

AN APPRAISAL OF RELIGION, ETHNICITY AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

National integration is of great importance in a multi – ethnic nation. However, Nigeria as a European colony is a multi-ethnic nation with the family values to destabilize national integration. The researcher thus, made use of profound primary and secondary sources of data for data analysis and two resourceful persons were interviewed. The paper observed that the whites never actually colonized Nigerians of African origin but the gods did for the genocide or races of the African origin. It argues that because Africans were attending to the practices of the gods, their genocide was bound to come to reality. It further observed that the gods are Greeks and they founded Nigeria in Africa as a Greek home for the Greeks and as a result they are working out the complete genocide of Nigerians of African origin. It argued that one of the ethnic groups in the Nigerian Islamic community is of Greek origin and out for the genocide of the other ethnic groups that are of Africa origin. It submits that if Nigerians of African origins do not reject the practices of the gods then, eventually, the Muslims will attack them and most probably bring them into extinction.

Keywords: Religion, Ethnicity, National Integration, Nigeria, Peace

Introduction

Exercises of oneness in a community with diverse socio-ethnic groups can be promoted or undermined by religious belief system and ethnicity in a multireligio-ethnic community. In Nigeria, national integration is deliberately undermined by religious belief systems and their ethnic activities. The Nigerian situation has one out of the many ethnic groups for attacking all other ethnic groups in Nigeria by virtue of the Nigerian religious belief systems. It also has features of other ethnic threats for the authority of the Nigerian order. Thus, Nigeria is developing towards the genocide of the indigenous ethnic groups in Africa and people are losing their lives in ethnic attacks on the indigenous people of the region of Nigeria. Previous analysis on the situation took the religio-ethnic crisis in Nigeria for farmers/herders crisis or a claim to religious superiority and as jihadists' attacks on the indigenous people and so on, but the analysis of this research will build on past researches and give account on the religion that is guiding mayhem in Nigeria as a community consciousness of the Nigerian family values. This paper therefore aims at exploring reasons for the current mayhem in the Nigerian society.

Religion

Though different scholars of religion have defined religion differently, some, based on their

areas of specialization, the meaning of religion can still be highly appreciated from its root word (Cowley, 80). Thus, the English word religion is said to be derived from a list of Latin words such as *religo* meaning “to tie or fasten”, *religio*, meaning “to respect, devotion or superstition”, or “obligation or bond”, *relegere* meaning “re-reading” or “rehearse, to execute painstakingly” (Fowler, 5- 6; Johnstone, 8; Diener, 1). For geographers like Park, religion can generally be classified into ethnic and universal religions (4). Park states thus:

From a geographical perspective it is more useful to distinguish universal and ethnic religions. Universal (or universalising) religions – such as Christianity, Islam and the various forms of Buddhism – seek world-wide acceptance by actively looking for and attracting new members (converts). Ethnic (or *cultural*) religions are very different in that they do not seek converts. Each is identified with a particular tribal or ethnic group. Tribal (or traditional) religions involve belief in some power or powers beyond humans, to which they can appeal for help. Examples include the souls of the departed, and spirits living on maintains, in stones, trees or animals. More broad based ethnic religions include Judaism, Shintoism, Hinduism, and the Chinese moral religious system (embracing Confucianism and Taoism), which mainly dominate one particular national culture (4).

While the ethnic religion seeks the elimination of other ethnic groups, the universal religion seeks the spread of the ethnic religion to regions of other ethnic groups for genocide of the ethnic groups. Because religion binds, or offers consciousness of family values, Fowler holds that, Christianity cannot be a religion as Christ came to free not to bind (6). We learnt that some other Christian teachings were declared by Christ to be for His disciples while other Christian teachings were to enable the people to know the truth so that they can be free (*The New International Version*, Matthew 19: 4 – 12). Though Park has listed Christianity on the list of universal religions, Wanjohi and Wanjohi are of the view that, the imperialists only organized Christianity into a religion in most if not all European missions in Africa to form enculturation, where “ideas” of the ethnic religion were introduced into Christianity to undermine Christian family values (29 – 30).

The Ethnic Religion and the Establishment of Nigeria

All ethnic religions are argued to be a Greek tribal religion (Carlton, 222 – 225). The Greek tribal or ethnic religion was transferred across the whole globe as an ethnic religion (Dobie, 176; Wanjohi, 28-29). Thus, the ethnic religion reached the people in the region that is currently known as Nigeria by transfer from an ethnic group in Greece (Dobie, 176). The landing of the religion to the indigenous people of the region called Nigeria today marked the people and their region for colonisation (Wanjohi and Wanjohi, 28-29). The practice and services of the ethnic religion in Nigeria are strictly protected by the colonist's myth to sanction the people in the region of Nigeria (Malkin, 90- 91; Haskins, 229). Consequently, the religion is helping the gradual colonisation of the indigenous people of the region to the final stage of the Nigerian colonisation plan, which for Flora Louise Lugard is genocide of indigenous ethnic groups in the region (Chaudhuri and Strobel, 90). Flora Louise Lugard who knows the meaning of Nigeria better, is said to have written a myth based on race superiority that, the superior race among Nigerian ethnic groups will dismiss the other ethnic groups out of the country (Chaudhuri and Strobel, 90). The entire colonisation of a country was programmed in a format to run in sequence and in the order of the background of the colony as it was laid by the gods and told as a myth by the oikist (Malkin, 90 – 91; Haskins,

229). Though, Doniger is of the view that, works in sociology of religion are in the real sense of the study not associated with the "history of religions", religious colonies and their European city states are same thing pointing at how religion is influencing human lives in their regions (918). Studying the influence of religion on the people in a colony is therefore proportional to studying its influence on a Greek city state and studying the religion of the Greek city state is equal to studying people of the colony's religious life. Secondly, what Doniger refers to as history of the religions may be writings of sociologists of religion in their society serving the need of memberchecking. Moreover, Hefner, Hutchinson Mels and Timmerman are of the view that, the world is global and that the people's religious life in parts is an expansion of another not basically history (48-49). Therefore, if relating the religious life of a colony to its foundation is considered history of the religion then, studying the religious life of the people as it is practiced at every current minute in the life of the people in their colony is same as studying the history of the religion. This is because the history is a theory but also a city of the religious life of the indigenous people (Dobie, 176). Thus, coherence of the people's socio-religious life in the society with their history can serve to verify values of the religion to the society. Bianchi, a professor of History of Religion in the University of Rome, writes thus:

If sociologists were to identify diverse types of religious societies or even, with the aid of cultural anthropology and ethno-psychology, diverse types of religious civilization, they could do this only by constant reference to historical research concerning these civilizations; otherwise they would run the risk of building on a hypothetical basis ((26).

Religion and the Amalgamation of Ethnicity for the Anti-Black Movement

For Cheeseman, Anderson and Scheibler, "ethnic amalgamation occurs when people decide on the basis of cultural, linguistic and/or socioeconomic similarity, interpretations of ethnic pasts, and assessment of current politics – that two or more groups, which are usually regarded as distinct, actually comprise part of a larger and more inclusive ethnic grouping" (100). Ethnic amalgamation is not a concept for half cast as it is made of independent culture, linguistics and resource. In order to dominate and take the lands and regions of other ethnic groups, the amalgamation of ethnicity was pronounced and clearly held as a religious phenomenon (Kidd, 196). This means that women can be sexually engaged for a super race and the "extermination" of the other ethnic groups (Meril, 69). It was the agenda of the colonisation movement to fuel sexual affairs with women in other regions to "demean" other ethnic groups or for the continuation of their ethnicity in the colony when it was risky for colonists to extend their stay on the land of others (Sexton, 60-61; Pearson, 7-8; Malking, 90). The amalgamation of ethnicity in Africa is said to be the colonists mating sacrifice offered to the gods with a black female to bring into existence, a new ethnic group from the imperialists (Sexton, 60-62; Stiglmayer, 191; Wees, 13). The aim is for the genocide on indigenous people of the black races. In a like manner, Chaudhuri and Strobel hold that, Flora Louise Lugard wrote in her book titled tropical dependence, saying a myth about Nigeria that, it is established for the Northern Muslims to do away with the ethnic groups other than the superior race which are the colonists and their "hybrid" races. In line with the aforementioned, Johnston also hold that, whatever people say about the Fulani, the Fulani originated from colonial ethnic amalgamation "as a conquering Muhammadan nation" (12 – 13). Iliffe writes about the first president of Nigeria thus:

Ambitious above all to become sultan of Sokoto, he displayed extreme pride of rank and

ancestry. 'I'd rather be dead than Hausa – I am a Fulani, 'he once declared. Accepting with regret the need to participate in party politics, he nevertheless considered democratic competition beneath his dignity, outlawing it in his constituency and leaving interparty bargaining to 'young kids'. He saw politics rather as patronage, appointing ministers without consulting them and... Northerners admired too, his determination to remedy their region's backwardness and his defiant contempt for southern critics. 'As regard slaves,' he once declared, 'it is only because the Moslem power is not strong here that we have not got the slaves to sell, and they are there'. His loathing of southern politics was sharpened in 1953 when northern legislators who vetoed a resolution demanding self-Government in 1956 were subjected to 'the screams and insults of large crowds of Lagos thugs'. 'Next time I come, I'll have a sword in my hand!' he warned as he boarded his train (314).

The most important people among the Fulani ethnic group are the cattle rearers and the herdsmen are those who will be leaders of the African region of Nigeria when the colonial agenda of the genocide of African Nigerians is accomplished. This point is well stressed in Philips that, the cattle rearers or “*Rimbe* caste” of Fulani ethnicity are the right Fulani people and they are the caste with “political power” (148). Accordingly, Philips holds that, all the Fulanis are descent of ethnic amalgamation made of people who identify themselves as Fulbe “from a Fulfulde word meaning “new” or “created a new”; and they are referred to as Fulani from the Hausa - English lingua know how (147). Fulani people are loudly argued to be pioneers of Islam existing as a result of religio – ethnic amalgamation (The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 52). In Nigeria, Islam seems to have embraced Hausa and some other ethnic groups for orders from the Fulanis even before the arrival of the European colonists (Umaru, 35). The colonists on arrival to Nigeria promoted the Fula leadership in the North and helped the spread of Islam in the region by far reach (Dudley, 91). Salamonewrite thus:

The presence of Islam among the Fulani and other northern peoples also helped define the overall situation. At the time of colonial rule, Islam was essentially a colonial religion. It had not yet seeped down to the common people. In truth moreover, the rapid spread of Islam in the Hausa-Fulani area, from about 5% of the population to about 80% of it is a result of deliberate British colonial policy (50-51).

Still to it, Awolowo is said to have loss in Fulani attacks on his people just because of the “intervention” of the colonists (Ogunnika, 31). Thus, Awolowo later came to the thought that one of the colonial functions of the colonists was to heighten the Fulani rule over African Nigerians (31). For colonialism, the Fulani are the only indigenes of Nigeria (Chaudhuri and Strobel, 90). Sir Lugard states thus: “Let it be admitted at the outset that European brains, capital and energy have not been, and never will be, expended in developing the resources of Africa from motives of pure philanthropy; that Europe is in Africa for the benefit of her own industrial classes, and of the native races in their progress to a higher plane” (qtd in Kwarteng, 289). The British colonial Government in Nigeria also helped in developing the worse state of almajiri as superior culture, a culture that has become a signal of danger to the society of Africans in today's Nigeria (Gordon, 78; Hoechner, 45; Rappa, 103). The colonists promoted the worse of almajiri in Nigeria as a superior culture aiming at the genocide of every other ethnic group within space of time (Hoechner, 45; Iliffe 314; Chaudhuri and Strobel, 90). In the society today, Nigeria is a multiethnic state that finds the different ethnic groups leave their

states of origin to states originally dominated by one or two-three of these ethnic groups. However, only the Fulani seek to dominate places other than their state of origin. This scenario has been on for long. Since 18th century to present day Governments, Fulani - Muslim domination had been a threat to other ethnic groups in Nigeria as the Fulani dominates through religious politics to appointments in the Government of the republic of Nigeria (Ilfie, 314; Falola, 225; Babalola; Onapajo, 62-63).

Amidst ethnic tensions in Nigeria, during the election of national leaders, the Nigeria city community consciousness of the indigenous people, do vote against all odds presented by ethnicity (Mwakikagile, 84-85). This was also evidenced in the 2020 General Election in the case of the Benue people. Here, masses converged on party rallies in Tiv areas were heard complaining that, while Tiv people have been displaced in large numbers and they that are still in their homes are having sleepless nights because of Fulani attacks, their own under APC (the ruling party) has scolded them for not being hospitable to the Fulani. For them, the gubernatorial candidate said to them that, the Tiv people were having farmers/herders crisis with Fulani as if Tiv people do not leave Benue settlement to states dominated by other ethnic groups. The barrister did not mention the case of other ethnic groups like Igbos living in Benue for long without serious course for concern. Yet, with the president's card reader electoral material, the APC candidate won, let alone for the inclusion of the votes rejected by the card reader. However, against Mwakikagile, the Fulani Sir Shehu Shagari did not meet up with the 2/3 of the 19 states that was serving constitutional demand for a Nigeria president (84 - 89). Rather the first civilian president from the Fulani ethnicity was brought into power by the Nigerian Judiciary (Ejiogu, 15-16). The fact for Nigeria is that the black races have been raped and amalgamated for extinction.

The ethnic religion established Nigeria for its ethnic groups (races) not for the ethnic groups that were in the region of Nigeria before the colonisation of the indigenes for "Nigeria". Flora Lugard is cited as saying that, they have established Nigeria for the superior races, the Northern Muslims and their genocide of the other ethnic groups in the region (Chaudhuri and Strobel, 90). Not even the Hausas are one of the superior races in Nigeria as Sir Shehu Shagari clearly declared it (Ilfie, 314). Some minor ethnic groups of the indigenous people became aware of the British support for the Fulani ethnic group in Nigeria and could not help but to become "a thorn in the flesh" of the colonists (Maiangwa, 28). However, Lord Lugard is quoted as saying that, if the indigenous people of the region of Nigeria will not act on the resource of the colonists meaning, treat the gods as imperialist, by rejecting their services, practices and claim to being indigenous to Africa then, the superior races of the Northern Muslim and their genocide of the other ethnic groups is a necessity with time in Nigeria (Kwarteng, 289). The polytheism emerged to sophistication as an ethnic religion and has established countries across the globe making different ethnic groups into a country, giving them national identity in irony (Kromkowski; Magliola; and Holley, 173).

Religion, Ethnicity and National Integration

The universality of the ethnic religion in Nigeria only means mayhem for the extinction of other ethnic groups in Nigeria. Most of the internally displaced persons of Tiv ethnicity today, are so displaced by the Tiv people working for Fulani through their human consciousness of

the Nigerian family values that comes from the gods (Miller, 14; Chauhhuri and Stroble, 90). This adds value to what geographers have said that, “ the religious person is one who seeks coherence and meaning in his world and a religious culture is one that has a clearly structured world view” (Park, 1). Moreover, the gods of Nigeria in the hall at Athens are the only gods in the African region of Nigeria. Consequently, because the gods instituted Nigeria for the genocide of the indigenous races of Africa in Nigeria, if the indigenous people would keep attending to the ways of the gods, they all will dance to the tune of genocide by the imperial races (Dobie, 176; Chuadhuri and Strobel, 90; Kwarteng, 289).

Conclusion

The ethnic groups of African origin are not from the races of religion. Therefore; the gods have bond the people of Africa to Nigeria just to undermine national integration for the genocide of the African ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Nigerian family values undermine national integration so that the gods could maintain authority over Africans in Nigeria and execute genocide on the Africans in Nigeria. Sources in the field work helped to reveal that Africans are glued to the tradition of the gods for its remedy against death but the findings of this research discovered that its remedy to Africans is irony seeking the genocide of Africans. The fate of the African races in Nigeria lies in genocide if they cannot desist from practices of polytheism and continue to refer to the tradition of the gods as African religion. It is to say that the gods are in Africa to jealously protect what they have achieved in Africa for the races of the gods. Africans must know that what connects the gods to Africa is a myth and the services of polytheism to Africans are meant for the gods to extinct Africans to make Greeks the owners of Nigeria in Africa. Therefore, like a chicken drawn closer for slaughter with grains in the palm of the man is the relationship between the gods and Africans. Could you picture the future of the indigenes of Africa called Nigerians if they cannot reject the gods, their services, practices and their claim to being indigenous to Africans?

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List of Informants

Name	Age	Date of Interview
Lucy Uyem	45	5 th April, 2022
Ama Orban	40	5 th April, 2022