

Religion: An Instrument for Enhancing National Security and Harmonious Existence in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper titled: religion as an instrument for enhancing national security and harmonious coexistence in Nigeria is timely because one of the national aspiration of Nigerians and the international community since our independence in 1960 is that religion as experienced or demonstrated in some nations of Europe, Asia and America should be an instrument of national security and vehicle of peace that triggers meaningful development. But at the contrary, "Religion" in Nigeria has become the main instrument of national security threats and actor of disintegration. Using the library and oral sources methodologies in a qualitative and themes analysis, the paper aim at adding to existing literature and motivating further researches by examining after the conceptual clarification of key terms. The nature of the Nigerian state; the synergy between religion, national security and harmonious co-existence in Nigeria; national security and religious threats; the expected roles of religions in promoting national security and co-existence in Nigeria using the three theories of religion namely Evolutionary, Marxist and functional and harmonious co-existence of the ethnic nationalist in Nigeria can be realized.

Theories, it reveals seven dimension human security threats in Nigeria. It also envisaged the Nigeria security and religious activities in the future, then a workable recommendation and finally a conclusion in which we adduced that the welfare of the individuals should henceforth be the concern of the government, religious organizations, corporate organizations and the international community if the expected national security.

Keywords: Religion, National Security, Harmonious co-existence, Enhancement, Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria occupies an area of about 923,768, the Nigerian Political Bureau (1989) with a population of about 145 million people in 2006 (NPC 2006). The territory is occupied by more than 350 ethnic nationalities that are found in a fairly well defined location with divergent religious and other beliefs. Religious crisis, conflict, peace, development and security seem the most recurrent terms gaining wide currency in the 21st century. Human beings value security and harmonious co-existence because they are both a social or global public good. National security and integration of the divergent ethnic nationalities for harmonious living especially in the president Goodluck Jonathan administration of Nigeria, has become the political slogan of our time.

The present state of security crisis in Nigeria is very worrisome. By its very composition and nature, the Nigerian, nation-state seems to be prone to some forms of insecurity, assassination, ritual killings, armed robbery, pen robbery, kidnapping, ethno-religious violence, suicide bombings, arsons, floods, food shortage, unemployment, corruption, police and military brutality, impunity, lawlessness and a host of other sources of insecurity abound in this country. Generally, the root causes of insecurity or security threats in Nigeria are poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance, poor or bad leadership/governance. Family, disintegration, social, economic, political and other aspects of national insecurity will remain at stake in Nigeria unless these underlined causes of insecurity are comprehensively addressed.

The thesis and thrust of this paper is that national security should be the primary goal or ultimate end of religion. Religion which does not have the enhancement of national security and harmonious co-existence of divergent groups of nationalities as its ultimate end is not worth the name. Generally, religion is categorized into universal and ethnic religions⁵. However, academic study of religion (a term which refers to transcultural international faith); indigenous religion (which refers to smaller, culture-specific or nation specific religious groups) and new religions movements (which refers to recently developed faiths⁶). There are about 4,200 religions in the world. A global 2012 and 2013 poll reports that 59% of the world's population is religious, 23% are not religious and 13% are atheists⁷.

This paper examines the concepts of national security, religions and harmonious co-existence establish a solid link between the three concepts from three important religion theories and how religions, specifically Islam,, Christianity and African Tradition Religion can be used as an instrument for the enhancement of national security and harmonious co-existence in Nigeria remains the essential focus of this paper.

Conceptual Clarification

E.B. Taylor defines or conceptualizes religion as a belief in spiritual beings. It excludes rituals and ceremonies which characterizes most religions like Judaism and Buddhism⁸. To James Frazer, Religion is the propitiation or conciliation of power superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the cause of nature and of human life.⁹

Karl Marx, on his part defined religion as the opium of the masses. Marx saw religion as a sign of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of a soulless condition¹⁰ we shall come back to this theory of Marx.

Later day Marxists, particularly Lemin, described religion as one of the forms of spiritual oppression which everywhere weighs down heavily upon the masses of the people, over burdened by their perpetual work for others by want and isolation¹¹.

Religion, which is as old as society, is the product of mans effort to come to terms with a harsh and uncertain world. It has always been the last resort of all those in distress, in that, almost all religious known to mankind started in conditions of social and economic dislocation, and were originally movements composed and led largely by the poor and oppressed in the society¹². In other words, religion brings people of same faith together in a social and spiritual sense, of course, for some kind of physical and spiritual security both here and hereafter. In Christian religion, the faith perspective is centered on Jesus Christ and the Holy Bible.¹³ In Islam, the faith perspective is on Muhammad (PBUH), Islam is based on the Qur'an one of the holy books of the Muslims.¹⁴ In Africa before the arrival of Islam and Christianity. The African traditional religion such as the Nupe religion existed. These among other new religious movements in Nigeria offer promises of some kinds of social and spiritual security to their adherents. They assure adherents of holistic divine security covering the tripartite being of man (spirit, soul and body) through faith which they emphasize as the indispensable means of divine security in life.¹⁵

National Security

The concept of security of a nation goes back to the cradle of nation-states themselves. Armies for domestic peace-keeping and maintaining national sovereignty have existed since the dawn of recorded history. Civil and national police forces have also existed for millennia¹⁶. Intelligence agencies and secret services and governments stretch back to antiquity such as the Roman Empire, Benin Kingdom, Bornu Empire among others in Asia. While the general concepts of keeping a nation secure are not new, the specific English term "national security" itself came into common parlance in the 20th century¹⁷. Methodologies and strategies to achieve and maintain the highest possible desired state of national security have been consistently developed over the modern period to this day. However, the concept of national security is very difficult to define because the roof term, security, has remained a contested concept. In other words, it has no universally accepted definition due to its many-sidedness arising from ideology and timeframe being addressed, as well as the focus of analysis¹⁸.

Moreso, the issue of national security is so critical to nations national interest and leaders that they are prepared to stake anything in defence of the nation, or to maintain its security. Hence Walter Lippmann observed that a nation is secured to the extent that it is not in a question to lose core values, life, property and liberty.¹⁹ National security also refers to the requirement to maintain, the survival of the nation state through the use of economic, military and political power and the exercise of diplomacy. President Olusegun Obasanjo, while presenting his grand strategy, declared that the primary objective of national security shall be to strengthen the Federal Republic of Nigeria, advance her interest and objectives; to contain instability; control crime, eliminate corruption, enhance genuine development progress and growth and improve the welfare and well-being and quality of life of the citizenry.²⁰

In this work, we shall, be adopting Gwarlox definition which sees national security as freedom from hunger, or from threat to a nation's ability to protect and defend itself promote its cherished values and interests, and enhance the well-being of its people.²¹ From the above definition, it can be observed that national security is not restricted only to weapons and military preparedness but encompasses political, social and economic well-being of the people. As such, any threat to any of these constitutes a threat to national security.

Harmonious Co-existence

Behavioural scientist like Adams Newman and Beatrix Newman recognized harmonious co-existence from the social psychology perspective put one of such insights forward. They conceptualized harmonious co-existence as states of friendship, hospitality, cooperation or competition, dominance or subordination, alliances or enmity, peace or war between two or more groups and their respective members'.²² Furthermore, they view a group as a social unit consisting of a number of individuals who stand in role and status relationship to one another and possess a set of values or norms of their own to regulate their behaviour towards each other in matters affecting them.

A.B. Ojularin in his analysis '*The Dynamics of Inter and Intra Ethnic Relations in Nigeria*' offers another important clarification on peaceful co-existence. According to him:

Peaceful of harmonious coexistence presupposes peaceful contact and interactions between groups each of which has an identity to make some inputs into their existence. In short, each of which has some scope and area of autonomous action but always exhibit sacrifice for a continuous friendship.²⁴

This raises a number of fundamental conceptual issues regarding the phenomenon of harmonious co-existence that should be identified. The first of these is that, harmonious co-existence entail contacts and interactions between groups. This ordinarily implies that it is the logical consequence of human contact between people either of the same ethnic affinities or not in which case, it deals with human beings and is therefore a social phenomenon.

The second issue arising from Ojularin's view is the unique identities of harmonious and co-existing groups. This ramifies into a wide range of issues not the least of which is variations in natural endowments, comparative and absolute advantages, divergent socio-economic and political needs and idiosyncrasies of people.²⁵ For an uncritical observer, the socio-economic, political and cultural heterogeneity ordinarily promote isolation and non contact between groups in conglomerate states.

Thus it is the duty of the state to encourage and motivate or put in place structures-social, political or economic relevance that would bring about peaceful co-existence of its citizens as examined in this paper using 'religion' as a case study.

Again, these elements of harmonious co-existence discussed above is reinforced *insitu* by the ability of the groups to contribute meaningfully to the totality of their aspirations or even dreams. It should be noted however, that while cooperation, reciprocity and sacrifice underlines this symbiosis, this is not to suggest *ab-initio*, that this precludes conflict or disagreements. As a matter of fact, conflicts, disputes, discord or even pretentious hatred is and will always be part of this harmonious process so long as the groups have some or any amount of divergences as the case of Nigeria. Social Scientists, particularly sociologists view conflict and some other disagreement as an important stage in the cementation of harmonious co-existence²⁶. However, it should be immediately added that rather than comprehend conflicts as a preponderant variable, it should be seen as the consequence of an ever-changing nature as character of the factors which in most cases facilitate peaceful co-existence between and among groups. Other writers who have written so much on evidences of harmonious co-existence in multiethnic Nigeria include.²⁷ N.Nwabueze, B.C.Osita, B.C Nwolise, D.O Erim and Garba, S. and from the above analyses, it is clear that diverse nature of the Nigerian society in terms of culture, religion, ideology, historical background among others should be harnessed for the development of the nation state. Problem of 'harmonious co-existence can be sought from history and theologian as demonstrated in most of the advance nations of the world'.²⁸

The Synergy between Religion and National Security: An Unending Paradox in Nigeria

The link between religion and national security is that of mutual transmissibility of impacts and repercussions. Before the details, there is need for us to preset Bolarinwa's²⁹ three dominant theories of religion which are the Evolutionary theory, Marxist theory and Functional theory. Each of these deserves a brief explanation. Evolutionary theory states that religion originated from fear, dread and fascination infused in animism. In other worlds animism (belief in spirits based on experiential fear of them) or animalism (belief in impersonal forces based on their expressive function) is the earliest form of religion. Marxist theory states that religion is from mans imagination and, therefore, a mere invention of man or society; and it is from man's imagination and, therefore, a mere invention of man or society. And it is more or less for the oppression of the proletarians (poor or the working class) by the bourgeoisies (rich or owners of means of production). In this case, religion is the "sign of the oppressed creature, the sentiments of a heartless world and the soulless conditions, the opium of the people"³⁰. In other words, religion is used by the ruling class to justify its tyrannisation and oppression of the subject class. Functional theory of religion state that religion is a sociological tool which develops from the need to foster a sense of belonging in human society and thus plays the role of community binding of social integration. In other words, functional theory sees religion as "performing the functional role of reinforcing the collective conscience of the society requires for social order, stability, harmonious co-existence and in all human security"³¹

It can be deduced, in line with evolutionary theory that whatever people fear or dread constituted a security threat to them. Man invented religion in order to cope with his own fear of the supernatural which he intuitively instinctively acknowledges as real. In this regard. Freedom from fear is the link between religion and security. Marxist theory (which is an economy theory) shows that economic security is the reason for religion. It contends that freedom from want is behind mans ingenious invention of religion, though the rich use it as an oppressive tool over the poor. Functional theory (also called meaning/comfort theory) shows that religion provides meaning to/comfort in life in the face of frustrations, pains, loss, etc. Religion therefore provides security against the mystery and vicissitudes of life. It reveals that freedom from pain constitutes the security function of religion. These theories, therefore, provide a strong link between religion and security be it national human or irrational. Hence religion serves a security purpose in all human society. Based on these theories, it is very certain that religion (contrary) to the prediction and expectation of scientific positivism will not cease to exist in the world and Nigeria inclusive. Now let's move away from these theories and examine the (religion-national security) fundamental realities on ground in the Nigeria situation since 1999-2014.

There is a general assumption especially within the realist paradigm that the world is anarchical in nature in which the use of force remains the ultimate means of guaranteeing national or international security. The realist sticks to the classical postulation which places a lot of emphasis on military threats and concentrates on the various forms of military response to the management of such threats³². The cold war and even the post-cold war era sustained this militaristic perception. However, the end of the cold war also marked the beginning of a debate on the need to redefine and reconceptualize nations security to respond to new global challenges especially on human security or socio-economic and political well being of the dynamic societies. This is because as Nwolise (2008) observed, the world was deceived during the cold war into believing that security is all about high defense allocation, amassment of awe- some weapon system and large military personnel. The views of John Mroz, Ian Bellany, Peter and Ahmed (2006) on national security one typical of the perceptions of the concept which propelled the practice and processes throughout the cold war era. Luard (1988) argues that a states level of security is measured largely on the basis of military capabilities such as the number of nuclear warheads, missiles, tanks, men under arms military expenditure and others. These scholars have viewed security within the context of defense thereby relegating other important issues such as economy and welfare of the people. Most developing countries built their security doctrine around this approach and as such a lot of their security problems still remain unsolved mostly because the aspect of human security/welfare is neglected.

The cold war era celebrated militarism in the practice of national security, ignoring all non-military variables, to the detriment of the real security of citizens and nations. The problems of security are dynamic and multidimensional. Any attempt to view these problems from a static and single perspective will therefore result to intellectual myopia, if not reductionism. There is therefore need to view it from a holistic perspective. The task of re-thinking national security is in part necessitated by the need to broaden national security to encompass non military threats, that is-broadening the nation of national security beyond militaristic and elitist perspectives. More-over, the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the humiliation of USA on September 11, 2011 corroborated Nwolise's observation that:

A country may have the best armed forces in terms of training and equipment the most efficient police force, the most efficient custom men, the most active secret service agents, and best quality prisons, but yet be the most insecure nation in the world, as a result for defense and security problems from with-bad government, alienated and suffering masses, ignorance, hungers, unemployment, or even activities of foreign residents or companies (Nwolise, 1985)³³

Nigeria's perception of security is a reflection of a realist paradigm of prospecting its power within a state centric system. This perception is increasingly becoming problematic. This is because a state-centric perception in democratic role is an anachronism, along with growing internal opposition to the hegemonic statist perspective of national security. Olukoshi (1992) Nweke (1988), and Imobighe (1986, 1987 and 1989) (in Cyril, 1997)³⁴ argued that state and dominant class interest eclipse national security in Nigeria. Olukoshi for instance posited that the security thrust is directed toward the interest of the governing classes and their propertied allies, while most Nigerians are alienated from the security processes that ironically turn on them from time to time. The consequence of this is that national security planners tend to strengthen the coercive apparatus of any government any time the nation is faced with internal security challenges neglecting non-coercive and social welfare approaches.

Official paradigm of national security in Nigeria especially under president Obasanjo's and Goodluck Jonathan democratic rule was and is statist and a reflection of the skewed power relations in the country³⁵. This is more so in the face of economic and social crises arising from the backward economic reforms of these administrations. The core or human security essence of the state remained largely unchanged, in spite of its takeover by the dominant elite. For instance, the Nigerian state between 1999-2014 seemed to consent to this military conception of national security. This is obvious from the super-ordinations of the military and consequent subordination of other vital aspects of the economy such as public health, education, agriculture, employment, youth and women empowerment, and provision of essential services e.t.c. when you compare the budget allocation to national security and defense with other vital sector mentioned above, the difference will justify where government priority lies. However the real security threat in Nigeria is the problem of underdevelopment, poverty, political instability, demonic governance and social injustice. These threats cannot be reasonable confronted by military preparedness.

The crudest expression between security and the socio-economic and political structure is expressed by the cliché about the choice between the guns and bulter. More bulter for the populace rather than guns to defend their peace Dwight Eisenhower (in Briggs, 1990) corroborated this when he said: "no matter how much we spend for arms, there is no safety in arms alone. Our security is the total product of our economic, intellectual, moral and military strength"³⁸.

Many security experts focus on the extent to which internal problems constitute a source of conflicts

and tension. Thomas Homer-Dixon and Robert Kaplam (in Micheal and David, 2005)³⁹ have popularized the idea that more than anything else, poverty in developing countries is the biggest threat to all nations because of the damaging effect it has on the environment. Here, the primacy of the socio-economic factor is seen as fundamental to national security. The non-military option is essentially a development oriented philosophy. McNamara (1968)⁴⁰ corroborating this assertion posited that security is development and without development, there can⁴¹ be no security. National security, Attah (2006) observed, “will be endangered when the economy slumps, when the citizens can no longer maintain their accustomed standard of living, when employment opportunities are no longer available, and when the country is corrupt”. The concept of national security must be expanded to include protection against all major threats to human survival and well being, including threats posed by severe environmental degradation and massive human suffering McNamara (in Nwolise, 2008)⁴² Examining the role of social, economic and technological forces in security calculus warned that:

Any society that seeks to achieve adequate military security against the background of acute food shortages, population explosion, low level of productivity and per capital income, low technological development, inadequate and inefficient public utilities, and chronic problems of unemployment, has a false sense of security.

A general look of national security threats since 1999-2014 reveals that aside being internally generated, threats were/are manifested in economic, political and social forms. For instance one of the fundamentals of democracy is popular participation and because of the complex and dynamic nature of contacts and interactions between the rulers and the ruled, its tenet of openness and popular participation had generated a lot of tension. Dunmoye (2009)⁴³ noted that there are three important aspects of development that have organic relationship with security. These he identified as raising peoples living standard-their incomes and consumption of food medical services, education, shelter etc. through relevant economic processes; creating conditions that are conducive to the growth of peoples self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity; and, increasing peoples freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choices-social, economic and political. When placed side by side with Obasanjo’s and Goodluck government, it is found wanting in meeting basic if not fundamental requirements. Another spotlight is the militant/insurgency security threat that is disintegrating the north-east northern Nigeria as having the highest propensity to undermine the Nigerian democratic process.⁴⁴

Re-thinking national security under the present Goodluck democratic rule has become necessarily important because when you consider the nature, character and manifestation of threats especially that of the “Boko Haram” religious insurgents, in the Nigerian state, these are internally generated. For instance, a general look at the plethora of crises and security threats to the Nigeria state reveal that these arise from underdevelopment, poverty, political instability, bad governance, corruption and social injustice.⁴⁵ Talking about the consequences of poverty in Nigeria, Sam Aluko (1995)⁴⁶ noted that no Nigerian regardless of their social location is free from the consequences of poverty. Hence he alluded that poor Nigerians can no longer sleep because they are hungry and the rich Nigerians can no longer sleep because the poor are awake. To push this further, a hungry man is an angry man, an angry man is a violent man and violent man destroys and destruction on its own is a security threat in our national history. Ideally, from the above analysis one would have expected that with our history of conflicts and aspiration for growth and development, that is still a far cry from reality that the various religious organizations in Nigeria design a programme to fill these gaps and provide Nigerians some welfare/human security where the government has failed. According to Mike and Onyinbo (2010)⁴⁷ ‘many Nigerians are religious and attend churches, mosques and other traditional worship centre’s believing that God through his functionaries on earth would assist them where and when the state had failed’. Unfortunately, religions in Nigeria, have often been a source of conflict, instability and insecurity instead of being an instrument for peace, stability, harmony, security and national integration.

Ideally, religion ought to be a resource of security in general and the well being security of their adherents in particular. It can be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that religion should be an instrument for addressing threats to national and all class of insecurity in Nigeria.⁴⁸ Threats which constitute human wants in Nigeria are: economic security threat, food security threat, health security threat, environmental security threat, personal security threat, community security threat, political security threat and many other security threats affecting the human existence. For instance the recent threat from the Ebola virus, this kind of threat demands nascent treatment and modern equipment and retrained medical staff to enable us curtail the spread.⁴⁹ In this wise, religion organization should focus on emancipation of people from these threats. How can religion be used to address these human security threats in Nigeria? The answers are discussed below.

Management and Control of National Security Threats and Enhancement of Harmonious Co-Existence through Religion in Contemporary Nigeria

The imperative of religion for addressing the above state of human wants security challenges cannot be

overemphasized. Religion and security, as discussed earlier, have a strong linkage because human (needs/want) security is the end of all religions. So religion can be tailored and re-packaged to address, manage and control national security threats. Therefore, the three major religions in Nigeria, Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion should focus on promoting, the security of individual citizens of the country in a number ways as highlighted in this paper as over next theme.⁵⁰

Enhancing Economic wants/security

Provision of productive and remunerative work should not be left to government and private sectors alone. Religion organizations in Nigeria should get involved in the role, especially now in the face of poverty and acute unemployment of teeming masses of this country. Rather than acquiring private jets, expensive cursor, building mansion like temples, religious bodies/leaders can invest in agricultural production, transportation, estate acquisition and sales, computer/business centre's, printing of recharge cards, bakery, textile and banking industries, block making etc. which will generate jobs for some people. Presently, religion is seriously into educational business in Nigeria as many schools (primary, secondary and universities) have been established by religions bodies. Unfortunately, the poor (from whom the money was generated) could not afford to attend these schools because of the exorbitant fees. Apart from school business, religion can look into other sectors of the economy and invest in large and medium scale and partner with interested individuals on small-scale for the purpose of reducing joblessness of productive Nigerian youths. However, their involvement in business should not be for the sole aim of profit making but from the sense of divine ministry to assist the indigent.

Enhancing Food Shelter and Clothing Security

There is starvation amid plenty in Nigeria. However people's access to food, shelter and clothing depends on their purchasing power. Many are denied of access to basic food simply because they cannot afford it. Thus, food security is closely related to economic security. Religions bodies can make free food available to the hungry and highly deprived people of this country on daily basis. Religions in Nigeria should feed the hungry, cloth the naked, house the homeless etc. as a humanitarian approach to the ministry. Religion should not only be expert at collecting money from people but should also become expert at meeting the basic needs of members for food, clothing and shelter.

Enhancing Health Security

The well-being of Nigerians is as important as their spiritual well-being. Therefore, religions in Nigeria should increase their involvement in the provision of health to people at affordable charges. Although religions bodies have made considerable achievement in the health sector, there is more to be done. Religions institutions in Nigeria are so rich that they can afford to give free health services to Nigerians. It is disheartening that hospitals owned by religions bodies are in accessible by a great number of poverty-stricken Nigerians due to neck breaking bills.

Enhancing Environmental Services

Religion should be used to promote environmental security. Religious functionaries should discourage human abuse of the environment through their messages and actions. In view of the fact that many environmental threats are chronic and long-lasting. Issues such as water pollution, air pollution deforestation, poor sanitation; e.t.c. should be vehemently decried. Since cleanliness is next to godliness, religions should promote healthy lifestyles in this country.

Enhancing Personal Security

Religions in Nigeria should enhance security of people from physical violence. In principle and practice, religions should deter and defeats threats from the state (physical torture), threats from other states (war), threats from other groups of people (ethnic tension), threats from religious fundamentalist/extremists, threats from individuals or gangs against other individuals or gangs (crime, street violence) threats directed against women (rape, domestic violence) threats directed at children based on vulnerability and dependence (child abuse) and threats to self (suicide, drug abuse).

Enhancing Community Security

Religion should preserve and secure good and valuable aspects of people's culture rather than destroying it. It should approve community virtues and disapproved community vices. Religion should identify with, assimilate and accommodate peoples culture rather than overthrowing it. It should vaccinate culture instead of contaminating it. In Nigeria, religions should be used to secure people from intra and inter-ethnic as well as inter-religious strife. Religions should settle disputes/conflicts, support core Nigerian values and national ethics as specified in the country's constitution. For instance, communalism, extended family system, inter-ethnic

relations and hospitality are core African values which ought to be celebrated by religions.

Enhancing their Political Security

Religions should offer security from basic human rights violation in Nigeria. They should oppose political repression, systematic torture, ill-treatment and human rights violation. They should uphold good governance and visionary leadership, fight against corruption and embrace the principle of religious tolerance, social justice, discipline, integrity, fairness/equity, self-reliance, dignity of labour and patriotism.

Nigeria Security in the Future

The opinion discussed below might seem alarming or scary, but this is certainly what the nearest future holds for Nigeria if it continues its 'free fall slides'. Neglect of human development; infrastructural decay and national security threats. As Osatowe Peters, a lecturer with the University of California, Sam Diego Campion, predicts Nigeria is the verge of large scale ethnic, religious, and communal upheaval. According to him:

In this 21st century, most European powers would be less involved in the affairs of Europe and West African. Sphere of influence will be filled by Nigeria – a more natural hegemonic power which means Nigeria will need two times it presents resources to contend with internal and external conflicts advancing from Niger (the Hausa link), the Republic of Benin (the Yoruba link) and conceivably Cameroun.⁵¹

Moreover, the prospect of sustainable democracy is slim because for one, the repressive apparatus of the state security service will be difficult to dismantle by the civil administrator or be controlled by it. As environmental scarcity adds to various demands made on the government, the country would become increasingly ungovernable. Ethnic and regional splits are deepening as situation been made worse by religious cleavages. Muslim fundamentalism and Evangelic Christian militancy are on the rise, and northern Muslim anxiety over southern Christian control of the economy is gradually becoming intense and the will to keep Nigeria together is not very strong. And not only will the west and America retreat from the African continent, because the Soviet Union is no longer a threat and the global containment of communalism dead.⁵²

Moreover, foreign policy is now resource driven as the USA State Department will like to say, and over the past five years, "don't ask anything for Africa that cost money"⁵³ Nigeria is simply not commanding the kind of attention in the New World Order (NWO) to keep it from disintegration due to the high rate of corruption, neglect of state structures, bad governance and promotion of ethnic-religious crisis and the Nigerian state is still predatory or prebendal. It is being used as a tool for the accumulation and expropriation of the national wealth by a few privileged individuals who control the lever of political and economic power. The state is symbolized by a personalization of political power which seldomly acquired through legitimate democratic process but through election rigging and adoption of a pre-part system. In the function of the state, there is a deliberate unwillingness on the part of the power wielders to blur the boundary between the private and public sphere in the state. Thus in a recent lecture delivered at the Nigeria institute of International Affairs, the renowned Africanist Scholars, Richard Joseph, stated that "such practices have now gone beyond prebendalism to a system based on pure confiscation of public assets. In a prebendal system, legal frames and procedures governing the operation of state offices are used as cover behind which state resources are appropriated under the confiscatory system, commonly referred to as 'lootocracy'. Government officials have simply seized public assets without even attempting to disguise their behaviour behind legal framework. Thus the states have been weakened by the low identification of the citizenry with the various units of governance. Thus, the Nigerian citizen have generally disengaged from the state since Nigeria has come to be seen as an external and oppressive force, the nature of the federal state in Nigeria, therefore accounts for the rampant insecurity and the absence of any semblance of legitimate authority, leaving insurgents, militias and vagabonds to carry out anarchy in most parts of the country. That is the main reasons why the author is calling for the religions in Nigeria to move out of the existing norms of religions tenets to and provide the citizens with human security as experience in Europe, Asia and America.

Conclusion

This paper has clarified the concepts of religion, national security and harmonious co-existence in Nigeria. It has shown the link between religion and national security and has indicated the need to improve on human security rather than national security. We have argued that in modern society, especially in this 21st century, security is not entirely hardware, military force or even traditional military activity, even though it encompasses them, but development and without development there would be threats to national security. Security, from some informants interviewed, is no longer a matter of preventing or defending against war or threats but about feeling safe from a variety of threats examined in this paper. It has discussed the expected roles of religion in the managing/control of national security threats through promotion of human security using the seven dimensions of human security/wants which are economic security, food security, health security, environmental security,

personal security, community security and political security (1994 UNDP Human Development Report).⁵⁴ The sum points is that as asserted by the former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Tony Blair, “security requires much more than hard power and Sophisticated weapons. It also requires an appreciation for the complex ways in which our political, economic, and social institutions help make us feel secured”.⁵⁵ More so; an individual who has not satisfied his or her basic needs like food, clothing, health care, housing, education and work can hardly be called secured no matter how much weaponry the individual may have at his disposal. And religion in Nigeria should improve the lots of their adherents of this country rather than adding to their misfortune and deprivation.

Recommendations

This paper recommends a stable democratic rule featured with good governance and good leadership that should aim at ensuring the attainment of these objectives: (1) to make people safe from violence and intimidation in their communities, homes work, school and religious places; (2) to make property secure from theft and destruction; (3) to ensure that everybody has access to a system which dispenses justice fairly, speedily and without discrimination among others as the preconditions of security (be it national or individual) in Nigeria, religious bodies should partner with Nigerian state in the provision of social services, basic healthcare, qualitative and quantitative education, job security to all population and a sense of belonging, not only to reduce threats but also as a matter of **Rights**. Moreover, an effective strategy for enhancing human security in Nigeria is by strengthening legal norms and building the capacity to enforce legal norms. Since human security/wants is every body’s business, everyone must be his brothers and sisters keeper.

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