec. 5, 2013. P7). In recent times the group has resorted to bombing and shooting people in Churches. For example, on Christmas day, 25th December 2011, St. Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla was bombed, 44 people were killed, 127 were injured, and 7 went blind. On the same day, some churches in Jos and Potiskum were also targeted. These are a few citations on the horrific nature of how Christians are persecuted through the instrumentality of the Islamic fundamentalist group called Boko Haram. These acts of brutality and cold-blooded murder cannot be described as social conflict since the victims carried no weapons and were not to attack anyone.

The Emergence of IDPs

Another tragedy of the Boko Haram Islamist insurgency is the internal displacement of many indigenous Christians of Yobe State in north-eastern Nigeria. On 4 November 2012, Boko Haram stormed the Yobe State capital, Damaturu and attacked security posts and then went to the predominantly Christian settlement of the city, bombed churches, shot people, and destroyed Christian shops. Any person that could not recite the Muslim creed was killed. A majority of the over 150 people killed that day were Christians. In the following weeks, attacks against churches and Christians intensified and spread to other towns like Potiskum and Geidam, forcing many Christians, including those that are indigenes to flee to other states, and those who were not able to leave took refuge in two Christians enclaves, Gadaka and KukarGadu. The preceding Islamic attacks on Christians are all aimed at the Islamization of Nigeria under Sharia ideology. These Islamization agenda are being promoted within the framework of what is considered to be a constitutional democracy. The upshot of this position is the emergence of dual ideology. As of today, Nigeria is a country with two ideologies for the same country and two laws for the same people. The dual conflicting ideologies in the 1999 constitution are the root cause of the corruption, mediocrity, insecurity, incompetence, lack of infrastructure and dysfunctional system in the polity. Unless the

conflict of ideology in this country is resolved, Nigeria would either fully transmute into a full-fledged Sultanate or it will implode (Akuchie).

Anomalies in the 1999 Nigeria Constitution.

In this 1999 Constitution particular, research has shown that:

The legal framework and constitutional arrangement were designed to discriminate against Christians and the practice of Christianity in Nigeria. Available statistics and records reveal as follows:

- i. The word “Sharia” is mentioned 73 times in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- ii. The word “Islamic” is mentioned 28 times in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- iii. The word ‘Kadi’ is mentioned 13 times in the Constitution.
- iv. The word ‘Customary’ is mentioned 68 times in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- v. The word ‘Christian’ or ‘Christianity’ is not mentioned at all in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- vi. It is constitutionally mandatory for the Grand Khadi of the Sharia Court of Appeal to be consulted by the President of the Court of Appeal in the composition of all Election Tribunals in Nigeria;
- vii. It is constitutionally mandatory for persons learned in Islamic law to be represented in all Courts in Nigeria from area courts to district courts, to magistrate courts, to High Courts, to Appeal Courts, and the Supreme Courts.
- viii. It is constitutionally mandatory for the Grand Khadi of the Sharia Court to be represented in all judiciary bodies and councils in Nigeria from the National Judicial Councils to the Law Reform Commissions.
- ix. Today, there are over 115 Sharia Courts, District Courts and Area Courts in the Federal Capital Territory alone, all with jurisdiction to handle matters of Sharia law and the Islamic legal system. These Courts are headed by Muslim Judges and serve the purpose and interest of Islam.
- x. There is no provision whatsoever, for Christian Institutions in the Constitution.

This 1999 constitution is a fraudulent document that promotes the interest of Muslims (Sharia) under a disguised platform of democracy. With all the powers of the Presidency, the Military, the Judiciary, and the INEC concentrated in the hands of the Muslims, any future election under this fraudulent constitution is bound to be in favour of Muslims who will thereby be given the advantage to completely rule this country, as a Sharia government under the guise of a democracy.

The Evidence for an Aggressive Islamic Agenda Policy in Nigeria: Abuja Declaration (1989)

Islam does not hide its desire to dominate the world. Muslims believe Muhammad prophesied that Islam would one day dominate the world. Therefore, when Muslims find themselves in political positions or any position of leadership and influence, they see it as an opportunity to fulfil this prophecy. For this reason, whenever Muslims find themselves in such positions of authority, they seek to proffer the same privilege to their brothers, thereby seeking to speed up the process of ‘Islam’s domination of the world. They do it unashamedly and ‘unapologetically(Nasir25}. The radical Muslims’ global agenda is a purification of Islam by which they mean a return to its golden age, when Islam was at its strongest and many countries were under Islamic rule. They want Islam to expand until the whole world is brought under Sharia and Islamic rule. Either the people willingly submit to Islam or be forced through violent Jihad.

According to Islam, the world is divided into two groups: **Dar al Islam** -The House of Islam and **Dar al Harb** ~The House of War. The Sharia law rules the house of Islam, a law

many Muslims desire to expand all over the world (Nasir, 22). An integral characteristic of radical Islamic fundamentalism is its insistence on a theocratic form of government. Islam, historically, does not accept any demarcation between religion and politics. Islam insists that religion must regulate not only matters of Salvation and moral development but also economic and socio-political affairs [Okai, 2016:97]. Islam is an organised religion full of strategies for growth. They always have a century plan. World conquest agenda was initiated by Osman Ghazi, the founder of the Ottoman empire - he made Islam the religion of the state.

This declaration provides the official communique of the meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), which took place in Abuja, Nigeria's Federal capital on the 28th of November 1989. The communique is considered to be a major step at giving teeth to the global Islamic agenda on the continent of Africa. The choice of Nigeria as the host and the chief sponsor of the meeting was deliberate and Strategic. **Firstly**, Nigeria is regarded as a leading and influential nation on the continent whose conversion can greatly catalyze the process in Africa. **Secondly**, it was designed to 'confer' on Nigeria an official 'Islamic state' status, and **thirdly** to place a moral burden on the Nigerian state to lead by example, the way for the implementation of the resolutions. According to a release by the Middle Belt Dialogue Forum (2014), the communique from the Abuja conference which was jointly issued by the Islamic Council, London, ICL, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, OIC, and the newly formed Islam in Africa Organisation, IAO, highlighted the following policy thrusts and agenda:

- Call on Muslims throughout Africa who have been separated by imposed barriers of artificial boundaries by the imperialists to unite, and cooperate with their brethren throughout the Muslim world, as an important part of the Ummah (Islamic community under Sharia), which is blessed with the guidance and mercy brought by the messenger of Allah, Muhammad.
- Call on Muslims to review the syllabi in the various educational institutions with a view to 'ringing them into conformity with Islamic ideals, goals and principles. To encourage the teaching of Arabic language which is the language of the Qur'an as well as the lingua franca for the continent.
- Urge Muslims to establish strong economic ties between African Islamic countries and other parts of the Muslim world to facilitate mutual assistance and cooperation in commerce, industry and finance to evolve a sound economic system based on Islamic principles.
- The conference notes the yearnings of Muslims everywhere on the continent who have been deprived of their rights to be governed by the Sharia and urges them to intensify efforts in the struggle to reinstate the application of the Sharia.
- To form a permanent body to be known as Islam in Africa Organisation, IAO, to perform among other functions, the stated activities and seek to attain the goals and objectives as provided for in the annexes to this communique. Some of the objectives and goals of the new body, according to the release are to ensure the appointment of only Muslims into strategic national and international positions in member states; to eradicate in all its forms and ramifications all non-Muslim religions in member nations, and, to pursue and ensure that only Muslims are elected to political positions in member countries. The Islamization agenda in Nigeria finds context in the quest of Islam to bring the whole world under the Sharia. It is an attempt to domesticate the Islamic global conquest chatter.

According to Nasir, the primary vehicle for actualizing the global Islamization agenda is the Jihad, an Arabic word that means "struggle". There are many phases and faces of Jihad: Peaceful, Violent, Economic, Social, Political, Intellectual, Media and Biological {26}

Kuka and Falola observe that, Islam is both a religious and political force in modern Nigeria and that there is a tiny Islamic elite who aims to impose a theocracy on the country. There has

been a determined effort at creating an Islamic identity. This process has not only been sustained but strengthened since the 1950s and manipulated to control Federal power {1996}. Whereas the Nigerian constitution has declared freedom of religion and seeks to separate state affairs from the doctrinal leaning on religion, the same constitution creates and recognizes executive and judicial institutions with religious biases (Sharia legal system) {Okai, 2016:96}.

A Muslim Leader’s Position on Islamization/Fulanization of Nigeria!

Aliyu Gwarzo a Fulani irredentist in his statement said:

The problem that you Southerners (Christians) have is that you can never understand the North. We are a mystery to you and you cannot comprehend us despite all your boasting that you are better than us.

You claim to be educated but you are uneducated and uncivilised. What do you know about education and what has it done for you?

We Fulani toss a small bone to you from our table and you betray and fight each other like dogs for it. You crawl before us and beg us for crumbs.

That is your lot in life. You are nothing more than beggars. Cowardly and contended slaves!

Just like your fathers served us, so you shall serve us. Just as you serve us, so your children shall serve us...

We are born to rule. Leadership is in our blood. Noone in this country can stop or change it. Noone can touch us. Allah has given us Nigeria. It is a gift to our forefathers from him.

Our great-grandfather Shaik Osman Dan Fodio fought for it. Our grandfather the Saurdana, Sir Anmadu Bello expanded our borders and frontiers.

Our father President Muhammadu Buhari has come to complete the job and he is doing very well.

You see the most effective chains are the invisible ones. We already have you in those chains but you just don't know it. We took our power back in 2015. We will not release it to Southerners or unbelievers again. Not in the next 100 years!

It is true that we came from Futa Toro and Futa Jalon many years ago and conquered the north. Now every inch of it belongs to us.

Every Fulani, whether from Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Niger, Chad, Cameroon or anywhere else is our brother and has a right to be here with us. We are Fulani before Nigerian and our allegiances to our Fulani brothers all over West Africa more than you.

Now we will conquer the south and we do it in the name of "one Nigeria". In that "one

Nigeria" We shall remain the masters and you shall remain the slaves!

None of you are going anywhere. Nigeria will never break. We will not allow it" (Aliyu Gwarzo).

Democratic Government in Nigeria Under Trial

As of today, Nigeria operates two conflicting ideologies under President Buhari who is a crusader for Sharia ideology. There is no gain-saying that Nigeria is a Muslim Country and the government is striving at all costs to keep it so. The Nigerian Government under President Muhammed Buhari seek to deceive the Nigerian populace, that he is running a democratic government:

1. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when the three arms of Government, namely the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary are headed by a northern Muslim?

2. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when the substantive Minister of Petroleum and Gas over the last four years and every single key General Manager and Director at the state-owned petroleum corporation, the NNPC, are all northern Muslims?
3. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when, for the better part of the last few years and up until one month ago, every single branch of the three tiers of the Federal Courts, namely the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and the Federal High Court, are headed by northern Muslims?
4. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when the first and fourth most deadly terrorist organizations in the world, namely Boko Haram and the Fulani militants, are wreaking havoc and committing the most heinous and barbaric atrocities all over Nigeria with the help and support of ISIS! Worse still the Fulani militants have made a sport of targeting and killing southerners and Middle Belters and occupying their land with the tacit support of the Buhari Government which has refused to call them terrorists or to arrest, prosecute and bring them to justice.
5. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when it is clear that a Fulanisation and Islamisation policy is being implemented by the Buhari administration before our very eyes?
6. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when the Coalition of Northern Groups, with the backing and support of the Northern Elders Forum, openly and publicly threaten the lives of southerners that live in the north and give them ultimatums to leave and consistently threatened to target southerners if RUGA is not implemented in the south?
7. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when Miyetti Allah appears to be above the law and when the Fulani herdsmen are allowed to carry arms and appear to be untouchable?
8. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when the most senior Presidential spokesman says we must either give up our land to the murderous Fulani terrorist herdsmen or give up our lives?
9. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when Christian leaders and clerics are being singled out and targeted for slaughter all over the country?
10. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when more Churches have been burnt and more ~ priests and Christian clerics have been killed in the last four years than at any other time in our history?
11. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when more Nigerians have been killed in the last four years than at any other time other than during the civil war?
12. How can Nigeria remain one when our people are more divided on religious, ethnic and regional lines than at any other time in our history?
13. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when southerners and Middle Belters are treated are regarded as nothing but slaves and, at best, second-class citizens in their own country?
14. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when a courageous young lady by the name of Miss Leah Sharibu mu not released and allowed to come home with the other Dapchi girls simply because she refused to renounce her Christian faith? Remember the young school girls like the Chibok girls were violently and mercilessly abducted from school and terrorized to become Muslim.
15. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when southerners and northerners regard one another with increasing suspicion and contempt for each other.
16. How can Nigeria be a democratic nation when Fulani nationalism and supremacy are engendered and encouraged by the Buhari administration whilst the ethnic nationalism of the Yoruba, Igbo, Ijaw, Tiv and other indigenous tribes from the South and the Middle Belt are frowned upon, outlawed and treated as enemies of the state of Nigeria?

Can Two Walk Together Unless They Agree? Amos 3:3

From the above review of the relationship between Christians and Moslems in Nigeria, since 1960 it could be stated without any fear of any contradiction that members of the two religions have not been able to live at peace with each other. Writing from a Christian

perspective, we observe that whereas Christians teach love, Muslims teach hate, while Christians seek light Muslims seek darkness, while Christians believe in life, Muslims believe in death, while Christians delight in peace, Muslims delight in war. Whereas Christians crave progress, stability, security and prosperity, Muslims lust for anarchy, chaos, bloodshed, destruction, terror, conquest, power and the perpetual domination and subjugation of others.

As Femi Fan-Kayode would say:

Can there be any fellowship between light and darkness? Between the sons of God and sons of Belial? Can there be peace between the captor and the captive? Can there be an understanding between the oppressor and the oppressed? Is it not obvious that Nigeria's claim to national unity is an illusion, and that it is bogus and false? Nigeria is not one and has never been one and will never be one, unless and until we first learn and accept the fundamental principle that all men, regardless of race, religion, and circumstance of birth are equal before God and Secondly that Nigeria must restructure and devolve power from the Centre to the six geo-political zones. (www.onenote.com)

The Irony of Christians' Response to Muslim Islamization Agenda

It is important to stress that it is no longer a virtue for Nigerian Christians to remain indifferent towards the Muslim Islamization Agenda in Nigeria. The Muslim perception of Christianity is the perpetual symbol of Western Colonialism which defeated the Sokoto Caliphate under Othman Dan Fodio in 1900. This impression contributes to why Muslims hate Christians in Nigeria. According to Mathew Hassan Kukah, though the caliphate accepted Lugard's defeat, it never submitted to its dictates and ever since then has ceaselessly pursued a reversal of this misfortune of the Fulani in the hands of colonialists, that's why they see the missionary and the church they left behind as a repugnant memorial of their humiliation. As Kukah put it:

Lugard, however, was very clear in his assertion that the defeat of the caliphate meant a 'trading of places', and that whatever the Fulanis had won by conquest, they had now lost to British conquerors, and the only hope of the Emirs lay in cooperation. The Waziri of Sokoto's response on behalf of the defeated caliphate to the power of Lugard was based on the Islamic injunction of **Taqiya**, which enjoined them to do business with the British by "...showing regard to them with the tongue and have intercourse with them in the affairs of the world, but never love them in our hearts or adopt their religion."

It should be unequivocally clear to all Christians in Nigeria, but especially the leadership of the church that though the caliphate "submitted" to British defeat, it never "surrendered" its claim of ownership of the territory of Nigeria and has never ceased to pursue the objective of reasserting its sovereignty and conquest, not only over northern Nigeria but over the entire nation as the logical conclusion of the Shehu Othman Dan Fodio's Jihad of dipping the Koran into the Atlantic Ocean, which the British truncated in 1900. From the foregoing, we have shown the evolution of religious violence and terrorism in Nigeria.

What is the Future of the Christian Faith in Nigeria?

Philip Jenkins a specialist in modern Christian and Islamic relations in the Middle East, he observes that:

At least 45 percent of Nigerians are currently Christians, some 72 million people, but how will that number change in future decades? No church or religion has a guaranteed market share in any country. It is quite possible to imagine a scenario in which the population of Nigerian Christians could fall as low as 10 percent, in the event of persecution, or a successful jihad by the nation's Muslims.

The possibility of a scenario such as Jenkins has postulated above should be seen as a worst-case scenario, which can only happen without any supernatural intervention on the side of the church in Nigeria. However, a biblically informed answer to the question of *the Future of Christian Faith in Nigeria* can only be that of hope and triumph of the church over all the

gates of hell mobilized or still mobilizing against her. Those who point to the history of the church in North Africa being overrun by Islam are terrified that that scenario can repeat itself in our time. From a human point of view, that fear is legitimate, but from God's point of view, such fear is unfounded and is more apparent than real.

The Christian Response to Muslim's Islamization Agenda.

The challenge of the Muslim Islamization agenda of Nigeria through violence and terrorism has been made abundantly clear. The church's response to the present situation of violence and terrorism in Nigeria must be measured, unequivocal, courageous, intellectually, biblically and theologically balanced. We must leave our safe and comfort zones and take an active stand to confront these evil forces striving to intimidate the church with fear and terror with bold and biblical answers that will not impair our fidelity to the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus and His Apostles prescribed various ways the church can respond to terrorism, violence and persecution, both for individuals and groups. According to Akuchie, these principles are ageless and universal in scope and application but must be adequately adapted and contextualized to specific local realities. The responses include **Love, Not Hate; Preparedness, Not Surprise; Resistance, and Not Revenge**. We shall consider each of these, one after the other:

Love, not Hate:

The Gospel of Jesus is a creation of LOVE. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 3:16-17). "Greater love has no one than this than to lay down one's life for his friends. (John 15:13). Because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a demonstration of God's love for lost humanity, it is incompatible with HATE. LOVE and HATE cannot flow from the same fountain; that will be an 'abnormality or outright absurdity. Any preaching of the Gospel that accommodates hate to any degree simply destroys the very essence of the Gospel — LOVE. As light and darkness, truth and falsehood are _ incompatible, so are love and hate. As love empowers the efficacy of the Gospel, even so, does hate impedes the efficacy of the GOOD NEWS of Jesus Christ and the salvation it offers to a dying world. Hate has never been nor indeed can ever be an ally of the Gospel.

Preparedness, not Surprise:

Despite a very long history of sustained and relentless Islamic terrorist attacks on the church in Nigeria, especially in Northern Nigeria, the Christian community in this country had never exhibited preparedness in her response all these decades, regardless of the location of attacks or targeted victims. On the contrary, what one sees is a perpetual expression of surprise at these attacks. Like the mother hen whose chick is snatched by a hawk, all the church does is make noise, while the hawk smiles away with its catch only to return another time assured of this predictable attitude of a mother hen, which poses no risks or threat to the hawk. This predictable attitude of surprise on the part of the church, which poses no risks to her attackers, has continually emboldened these attackers with greater impunity. As a result of the lack of 'discernible strategy and intentionality in the church's response, theologically, legally and constitutionally, these terrorist attacks are continually growing in 'intensity, greater spread and diversity of operations.

Resistance, not Revenge:

In this segment, we are going to deal with the crux of the church's response to persecution. It could be said that today's loud calls for Christians to arm and defend themselves against Islamic terrorist attacks as ostensible. For many, making these calls, the real motive is REVENGE, which is forbidden by God for Christians. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will stack coal of fire on his head." Do not be overcome by evil but

overcome evil with good. (Rom 12:19-21). Since the church is under the full custody and protection of Jesus Christ, no amount of persecution can wipe out the church from this nation. As certain as persecution is to the church in Nigeria, even more, certain is the assurance of God's protection and preservation of His church. "... for I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it". (Matt 16:18b). If we are forbidden to embark on revenge, are we also forbidden from resistance to terror attacks against the church? Before we offer any views, let Us observe that we are going to encounter many cases of theological antinomies in trying to understand key scriptures dealing with resistance or no resistance to persecution. The keywords in this segment are **resistance** and **revenge**.

Before we define these two terms, let us define the word **antinomy**. What is an antinomy? According to J. I. Packer, a theological antinomy can be defined as an apparent incompatibility between two apparent truths. An antinomy exists when a pair of principles stand side by side, seemingly irreconcilable, yet both undeniable... The temptation is to undercut and maim the one truth by how we stress the other: to assert man's responsibility in a way that excludes God from being sovereign or to affirm God's sovereignty in a way that destroys the responsibility of man. Both mistakes need to be guarded against. Let it be stressed again that in this segment of this paper, we are going to face some cases of antinomy, especially in our consideration of resistance as a valid Christian response to persecution. With this clarification, let us now define resistance and revenge.

Resistance:

From a strictly biblical point of view, the word resist means to take a stand against the devil, to exert the energy and the effort to oppose and defeat the devil and his temptation; to keep your mind and energy focused upon counteracting and conquering the temptation of the devil. The word is a military term; therefore, it is urgent and imperative. When temptation strikes, submit yourself to God. Do exactly what your military commander says. He has the overall plan and all armament and firepower at His disposal. His grace and power can defeat the enemy. Therefore, submit yourself to God and His Word of command. The dictionary meaning of the word resist implies to withstand, strive against, or oppose: to resist infection; to resist temptation... to make a stand or make efforts in opposition; act in opposition; offer resistance.... the act or power of resisting, opposing, or withstanding... the opposition offered by one thing to another." Simply put, resistance is to withstand or act in opposition to something or someone in self-defence. **Revenge:** to exact punishment for a wrong done on behalf of somebody guilty of an offence, especially in a resentful or vindictive manner; this implies a retaliation for inflicting injury on someone who has caused another person to suffer. This can be exemplified by Absalom who inflicted a deadly revenge on his half-brother Amnon for raping his sister Tamar in 2 Samuel (13:1-39).

Constitutional Rights

According to Akuchie, a vast majority of Nigerian Christians and gospel ministers are too ignorant of their constitutional and civil rights and freedoms. Since such ignorance empowers oppression and oppressors, there is a crying need to educate the church on legal matters, if it will stand a chance of resisting unjust and tyrannical state actors and their Chronis. Ignorance is never an ally of the TRUTH, which is the main commodity of the gospel of Jesus Christ: who said "And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

The Relevance of Mass Media for Effective Communication of the Gospel in Nigeria Under Persecution.

Regarding Akuchie's observation, the church in Nigeria needs to give urgent attention to protect herself from unjust persecution and terrorism through a robust communication and media strategy to lend her VOICE in the national discussion and publicize any threats to her

interest and counter misinformation and deliberate falsehood that other media outfits are perpetuating against the church, especially her leaders. The mass media has become a very powerful organ of every modern society, including Nigeria. Akuchie quotes with approval Todd Gitlin who said:

...Of all the institutions of daily life, the media specialize in orchestrating everyday consciousness under their pervasiveness, their access ability, and their centralized symbolic capacity. They name the world's parts; they satisfy reality as reality... To put it simply the mass media have become core systems for the distribution of ideology.

Akuchie further observes that despite the media's pervasive and controlling influence over our lives, it is frightening to see how the church in Nigeria seems not to be aware of this reality and its impact on her existence in this nation. He submits that the church as a matter of survival strategy most encouraged the establishment of print and electronic media houses, internet news and opinions sites etc., with distinctive Christian perspectives of news on critical national issues while promoting a high standard of journalistic excellence and professionalism. This effort could include periodically organizing Christian writing workshops, seminars, and short and long-term training outfits to discover and develop new talents in the field of Christian writing and journalism. Theological institutions ought to have courses in this area to provide holistic training for the gospel ministers in an age of information technology and pervasive media chaos.

The Way Forward:

What is the future of the Church/Christian faith in Nigeria in the context of the Muslim-sponsored violence and terrorism unleashed on Christians? Our response could range from hope to fear, despair to pessimism, or even outright despondency – simply because there has been no apparent coordinated and sustained training on how to respond to these existential challenges. The church's response to the present situation of violence and terrorism in Nigeria must be measured, unequivocal, courageous, intellectually, biblically, and theologically balanced. We must leave our comfort zones and take an active stand to confront these evil forces striving to intimidate the church with fear and terror, with bold and biblical answers that will not impair our fidelity to the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The history of violence and terrorism against the church in Nigeria is not a recent development, it is almost as old as both the nation and the church in Nigeria. Therefore, the critical issues of terrorism and violence should be reflected in the theological educational curriculum of Seminaries. According to Prof. O. U. Kalu – there is a need for a theology of life to be included in the Theological Education Curriculum. This theology of life is the capacity to bring theological tools to grapple with life-threatening issues, of violence and terrorism. In this way, we make theology a tool for the church's engagement with society by linking faith to social justice.

This perspective enables theology to be contextual by paying attention to the local realities of churches grappling with difficulties generated by local terrorism. Our curriculum must respond robustly to our contextual challenges and be aligned with the existential realities and aspirations for authentic Christian living. While it is important to maintain our various inherited theological traditions, we should at the same time ensure that we do not ignore those needful things our context is desperately yearning for, such as theologies of violence and terrorism.

Our Contextual Theology should break loose from the web of missionary imperialism and emotional attachment to our inherited past and should not only be for intellectual and spiritual capacity building but should include physical training to provide for self-defence in the face of terrorist attacks; training the body for self-defence in practices such as Judo, Karate, Taekwondo etc. as it obtains in Japan, Korea and China. In this way, we should be providing holistic training for body, soul and spirit. From the foregoing, we can unequivocally

conclude that it is not possible for the true church of Jesus Christ (Christians) to exist side by side in peace and harmony with (Muslims) – whom we are called upon to evangelize. Therefore, our curriculum should provide a theology for peaceful coexistence.

Summary and Conclusion:

The paper has critically reflected on the historical background of how Christianity came into contact with Islam under the platform of the British Colonial conquest of both the Northern (Islam) and Southern (Christianity) parts of Nigeria. The mischievous roles played by the British Colonial masters especially General Frederick Lugard and Harold Smith in giving the Northerners (Moslems) the unjustifiable support that they must rule Nigeria by all means and forever. As Harold Smith put it:

... we planned our agenda to give power “at all costs” to the northerner. Our mission was accomplished by destroying the opposition on all fronts. The West led the fight for independence and was punished for asking for freedom. They will not rule Nigeria ... despite seeing vast land with no human beings but cotten, in the North we still gave the North 55 million instead of 33 million. ... we did everything to work against the South (TUNON P115-116).

By sowing this evil and the demonic seed of injustice, we are now reaping the fruit of hatred, enmity, and conflict in the spheres of the physical (military) intellectual, spiritual, emotional and psychological struggle for survival which has since been to the advantage of the Muslims; their advantage is well documented in this paper and the fact that the intensity of their attacks has the tacit support of the current President himself an ardent apostle of Sharia, worsens the case for Christians. These monumental dangers notwithstanding, the paper recommends that the Christians' response must strive to be uncompromisingly Christian: promoting love, not hate, preparedness not surprise, resistance, not revenge.

The response must include the education of Nigerian Christians and Gospel ministers to know and exercise their constitutional rights and privileges under the law. The seminaries should respond to the existential threats of violence and terrorism by enlarging their curricula to include topics like the theology of violence, terrorism, peaceful coexistence and persecution. Education should not only be limited to the spiritual and intellectual capacity building but should include physical training that should teach Martial Arts. Also, given the vital role of electronic and print media, deliberate efforts should be made by mega-churches to establish media houses, that can as well mount workshops and seminars for training talents in Christian writing and journalism. With the implementation of the above suggestions, Christians should be able to effectively and practically respond to the existential threat posed by Muslim terrorist activities against Christians.

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