

A PANOPLY OF READINGS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Lessons for and from Nigeria

Edited by

David O. Imhonopi
Ugochukwu M. Urim

**A Panoply of Readings
in Social Sciences
Lessons for and from Nigeria**

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Edited by
David O. Imhonopi
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Dedication

This book is dedicated to Dr. David Olaniyi Oyedepo, the Chancellor of Covenant University, whose love for scholarship has redounded to the creation of a world-class university citadel which is gradually but steadily taking a prime position in the global academic community.

Acknowledgements

Working in Covenant University is unlike working elsewhere. This is a place where academic excellence and possibility mentality are conjoined in the womb of enlightened spirituality to create well-rounded faculty and students who are equipped to provide solutions to the challenges of an embattled world. Professor Charles Ayo, the Vice-Chancellor, comes across as an inspirational and selfless leader whose actions and mien drive the mandate of the university. His constant encouragement to faculty to engage in knowledge production is unparalleled and has generated this effort. We appreciate you sir!

We would also like to appreciate the supportive roles of the Dean, College of Development Studies, Professor Olurinola Isaiah Oluranti, and the Sub-Dean, Dr. Patrick A. Edewor, in bringing out the best in the faculty. Our thanks also go to the HOD of the Department of Sociology, Dr. Oluremi Abimbola, who gave us much fillip needed to crystallise this effort. We will not also forget the kind support of colleagues in the Department of Sociology whose contributions in and towards the book enriched the contents and made the experience of putting this publication together a pleasant one.

Finally, we thank our students, past and present, whose constant motivation inspired the production of this work and the Nigerian state for serving as the social laboratory for the aggregation of scholarly researches and studies resulting into lessons for and from Nigeria.

The Editors

Foreword

A Panoply of Readings in Social Sciences: Lessons for and from Nigeria is an omnibus of scholarly treatises that have addressed a wide compendium of salient issues in the Nigerian society. The editors have strongly quested to subject contemporary issues in Nigeria under the scrutiny of academic research, thereby generating findings and outcomes that bear the social science hallmarks of objectivity and empiricism or at best represents well-researched deductive interpretations of social phenomena. Thus, the various chapters provide interesting but unique construal of issues treated while it seems all the contributors sought to auspiciously strike a balance in their writings and to proffer solutions that could improve the entity called Nigeria so it can serve the interests of its citizens better.

The editors are young and bright scholars whose commitment to scholarship and knowledge production over the years has culminated in their robustness and in-depth understanding of the protocols of the trade, hence their ability to midwife the editing of this intellectual effort. While the discourses in this book are ongoing conversations that will continue to engage academic curiosity and study, it is commendable that the contributors have helped to broaden the universe of knowledge regarding subjects treated and have laboured to fill the various gaps they have identified.

I therefore recommend this piece of intellectual exertion to the various publics that will make up its readerships. Chiefly, they will be found in the academic community, the political ecosystem, the policy environment, industry, the third sector (civil society and non-state social actors) and members of the public.

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Preface

The book, *A Panoply of Readings in Social Sciences: Lessons for and from Nigeria*, was conceived as a result of the observation by the editors that contemporary issues in Nigeria that are hot-button subjects in the public domain were given dilettante treatments by various discussants and writers. This approach may be damaging to knowledge production as some of the positions taken sometimes tilt towards dangerous extremes and bear partisan, ethnic or religious overtones (or undertones), further polarising the delicate union that Nigerians in Nigeria have found themselves in. Sometimes, too, issues discussed appeared to possess a destructive tendency rather than constructive application to remaking or achieving the Nigerian dream. This was a challenge that we saw and that prompted us to invite contributions from scholars within the academic community to make their voice heard and to broaden the various dialogues guided by the invisible hand of social science epistemology. While the works embedded in this book may seem not to have fully achieved this desire, to a large extent, they have certainly produced for its diverse readerships within and outside the country sublime, objective or deductive reasonings regarding analyses made. The diversity or plurality of opinions also should be seen as strength and not a drawback. This is because scholarship promotes independence of thought as long as such ventilation of epistemics abides by high value ethics that respect the rights and opinions of others.

Thus, contributors who have contributed their works to making this omnium-gatherum of scholarly viewpoints what it is must be commended. However, opinions expressed in the book are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Department of Sociology, Covenant University, or those of the editors.

Essentially, this book is made up of twenty-one chapter contributions from various scholars that have addressed a panoply of issues that have wide resonance in the social space in Nigeria. It has treated the need for the Nigerianisation of democracy, extensively and surgically dissected the subject of insecurity, especially the debouchment of the Boko Haram terror envoys; it has also examined the issue of religious fundamentalism and how this has played out in the multi-religious Nigerian state. Particularly, the application of the Game Theory in explicating the right approach to resolving the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria may be found an interesting read. Not

forgetting the historical roots of Nigeria, a chapter also dwelt on colonialism and its creation of a new social structure and class formation in Nigeria. The behemoth stature that ICTs have assumed in the society was also recognised. Therefore, different chapters jostled to explain the impacts that information and communication technologies are playing in various areas in Nigeria and how ICTs can be further harnessed to bridge the information gap, improve secondary and higher education, digitise the banking and financial markets, spur the implementation of the objectives of labour laws for industrial harmony and development, and improve the effete health systems in place. Concomitantly, a chapter was devoted to how social networks have redefined the workplace, loosened its formality and created a paradigm shift regarding the future of work within society. This was followed by chapters that addressed the gravitational influence that social media and the internet have become, especially as they now interpret sexuality in more forceful ways that are unAfrican and certainly less conservative. The implications of these technological tools on the youth of Nigeria were highlighted in bold relief. Another emerging discourse in the global media, that is, climate change and global warming, was addressed with a quiet consensus that although Nigeria, like its Global South neighbours, is a victim rather than a culprit in the climate change praxis, its politicians and other publics must bridle the anthropogenic factors that could sustain this menace which has already manifested minatory consequences in many parts of the country. Not losing sight of the importance of the gender debate, a chapter identified the mistakes that Nigeria will be making if it leaves its girl children and women uneducated. Another chapter added that women entrepreneurs, like their male counterparts, must be allowed greater access to more funding windows for entrepreneurship development to happen in that sector.

The gestalt of all these contributions is geared towards expanding the epistemic frontiers, broadening existing conversations on the subjects treated and providing our various readerships with lessons for and from Nigeria.

We hope that this book serves these purposes.

David O. Imhonopi, Ph.D.
Ugochukwu M. Urim, M.Sc.

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Boko Haram: a Nigerian Brand of Thwarted Religious Fundamentalism and Terrorism

3

Jegede, A. E. *PhD* and Olowookere, E. I. *M.Sc.*

Chapter Summary

Historically, religion bequeaths man with the opportunity to relate with his creator for fulfilment and completeness. However, a new brand of acute religiosity which developed with the late modernity is notably characterised by an excessive emotional enslavement of men to strange dogmas devoided of basis in all known transitional societies. Existentially, the spate of fundamentalism explicable under the cloak of 'right to worship' in this era is continually assuming a dangerous dimension in its global context. The core of this deviation lies in the 'flexibility of meanings' often made possible by the chronological ethos 'eternally inherent' in most religious books and mostly found suitable by spiritual leaders to channel the potentials of their adherents to embark on causes that are diametrically opposed to the true intentions embedded in such religious ethos. Consequently, the boundary between such fundamentalism, sectional interest and criminality stands blurred and thus engenders disillusionment on how best to tackle the upsurge in violence often attendant of fundamentalism. In line with this, this chapter interrogates the environment of religious teachings that promote the activities of the Boko Haram Sect and its resultant lethal

conflict in Nigeria. It also seeks explanation to this trend in both interpretive and modernisation theories and finally, charts a pragmatic direction needed to avert in the future the dire consequences of religious fundamentalism in Nigeria.

Introduction

The world scene reveals many instances of terror and tragedy created by people acting in the name of religion (Marty & Moore, 2000). It has been viewed as capable of causing all manner of troubles in the public arena and part of which is the resultant fundamentalism experienced lately in Nigeria (Juergensmeyer, 1993). Basically, religious fundamentalism has severally been viewed as a fact of life in the twentieth century and was equally argued to be the major source of conflict globally since the late 1980's and 1990's (Ruthven, 2004; Soares de Azevedo, 2010). Apart from the ubiquity of fundamentalism, a parallel has also been drawn between religious politicisation, fundamentalism, militancy and terrorism in different religious traditions. The overlap of religion and politics is most clear in militant Islam (Bland, 2003). The potentials of this Islamic fundamentalist practices produce what Ruthwen (2004) describes as highly charged political and religious conflicts. Judging from different historical eras, therefore, different religions have assumed both mild and grave fundamental postures at various times in their known localities. Historically, violence is authorised by religion in most cases because religion is inherently absolutist in the type of authoritative claims it makes and in the all-encompassing nature of its demands on its followers (Cavanaugh, 2006). The locus of violence in religion is what Avalos (2005) has identified as been embedded into the very structure of religious commitments of the adherents. Considering how religious fundamentalism evolved in Nigeria, therefore, Ruthven (2004) was able to give a sense of direction on how best to locate the flow of religious violence. He posited that the world of Islam seems particularly prone to religiously inspired violence in this late modernity.

The core of conflict of interest in religious fundamentalism cross-culturally lies in the divergent understanding of God's will, command and assignments, which in the process occasions the

pitching of one against the other through the observance and the manifest enforcement of such God's directives. This singular human effort to interpret the mind or intention of God ultimately engenders violence among adherents of diverse religious groups. However, the outbreak of religious fundamentalism cannot be extricated from the socioeconomic situation in Nigeria. The most germane involves the ethnic struggle for relevance or at best power domination. Pape (2005) was apt to inform that violence under the guise of religion is nothing but calculated political attempts. The Boko Haram's adoption of lethal violence against the state and non-state actors in its recent encounter is predicated on defending the political interest and 'territory' of the North. The latent target of religio-political violence lies in Carlos Marighella's dictum in his **Manual of the Urban Guerrilla**, 'dramatise the political demands, provoke the government to overreact and cause the antagonism of the general population who will either neutralise their support for the government of the day or become sympathetic to the cause of the fundamentalists' (Cavanaugh, 2006; 5). This class of persons constitutes the wily political jobbers who twist religious messages of peace for their own devious purposes (Juergensmeyer, 2006). This clearly depicts the scenario currently playing itself out in Nigeria.

In its earliest manifestation, Islamic fundamentalism developed in Nigeria under the cloak of the enthronement of new order. Fundamentalism was mainly directed at the substitution and adoption of laws, institutions and other cultural diffusions representative of "Islamic ideals" and this often done in contradistinction to Western values. In a concrete term, inflammable statements are made and backed up with a deliberate selection of an aspect of the Quran that best drives home the nefarious ambition of any reigning political resource seeker and this is concomitantly given self-construed meanings that best promote the intention or interest of such launders. This is in most cases done outside the injunction of the holy Quran which states that "there is no compulsion in religion" Chapter 2, verse 256. With regards to convention, a sectional group commonly referred to as the Ulama and the Mua'llims determines the right injunctions of Allah, disseminates same and coerces obedience from the followers.

Regrettably, the spate of violence currently experienced in Nigeria is located in a hijack or usurpation of the exalted post of the Ulamas by religio-political charlatans and as a result, a sizeable portion of dogmas capable of fanning fanatical restlessness has become the norm. This norm of violence and terrorism then has become enforceable just as a section of the Islamic community regarded itself as divinely chosen to gag others into conformism and if by reason of non-cooperation to destroy the non-compliant category within the population. This remarkably creates a sharp boundary between the usurpers (Boko Haram sect) who seek to enforce the "divine morality" and others, and in the process, classify significant others as enemies and opting for violence and at best terrorist activities to drive home their religious ideals (Marty and Moore, 2000: 207). All forms of action in line with these practices are equivalent to what can be conveniently described as abuse of a sacred privilege. Once such abuses occur, a dislocation or misapplication of sizeable verses of Quranic injunctions is automatically instantiated. This is in most cases followed by resounding appeals from those regarded "knowledgeable" in the mystery of the Quran instructing their adherents to embark on or utilise whatever means which may range from legal to illegal approaches to clearly outright obstructive/destructive strategies within their reach to enforce the cause of "Allah". This, in a way, places on the adherents overriding commitments and invariably engenders potential lethal subordination of other secularist appeals.

In the case of Nigeria, these directives are mostly issued in furtherance of ethnic agitation for political relevance or reckoning. Most pathetic in relation to the consequences of fundamentalism cum terrorism consists of the wanton destruction of lives and properties. This engenders a situation where no one is capable of being trusted and everyone becomes an instrument to be feared. All unknown people or strangers automatically assume potential Boko Haram suspects in every locality, a situation created in the name of actualising God's mandate. In several instances, there is continual promotion of disillusionment about the existence of such often acclaimed God's mandate propelling anti-legal actions, criminality and simultaneously engendering the dilemma about the

boundary between the acceptable and unacceptable religious conduct on one hand and permissive and non-permissive expression of religious vandalism on the other hand. This chapter therefore considers the insurgence of religious fundamentalism linked with the Boko Haram sect, a strand of fundamentalist Islam found in the Northern part of Nigeria. This is done with the view of proffering lasting solution to the imbroglio.

Description of the Boko Haram Sect

With regards to the rise of Boko Haram-styled fundamentalism in Nigeria, the sect came into existence in form of what can be likened to Wahhabism of Saudi Arabia; a sect representing the puritanical, anti-intellectual and anti-Western Islamic disposition. It also took on the dimension of the 11th and 12th centuries Isma'ili Fedayeen Shi'ite activities in Southern Asia. In line with the latter's philosophy, Boko Haram's drive towards fundamentalism and lately towards terrorism is predicated on the assurance of a blissful place in heaven and multiplication of wives in the hereafter if they become martyrs fighting for Allah. These are viewed as benefits of the scarce resources of spiritual blessings to grateful perpetrators of Islamic terrorism or violence (Avalos, 2005). Considering the geographical distribution of the fundamentalists, membership of the sect is widely spread along the north-eastern part of Nigeria. Their massive presence is registerable around five major states in Nigeria and these include: Borno, Yobe, Gombe, Kano and Kaduna states. These areas have been known in the past to be volatile in terms of religious conflicts. The build-up of fanatical predisposable factors in the region is closely linked to permissiveness partly on the part of the elite within the area and the structural imbalance that attends Nigeria's independence. Making assessment of the contribution of the former to fundamentalist practices, it is commonplace to consistently link incendiary statements laden with religious intolerance or intentions to a sizeable number of northern revered elites in both the past and present. At the vanguard of non-secularistic agitations in Nigeria is the late Abubakar Gumi, who consistently displayed resentment to the Christian religion on one hand and vehemently opposed the ascension of Christians to positions of political authority in all its

ramifications. Of late also, another statement was credited to Major General Muhammadu Buhari, a former Nigerian head of state, who conscientiously appealed to Muslims in Nigeria not to vote for Christians on one hand in the past and later incited Islamic adherents to cause mayhem after suffering political defeat in the 2007 Presidential election (Anifowose & Odukoya, 2011). All these statements and several others coming from these often acclaimed "respected personalities" in the northern region portray a tacit approval of disruptive behaviours in particular and concomitantly, the display of a most astonishing lawlessness among a insignificant few in the area in general. Apart from the identified rudimentary links of violence associated with diverse Islamic fundamentalist groups in the region, further events which unfolded in Nigeria's political environment constitutes a singular cause in the offshoot of the recently dreaded Boko Haram. Probing domestic political causes, Crenshaw (1981) affirms that researchers' attention should be directed towards distinguishing between permissive or facilitating causes and direct or instigating factors predisposing people to either fundamentalism or terrorism under democracy. Further research equally confirmed a lineal relationship between the existence of democracy and religio-political violence (Weinberg and Eubank, 1994). Holding the varied ideological backgrounds that demarcated its emergence constant, it is observed that this sect became more politically inclined with defining ideology needed to defend the Northern Nigeria political agenda under Nigeria's current democracy. Boko Haram's quest for recognition and acceptance grew far higher during this period. In accounting for its followership, the sect consistently solicited and launched substantial Quranic embellished psychological warfare on the Islamic community in the north. This was done by drawing extensively on religious sentiments mutually held by Islamic adherents and this was subsequently used to woo those who became sympathetic to its major goals. In essence, Koranic verses were used as instruments of deceit, recruitments and potent marching order for destructive activities. In consonance with what had been earlier reported in research, there was a subtle politicisation of Islamic religion to justify all forms of ethnic-related ambitious atrocities. Consequently, the Islamic religion that is quite

endemic and accepted by the majority in the region now became a vehicle for legitimising all shade of evils; a role it has consistently been adapted to serve within Nigeria's political landscape from the past. By its nature, Islamic religion remained suitable to fundamentalism due to the amenability of sizeable Koranic verses in furtherance of personal and group violence agenda. The hijack of God's mandate and the distinctive definitions of God's mind at best remained capable of making Islam repulsive to would-be good-intentioned adherents.

Conceptualising Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism is akin to being absolutely enclosed emotionally in a single point of view, refusing to cultivate objectivity, give priority to intelligence or put oneself in the place of others. It involves conflicts in which the fundamental error is always the emotional and violent attachment to biased, superficial, and non-traditional ideas of religion, ideas which, in fact, serve an extremist's political ideology (Soares De Azevedo, 2010). When fundamentalism assumes an acute dimension, it is often classified as terrorism. Religious fundamentalism becomes heinous when it assumes a terrorist posture (Kimball, 2002). This consists of actions meant to achieve goals beyond the criminal action (Yayla, 2007). In this regard, fundamentalism in the context of Boko Haram's activism is a purposeful activity directed towards the creation of a general climate of fear designed to influence in ways desired by the protagonists, other human beings and through them some course of events (Coopper, 1974). The first common element of terrorism is the use of violence (Anderson and Sloan, 2009). Research has shown that violence by gangs and other groups of armed young men is a worldwide phenomenon (Hagedorn, 2008). Fundamentalism is characterised by violence mostly perpetrated by young energetic people. The definition of Boko Haram's fundamentalism, therefore, is clearly situated in Wardlaw's (1982) position, which he termed political terrorism. This involves the use of, or the threat of violence by an individual, or a group, whether acting for or in opposition to established authority, when such action is designed to create extreme anxiety and of fear-inducing effects in a target group larger than

the immediate victim with the purpose of coercing that group into acceding into political demands of the perpetrators. In the parlance of Thornton (1964), the form under current discourse falls within the class of "agitational terror" often engaged to attempt the replacement (of Western values), transformation (into desired Islamic structure) and destruction of the existing order (secularity).

Theoretical Perspective

Religion is a social phenomenon. Its existence and perpetuity is sustained by human relations within a spectrum commonly known as a society. It manifests in the realm of social action and with its attendant consequences. In accounting for the interpretive comprehension of the current Islamic fundamentalism ravaging the north, there is need for one to make a detour to the two forms of action identified by Weber (1978) in his social action perspective. In the world of Weber, the first form of action traceable to fundamentalism is what he called *aktuelles verstehen* denoting the observable of the impact of fundamentalism. This is represented in the wanton destruction of lives and properties being experienced in many parts of the north. This has recently culminated into a state of insecurity especially in the affected region. However, a more sociological discourse that is relevant to the current analysis is the form he called *erklärendes verstehen* which represents an advocacy made to unravel the motive of the fundamentalists. This latter is giving credence under the section which discusses the locus of confusion fanning Islamic fundamentalism. This involves a discussion on what gave rise to the motive of exhibiting anti-human and state posture. Theorising fundamentalism and terrorism, the interpretive approach linked to Weber (1958) becomes relevant in the determination of linkages between the meanings men acquire through various learning processes and the subsequent actions attendant of such learning. Fundamentalism is closely linked to religious learning and the created meanings garnered through such a learning process produce the needed input germane to terrorism. Flowing from Weber's (1958) assertion, therefore, fundamentalism and terrorism can only occur where there is appreciable teaching and the appropriate kind of belief working in consonance with the

disruption of the existing order on one hand and the existence of socio-material conditions capable of generating optimal frustration in any religious adherent, on the other hand. The Nigerian environment, in this regard, seems conducive to the requisite conditions identified by Weber (1958) for the mushrooming of fundamentalist and terrorist activities.

In considering the modernisation perspective akin to a pictorial diagram of fundamentalism in the modern age, scholarly explications by right must examine the social forces and the historical dynamics promoting the event. The most central to current discourse lies in the conceptualisation of Beck's modernity which he describes as a pervasion of organised irresponsibility, manufactured uncertainty, contradictions and ignorance (Beck, Bonss & Lan, 2003). With the complexities of transformation culminating into individualisation or structurally created individualisation, there is a consistent production of uncertainties, risks and chances. The cyclical challenges posed by globalisation affecting modern nation-states often promote the demystification of the dogmas of traditional religion and life course. Traditional form of Islam preaches peace and brotherliness. However, the tide of the rapidly changing world has dislocated the ideals Islam hitherto stood for. Consequently, fundamentalism and terrorism are both within the class of manmade risks associated with modernity. The traditional mode of worship eulogises and promotes collectivism, a condition in force prior to modern globalisation. Basically, modernity promotes individualism in which strands of people are left in the cold without support and hence the arrival at what is called *new contradictory mode of societalisation* that reshaped all known basic structure and traditional linkages to established relationships (Beck et al, 2003). Religious relationship in the context of modernity assumes the posture of formalism devoid of primordial sentiments engendering cooperation among major group in the previously operated societies. As a result, there is a gradual transformation of individuals or class grievances into religious-related discontent, hence the discharge of individuals experienced or felt pains into the domain of handy substitutes. In Nigeria, structural produced pains under current democracy secure its manifest function in religious vendetta mostly meted on

government cum civil society. Basically, just as the trend towards individualisation is currently being felt in Nigeria, a situation in consonance with what Beck (1992) clearly identified, the experienced impact of this development is nevertheless recordable in its adverse consequences often generating killings and wanton destruction of properties. The acute individualism promoted by modern global economy, therefore, engenders what Beck (1992) referred to as analytic objective life assessment where in due course, the have-not displays action of having nothing to lose and everything to gain in their engagement in disruptive behaviours (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). This is done by paying what life demands (display frustration) and expecting results (government intervention). Under Beck's individualisation concept, there are three aspects which affect religious relationship in the modern era. First is the liberation of most adherents from the dogmas of traditional religion and/or encumbrances. In this case, there is liberation from the historically prescribed religious forms and less commitment to eternal injunctions. The second consists of the loss of stability occasioning disenchantment with government and the society. This is reflective in dimensions affecting mistrust of traditional knowledge, faith and guiding norms thus making it difficult in orienting modern man on the ideals of society. Third is the struggle towards reintegration in a divided world. Man in this context is faced with the challenge of situations and conditions that completely escape his reach (Beck 1992), thus making the world of modern man a runaway world in the parlance of Anthony Giddens. It is a world laden with uncertainties and unpredictability and in its observable form, it entrenches massive disillusionment in which one of such is the current religious fundamentalism and terrorism.

LOCUS OF DISCONTENT IN NIGERIA'S ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

Disagreements on the basic tenets of Islam are not unusual from time immemorial. At inception, divisive ideologies grew alongside the complexity of Islamic religion. All major disagreements borrow substantially from political interests across ages. From the point of origin, the demise of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) instigated

Leadership crisis with notable contests between Caliph Abu Bakr whose major followers became known as Ahl al-sunnah wa'l-jama'ah or Sunnis and Caliph Ali who became the leader of rival group Shi'ites. The differences in emphasis of these two groups do not in any way question the foundational structure of Islam at this period. However, the modern era witnessed the vast incursions of pollutants into Islam. These groups were mainly reactionaries and parochial gratifiers who gradually evolved within the world politics in part and were affected by vagaries of socioeconomic and political imbalances ravaging most modern states.

There is a persistent and substantial negation of what the Muslim Koran stood for. As the name portends, Al Quran denotes the book meant for recitation and repository of wisdom. It also assumes the name Al Furgan referring to enablement for divine discernment and a bank of knowledge helping to distinguish truth from falsehood. It is Umm-al-kitab, the mother of all books; Al-huda or Hidayah the guidance of mankind both in morality and education (Nasr, (2011). Considering what the holy Quran represents, fundamentalism secures a deep-rooted base in the latter. Just as other world religions, the educational content of Al-Quran is meant to engulf the total man of the adherents. It involves the transmission of knowledge (ta'lim) and training of the whole person of the adherents (tarbiyah). The Islamic teachers in this context assume a dual capacity in their performance of educational role. They are both Mu'allim (transmitters of knowledge) and Murabbi (trainers of soul and character). However, these roles are commandeered by few Ulamas and Mu'allim to make the Al-Quran subservient to diverse selfish or political interpretations for obvious reasons. Several inferences can be drawn from the ongoing impasse.

First, the true meaning of the Arabic content of the Quran in most cases exists beyond the interpretive capacities of lay persons and consequently promoting an absolute reliance on what is said or interpreted of each verse of the Quran (sunna: prophetic practices) by the Ulamas which then becomes the basis for both positive and negative motivations. The most pathetic about this is the fact that a slight thwarting of the true sacred/divine meanings of the "holy instruction" could produce monumental anti-social

behaviours, among mentees or devotees. Therefore, the root of fundamentalism in this age of Islamic religion lies in the probable effect of religious moral doctrines often received by most violence-prone gangs.

Second, the personal, sectional or group socio-religious interest of the Mu'allim is in most cases given representations and leads to astronomical embellishments often devoid of what God has in mind but simultaneously disguised as the "will of Allah". In essence, the remote and the immediate causes of fundamentalism in Islam can best be approached by seeking answer to this question; what substance of training is mostly passed across to the northern-based Islamic adherents which make them inadvertently prone to wanton destruction of lives and properties? In answering this, one should simply know that men are equally born but at no time are they equally talented. Due to this shortcoming, the dispensers of doctrinal knowledge from time immemorial, in all known religious arenas, are not equally talented or endowed to give the true meaning of God's will or unravel the minds of the gods concerning issues that may be a central concern to both the revealers and their societies. This limitation or gap often accords any would-be trouble fomenters as in the case of the Ulama mentoring the Boko Haram adherents to have their ways. Having considerable exposure to dogmatic teaching laden with anti-secularist, anti-government and other religious groups' ideas, most cohorts of Quranic schools morph into ethnic militia thus transforming into what is being currently experienced in the northern region of Nigeria.

Third, the high incidence of poverty cum illiteracy serves as an incubator for fundamentalism in northern Nigeria. Robinson (2002), for instance, viewed poverty in all its ramifications as an acute violation of human rights. The implication of poverty therefore invariably caused Townsend and Gordon (2002) to argue that the analysis of poverty in any given context must consider how poverty is constructed, its historicity and contemporary responsibilities. Islamic fundamentalism, compared to any other gang-related activism, provides unmistakable signs that all is not well and that millions of people are being left outside of the fringes of the nation-state in particular and globalised economy in general (Hargedorn,

2008). In relation to the construction of poverty, its measurement lies in substandard human existence and in its historical past. This is seen in the northern region where the masses have been grossly impoverished; a feat perpetrated in furtherance of the parochial interest of northern political leaders. There is a deliberate conditioning of the mass majority of the people who are preserved for the purpose of eliciting or mustering their support when needed particularly when such leaders are not getting their perceived share of the national cake. As a matter of fact, most northerners are excluded from decent living either as a result of structural arrangement of the Nigerian state or that which is further reinforced by the self-preservative philosophy of the political elites in the region. This is further intensified by low economic opportunity and poor human development of those affected.

Fourth, there equally exist sufficient spatial disparities across major regions in Nigeria. Research has shown that spatial disparities produce worrisome effect and thus become the source of religio-political grievances as in the case currently witnessed in Nigeria (MENA Report, 2011). The gap between the south and the north socioeconomically has been alarmingly high and the prospect of closing it in the near future is quite remote, if not impossible. This accounts as one of the contributory factors to the emergence of fundamentalism in Nigeria. Looking at the current factors fuelling fundamentalism, the question of power rotation between the north and the south looms high. One wrongly held assumption that is rife among northern elites is that of a subtle inclination that stipulates that economic power be situated within the South and political power be zoned to the north. This creates monumental misgivings among the ethnic groups within the country and has generated “us” versus “them” syndrome among Nigerians. Holding onto political power has been elevated to the position of almost a national ideology in northern Nigeria. In this context, Bjorgo (2004) drew attention to the fact that in transitional democracies such as Nigeria, the likelihood of unclear rules or lack of succession plans about rotational principles, among various blocks and non-acceptability of fair play among political actors may fan sporadic violence or the use of terror to secure power or to actualise political mandate among

those obsessively thirsty for it. This situation is exemplified in the current religio-political acrimony ravaging the northern region in Nigeria. It is most glaring that the exercise of political power at the centre during most military regimes in Nigeria favoured the regional axis where Boko Haram emanated from and during the long rule of the military, most northern religio-political jobbers held sway. But with a shift in the powerbase now in operation, the shocking effect which this has triggered cannot be contested constitutionally, hence the resort to guerrilla warfare by some elements in the region to checkmate the current power wielders from the south.

Finally, high level of violence by non-state actors like gangs and terrorists has also been found to be an unsettling aspect of globalisation thereby making it a significant aspect of the modernising society. What makes globalisation relevant in this context is the condition of workers and wage inequality that is rising globally. Considering the productive composition of different regions in Nigeria, for instance, there are far more unskilled population in the north than what obtains in the southern part of the country. This is considerably responsible for the intermittent frustration because of the declining labour income accruing to vast majority of the population in the region. Globalisation enhances the earning capacity of some segments of the workforce of a nation than the others. Freeman, Oustendorp and Rama (2001) argue that certain types of workers benefit more than the other in the modern global economy. Research has shown that wage inequality is not only affecting nations in this regard but also individuals (Harrison, 1994; Lindert and Williamson, 2001). Once inequality persists, nations are bound to harvest a sizeable portion of the population in the frustrated category and subsequently the venting of anger on both state and non-state actors, lives and properties.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Advancing Juergensmeyer's submission, religion exacerbates the tendency to divide people into friends and enemies, good and evil, us and them, by ratcheting divisions up to a cosmic level (Juergensmeyer, 2000). Religious-related violence, therefore, in no small measure works against healthy pluralism required for national

continuity both now and in the future. According to Cavanaugh (2006), what makes religious violence savage and relentless is that it puts worldly conflicts in a 'larger than life' context of cosmic wars. Religious violence and terrorism operate in most cases in a non-comprehensible manner, distorting humanity's sense of solution due to the interwoven nature of violent and non-violent environment where such contradictions thrive, and put both government and vulnerable victims in a precarious state on how best to secure lives and properties. The continuity of both violence and fundamentalism portends a pervasive climatic condition of threat, danger or death and without addressing the contentious issues engendering this conflict, socioeconomic development of nations becomes elusive. It is on this basis that a lasting solution be adopted to douse the tension created by fundamentalist activism in Nigeria.

According to Richardson, (2006:1):

The search for the cause of terrorism, like the search for a cure of cancer, is not going to yield a single definitive solution. But as with any disease, an effective cure will be dependent on the accurate diagnosis of the multiplicity of the risk factors as well as their interactions with one another.

Along this line of thought, consequently, solving the challenges of fundamentalism and terrorism will require a three-way approach. These will involve technical, structural and unitary approaches. First, it is quite evident that when one accesses any literature material written in an unknown language, it often poses technical related difficulties at the level of readability and comprehension. This is true to a large extent in the case of both the holy Bible (hitherto written in Hebrew at a particular period in history) before its interpretation and its subsequent wide circulation and the holy Quran (written in Arabic) that is largely still being operated in its original language form. Addressing the technical aspect of Islamic fundamentalism therefore will entail the demystification of the Arabic basis of reading and interpreting the holy Quran. In a view,

this should be the starting point. An extensive interpretation of the Arabic content of the book without compromising the uniformity of meanings of diverse verses in the holy book will reduce the adaptability of holy instructions contained in the Quran to nefarious uses. Just as the holy Bible has been interpreted into different languages to facilitate understanding or comprehension to a lay man, so also should the Qurān be made not only accessible but readable, comprehensible and meaningful to an average adherent of Islam. This in a way will reduce the excesses of most religio-political jobbers camouflaging under the toga of religion to cause mayhem in the North-eastern region of Nigeria.

Second, the structural efforts will be most meaningful in the governmental and inter-governmental arenas. Although, a submission was once made that governments fell short of defeating fundamentalism or at best terrorism and that the world as a whole seemed incompetent to produce policies, programmes or precautions to conquer the growing violence in the world, but how can this type of knotty issue be addressed?

The authors contend that the solutions to fundamentalism or terrorism are not farfetched because they are subsumed in the second royal law emphasised by the Lord Jesus Christ and written in Matthew Chapter 22 verse 39 (KJV) which says, "...Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself". Contextually, one should not allow his/her neighbour to get angry before one begins to look for palliative measures. Human beings should not be subjected to excessively degrading life conditions and reduced to the state of squalor like the one ravaging substantial northern states at present. Governments and concerned stakeholders should not be dilly-dallying on how best to cushion the effects of poverty. They should be decisive in creating hope, establishing far-reaching economic programmes and ameliorating the sufferings of the masses. Let governments in their various categories treat their citizens as humans, put them at heart and respond to their needs in a prompt manner. Most violence in sub-Saharan Africa has been a product of the abandonment of citizens and the irresponsiveness of those at the helms of affairs. Although, this is not to say that government is totally not responsible but the major crux of the matter is that political office holders' self-interest often overrides the collective

interest. Obsession for self-actualisation, public wealth accumulation and aggrandizement combines together to increase the frustration of citizens. The plight of the common man in most African countries, including Nigeria, is that of disillusionment and acute hopelessness. The condition of most people in the category of the poor can be captured from the lamentation of a Tunis who had this to say "We know nothing but humiliation. How can you consider yourself a man if you do not have a job?" (The Economist, 2012). Government should make effort to make jobs available and as well make the take-home pay relatively sufficient to cater for at least the physiological needs of most Nigerians. Ideally, in most African countries, the agitations have not been over the satisfaction of high order needs but the basic needs. A substantial number of Nigerians are hungry and in destitution. The solution is to put food on their tables and the government is sure to harvest their cooperation astronomically.

Third, the unitary approach is closely linked to individual adherents' redefinition of their role and relationship to God on one hand and their role and responsibility to their fellowmen and women on the other hand. The former addresses the reconceptualisation of who God is and His potent power to convert and punish those often regarded as infidels. No one should be seen fighting for or on behalf of God. If the God religious devotees claim they serve is truly God, He will fight for Himself. What do they possess to fight for God or cause mayhem and wanton destruction of lives and properties on His behalf? Fundamentalists and terrorists should be compelled by religious leaders to put a stop to the conferment of self-appointment as God's fighting army and to know that sinners and saints are creatures in the hand of God. Considering the role and responsibility everyone has to their fellowmen and women, sanctity of life is paramount. Shedding the blood of innocent people who, in most cases, have no link whatsoever with the contentious issues promoted by fundamentalist and terrorist activities is not only heinous before God they claim to be fronting for but it is also punishable when they eventually appear before Him when He will judge the world as commonly believed in all religions. There should be a sense of decorum as it is evident that there is no superiority of any soul above the other in the presence of Allah!

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A PANOPLY OF READINGS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Lessons for and from Nigeria

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This book, *A Panoply of Readings in Social Sciences: Lessons for and from Nigeria*, is made up of twenty-one chapter contributions from various scholars that have addressed a number of issues that have wide resonance in the social space in Nigeria. The book has subjected contemporary issues in Nigeria to the scrutiny of academic analysis, thereby generating findings and outcomes that bear the social science hallmarks of objectivity and empiricism or at best represents well-researched deductive interpretations of social phenomena. Thus, its various chapters provide interesting but unique construal of issues treated while its contributors have strived to strike a balance in their writings and to proffer solutions that could improve the entity called Nigeria, so it can serve the interests of its citizens better.

We recommend this piece of intellectual exertion to the various publics that will make up its readerships, that is, the academic community, the political ecosystem, the policy environment, industry, the third sector (civil society and non-state social actors) and members of the public.



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