

Globalization and Identity Mobilization in Nigeria: Muslim and Christian Youth Violence in the 1990s

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Abstract

Nigerian youth were directly responsible for most of the violent conflicts that straddled the socio-political life of Nigeria in the 90s. This can be partially explained by the argument that the search for economic relevance made Nigerian youth the carriers of violent identities. As such, youth were instruments that were used to transform the social structure from what it was to what it is.

This paper is a discussion of youth and religious identity in Nigeria, and it is premised on the fact that the breakdown of the state and its capacity to arrest the declining fortune of the economy gave rise to a very religious youth who, across religious barriers, saw no other means of becoming politically active than becoming religiously active. For Nigerian youths of the 90s, therefore, there was a close relationship between political and religious processes, ultimately encouraging their participation in the violence of the era.

Background to Youths Mobilization and Identity Transformation in the 90s

Identity politics as the reconciliation between nation- building and demands by different citizens for recognition of communal identity emerged in the 1990s as a challenge in many nation-states (Bekker, 1990; 1).

Different countries and societies responded differently to the global challenges of the 90s. In Nigeria the social transformational impacts of globalization on society impacted and transformed groups and inter group relations. Youths became the major instrument for this transformation in the 90s. Many of the violent conflicts of the 80s through the 90s

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had youths between the ages of 18yrs and 40yrs playing significant roles as organizers, planners, actors, benefactors and victims of this violence. Unprecedentedly, Nigerian youths became very vocal in religious matters, played significant roles in religious institutions, organizations and activities which also catapulted them into the political domains of the late 90s. However, there was an inverse relationship between “in-groups” who are variously shaped by religion and “out- groups” who are also defined by similar orientations. However as ethno/cultural walls became fluid and inelastic individuals from different ethnic background were either being variously converted, reverted, “won” co – opted, manipulated by religious actors into their religious folds. Pentecostalism particularly made it a focal point of its religious tradition to demonized non Pentecostal Christians and Muslims on the account that their different religious point of views. From Pentecostal Christian point of view all must therefore by either “won”, “converted” or “reverted” to Christ it does not matter what approach is used. Religious intolerance and radicalization of youths and religious politicization and the secularization of the spiritual order which was assumed to antithetical to Christianity were all deployed and legitimized in the 90s. Liberation theology became a highly contested issues even the academic and in the various religious sanctuaries.

As Pentecostalism forcefully emerged in the 90s, it forced Islam and Muslims to assert their religion ideals also in a most intolerable manner. As both religions struggled for the soul of the state via the soul of the citizenry, inter religious socialization became rigid and elastically “closed”. However, social transformation did take religiously radicalize of youths by transforming religiously passive youths into religiously overzealous youths in their perception of the political and social processes. Youth became carriers and triggers of violence and participants in most of the violent conflicts of the 90s. By the early 90s most youths had gained religious consciousness and were ready to assert this consciousness, in fact they asserted them at will and with slightest provocation and utmost disregard for rationality and tolerance. Religious identities did not only become a strong and deciding factor in inter-ethnic group relations, it was also a strong determinant of social identification as most youths were organized around their respective religions.

This also shaped other aspects of society including neighbourhood associations and petty neighbourhood trade and transactions. These two scenarios capture the moods of the 90s.

Most actions, policies and appointments of government at every level were seen through the lens of religion. The lens also extended to dress, food, and the balance of religious propagation in educational institutions, allocation of airtime on radio and television, a fair balance between Muslims and Christians public holidays, and the religious composition of the armed forces (Osaghae, 2002).

In a judgment handed down in a Lagos High Court, the judge declared that:

...some religious traditions have not done any society any good. Nigerian society has been bogged by many problems [...] that dragged the citizenry to religious highways (Punch, Thursday, 2007, pg 13).

The translocation of violence as it spiral or spills across geographical zones can be related to from the contagious effects of how religion was organized and mobilized, and the role of youths in the mobilization of religious identity. Religion and ethnicity were strong elements of colonial and post colonial state formations and are not only problematic to de root they served the interest of those who control state apparatus'. Therefore religion cannot be a veritable instrument to correct colonial and post colonial ills, it amounts re inventing the wheel and complicates already established state order that encourages social oppression.

Islam and Christianity, while not only proselytizing religions, both seek to expand their support base, hence conversion and poaching of followers of other religions through stereotypes, hate preaching, distortion, misrepresentation and misinterpretation of the various religious texts in such manners that promoted prejudice in both camps. The aim was either to exclude or includes, usually demonizing either religion as "satanic". Religiously "good" became misrepresented by the teachings of either religions. Religiously active youths played a significant role in the transformation of the social structure of the 90s to what is obtainable in the present by transforming themselves from passive, less conscious and less assertive to more engaging youths in the religious fronts.

How did they do this? The foundation of religiosity and religious fundamentalism is difficult to root out in Nigeria as mentioned above religion is a major building blocks of the state construction and re construction and has since become concretized in the consciousness of both the occupants/tenants in states houses and those who seek to dislodge them.

Never the less, Christian religious fundamentalism, which emerged as Pentecostal Christianity in the 80s, peaked in the 90s and began to find anchor in the social and political consciousness of adherents of that version of Christianity who were mostly youths. Pentecostal Christianity targeted mainly youths as instrument for the socio economic and political reconstruction. It was therefore not a surprise that the church became very vocal in the political process in the 90s. What was surprising however was that the civil society role that church played were hardly given attention in the literature demonstrates how deep seated and penetrative religion sentiments can have even on the intellectual community. A civil society organization and their role are social engineering and social re direction. However because they are non profit organizations they are usually externally or internally funded by a parent organization, often with agenda of the funder behind them. As case of the “carrot and the stick” or “who pays the piper dictates the tune”, otherwise civil society organizations are non profits organizations committed to social development. By the late 80s and early 90s Pentecostalism in Nigeria has delved into all aspects of political life of the state raising serious debate about the role of the Church to politics and to the state.²

Churches, youth’s fellowship, outreach programs/camps, crusade, new religious preachers emerged, Christian business fellowship for men and women sprouted with lightning speed. Public debates were tainted with the religious discourses, while this was common in the southern part of the country, attempt to extend this to the pre dominantly Muslims north that provoked most of the violence. There seemed a gradual and incremental “Christianization” of “everybody” for Christ in the 90s which occurred in various and diverse forms, “evangelism”, “crusading” many of which involved foreign preachers all escalated religious disgust and intolerance. This in itself could not be

² see Enwerem the Politicization of Religion in Nigeria.

misconstruing as dysfunctional so long as the rights of other Nigerians are respected religiously but this was not to be, as the regimes at the time was not democratic and religious rights were guaranteed. However the question of rights and the limitation of religious right is such a highly contentious issue that it could hardly be determined by the authoritarian power at the time and also the question of infringements of religious rights in a very weak state that was undemocratic and could not be regarded as unbiased and neutral to perceived conflicting interests. In short, how legitimate the state is impinged upon how well its capacity to remain neutral was overwhelmed by its incapacitation and recourse to stimulate group actions and use religious and ethnic divisions as social fragments as highly active instrument of state control.

Chazan et al argue that the fraying character of state- society relations in Africa and the increased tendency towards authoritarianism, and the decay of basic governmental institutions contributed to the diminutive of administrative capacities of the states effectively capture the state in the 90s. Although, Nigeria represents a classic example of a deeply divided society, the steepness was further deepened in the 90s by the unprecedented conscripts of youths in religious activities. The religious clergies and clerics from the Pentecostal churches and the Muslim “Assalatu Fellowship” groups (Assalatu groups are Muslim fellowships similar to those of the Christian fellowship groups) that sprouted across the country were mainly youths. The congregation and their adherents were also mostly youths and the fact that their activities were targeted at youths, ex-convicts and miscreants is true for both echelons and followership of these religious organizations.

Religion played two interrelated functions that prepared the ground for the present situation. Firstly, Both Islam and Christianity played the role of modernizing agents in the 90s; and secondly, they transformed the religious orthodoxies of both religions that “excluded” the youths from political, economic and spiritual relevance. By focusing on youths, Pentecostalism and the “Assalatu Fellowship” questioned the structures and organization of the orthodox religious practices and pattern that “shut the door” on them. Most orthodox religious practices pay less attention to youthful cravings and yearnings which also manifested the lack of interest in religions by the youths of *yore*, youthful

religious passivity of yore can also be used to explain the less youthful religious radicalism and the insignificant role of youths in critical economic and political decisions of the pre 90s. However, there are three implications of the shift on the transformation of the orthodoxy religions. Firstly, they were forced by the powerful emergence of youths to reform to meet youthful expectations; Secondly, the hierarchy were taken over by the youths; and thirdly; those of the orthodoxies that failed to reform were either taken over or depleted in sizes or had their members identified with the youthfully control ones.

As earlier noted, Islam and Christianity are both proselytizing religions premised on conversion and on “winning souls” for Christ and Islam. The democratization and the globalization of democracy are all premised on the same principle of “conversion” and popular participation, so it was therefore not surprising how “conversion” and “soul wining” cooperated in the political and the democratic processes. Pentecostalism and the “Assalatu Fellowship” disregarded and consistently violated individual religious rights with their religious practices, which they saw as competition for the “soul” of the state as instrument for accumulation and appropriation of wealth for their members via the religious path. The limits and limitations of religious fundamentalism became very problematic for the state to contain and consequently the free for all religious violence that characterized the period, of which the greatest participants were religiously mobilized youths seeking to open up the political and economic spaces by redefining politics and the political process and the consequent transformation of the group process, social behaviour and of course ethnicity.

An important transformative role, significantly played by Pentecostal Christianity, was to transform the group process by breaking it down from its communal modes base on kinship ties, lineages and relationships that modernizers saw as encouraging the personalization and privatization of the of the state, thereby encouraging the informalization and instrumentalization of politics (Chabal & Daloz, 1999). All of these, Rothschild & Olorunsola (1983:7) argue, go to the very heart of the weakness of the post-colonial state in Africa as a conflict manager by perpetuating mono ethno religious group dominance in power and political exchange between patrons and clients for example, are

believed to have been fostered by Islam and traditional relationships, where as Christianity is believe to encourage “individualism”. Islam is often perceived as being inconsistent. As a result the bold transformative surge of Pentecostalism was to break down institutions that encourage communal living. Transformation therefore took two interrelate approaches; remove the protective ties that encourage ethnic communal ties and secondly those that encourage religious communalism. Since Islam is often perceived to be inconsistent with liberal tradition, Muslims reactions did not come as a surprise to objective conflict analysts. The impacts of social transformation removed the protective family, cultural and ethnic control by eroding, weakening and displacing the social institutions that promotes them and reconstructing new ones in their place. This was promoted through the individualization process i.e. individualization of the state, the markets and the social space.

The Individualization process and Communal Conflict: Theoretical Approach.

In African and specifically Nigeria relationship between the state and the individual is defined in the group setting. In other words the group is very central to understanding socio political processes. The centrality of the group unfortunately has enabled powerful individual the ability to explore the group, construct and re construct the group by giving life to it. Christianity is usually associated with individualism while Islam is less associated with it. The bane of development in Nigeria is therefore tied to Islam and Muslims by most Christians. The core problem however is perception and approach. The super structure of the state encourages groupist control and not the other way round as often perceived. The contention therefore was how individualism can contain communalism has been a major source of violent struggle. Wrong diagnose has elicited wrong medication thereby escalated the problem. Individualization is to be premised on personal “experience” (and group experience) or ties of lineages and kinship, or ties to ones religious beliefs systems etc. The paradox, however, is that Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria deployed groupist religious activities that have been sustained by the same group it seek to transform. The powerful emergence of the “self” that Ian Craibs (Craib, 1991) argues will dominate social relations will suffice to determine perceptions to

relationships in Nigeria can only be effective and consistent with state transformation that takes account of historical reality of the Nigerian state, not a distortion of history or selective application of history. Similarly, in the era of the “juggernaut” Anthony Giddens argues that identity shall become a major player in social and group relations. Jenkins and Craibs (in Craibs, 1991) attributed the “powerful self” to capitalism and pressures from capital. The penetration of capital and its impacts on the individual will lead to the marketisation (Fukuyama, 1999) and the commercialization (*and privatization*) of relationships.

The assumptions here are that group based behaviours are defined by a culture of kinship ties and relationships will be grounded for a more individualized relationships. According to Christopher Bollas the “nomortic personality” by which he meant individuals disinclination to entertain the subjective features (i.e. cultural symbols, myths and mythologies) encourages the domination of constructed cultural/racists identities that inhibits the democratization process. Mason and other scholars have argued that however that primordial assumptions as promoted by Shills and Geertz as having over powering and overbearing effect on its members thereby emphasizing in-group socialization and in-group worth does not only prevent in groups socialization but encourages racists and exclusive politics and oppression. Eller and Coughlan claimed to have demystified this and argued that its “unsociological and unscientific” (Eller and Coughlan 1998). This argument is insufficient and does not explain the over powering emergence of global identity; nationalism and ethnicity that co habit simultaneously with globalization. Bollas notes therefore that the disinclination of the nomortic personality to identify more with subjective features of the “self” than the cultural objective will shift the groupist paradigm to individualization. In other words, the penetration of capital to pre capital societies will create social reflexivity, commercialization of “self” and relationship which will eventually leads individual to think rationally and personally rather than just as a group, and this would be the triumph of individualism. The commercialization of relationships would then mean the constant re-launching and revamping of the “self” as capital expands its frontiers, but how should the “homogenization and de territorialization” “fragmentation and re nationalization” (Garth and Lambrechts,

1999;11), of groups even in the advanced democracies be explained within the context of globalization? The paradoxical emergence of these trends has re created in the very backyards “monsters” that is claimed to be responsible for Africa's “backwardness” in them. The race bomb issues in the US and Europe, Ethnicity in Africa, Xenophobia in South Africa, the forceful emergence of religious identities around the globe, Semitism and anti Semitism around the world and significant role being played by non state actors all co exists with globalization.

By the 90s Nigeria’s social landscape had transformed and has become religiously charged, swift conflict movement from ethno communal to ethno religious conflicts became common features of inter group relations. Every conflicts analysis on Nigeria has implicit or explicit religious aspects to it, the simple reason being that religion dominated life in the 90s. As Pentecostal Christianity surged, religious poaching (i.e. the conversion of other youth’s mostly Muslim youths) became a common feature, particularly in the south west and other places. Among ethnic minority groups who found themselves in predominantly “Hausa/Fulani” Muslims in northern Nigeria, religion became according to Osaghae a “counter-mobilizing” instrument for resistance against perceived injustice and domination. Among such groups as the “Kataf in Kaduna state and the “Zar” ethnic group in Bauchi state Christianity did not only help create ethnic identity, it was also a potent instrument for resistance.

To counter perceived poaching, Muslims mostly youths responded to Pentecostalism in the west by creating the “Assalatu Fellowship” and prayer group with the aims of stemming poaching of Muslim youths and also creating opportunity for them through cooperation and exchange. “Nasrull Fathiu” and “Quarib Fathiu” were pioneer organizations that emerged but numerous of other “Assalatu Fellowships” have since sprouted. The implication of proliferated religious groups is their unintended actions to either become instrument of “terror” overtly or covertly. However, the emergence of religiously mobilized youth’s activities shifted the family structures and relationships, crimes surged and cultist violence among youth groups coincided with the era under review. An unprecedented rise in religiosity and innocence among the youths all

coincided with surge of all sort of crimes. More youths became disenchanted with simple societal values and norms as family ties and consequent break down of family system were common. Also, religion became a major determinant of inter group marriages. Cross-cultural marriages that were trendy and fashionable refracted as social relationships retreated and discouraged by religions. Nearly all social life was marked by religious “iron curtains”; and as intra religious socialization thrived on a national scale, ethnic identification and citizenship became even more complicated to analyze. In some cases ethnic consciousness was the basis for demand and contestation, in some other cases it was religious consciousness that waxed stronger, in both circumstances religion played significant role in their construction. Reversal and contractile relationships were defined more by ones religious affiliation and commitment to them, which in turn translated into economic and political opportunities to adherents/followers. The consequences of all these was to further suggest that Nigerians and Nigeria are premised on diverse groups that are all culturally and religiously different.

The Globalization and Identity Transformation linkages

One proof of global interdependence is the contagious effects of global economic collapse, which is felt around the globe. The global impulse of recessions, catastrophes, wars; etc were felt in Nigeria even during the Cold War politics of the 70s, but what differs are cold war impacts on global interdependence and post cold war globalism impacts on social structures. However, the end of the cold war politics of the 90s sped up global interconnectedness, by relaxing international inhibitions and improvements on telecommunications and other internationally enhancing interactions between nations, societies have connected more than ever before. None the less, Susan Joseph queried the rational for viewing future conflict as “clash of civilizations” (Huntington, 1996) in spite of the massive movement and migration that have occurred in a short time, in spite of these movements and their impacts on global other cultures, theories of cultures are not reflected by global cultural transformations. It seems to her that:

...the globalization of the economy and the media seem only to have increased awareness of differences since understanding a culture and its

symbols and meaning is now perceived as a necessary prerequisite for effective corporate promotion (Joseph, 1998: 7).

However, globalization never took away economic restrictions and international politics of inequality. By the early 60s however, modernization experts have posited to Africa and other weak countries that they will do well if only they “copy” the so-called advanced and matured democracies, America included. They needed to liberalize their democratic space, liberalize, commercialize and privatize their economic space like those of the Euro/American societies. This position were “packaged” and thrust at African countries to adopt and implement. The fundamentals of this position were that Africa is “backward” and can and only be “redeemed” through eventual modernization of its backwardness. Unfortunately for the modernist experts the only way they could get African leaders to implement these poisonous “pills” is either through the use of “soft” power or other clandestine means. The control of international instrumentalities at their disposal made it easier to overtly or covertly impose their will on regions that stood in the way of global capital penetration. Modernization as an agenda has always been a strand in global interconnected assumptions. Was it a coincidence that the global economy crashed in the 70s and the 80s? The attempt to rationalize global economic crashes as coincidence is too simplistic in explaining the conditionality that was thrust specifically at African countries either to cutback spending or to deregulate their economies as readjustments in the aftermath of economic crash. One UN report reported on the romanticism on the ideal picture of the global economy as follows:

The International Monetary Fund I.M.F and the World Bank seem to have the picture of an ideal country; its economy would be largely self-regulatory through open competition, and its public sector would do little more than provide the minimum services necessary for the conduct of private business and the protection society’s weakest members.” In which the economies and political structures are open to economic competition.

The same report concluded that “the picture corresponded to no known place on earth...”
(ibid)

According to the United Nations report on “*States in Disarray*” it was the condition that warranted states restructuring and economic liberalization in third world countries which are also part of the conditions that must be met by these countries to qualify for international aids, thus it is the readiness of African countries offset by accepting “dumping” from OECDs countries that qualifies them for aids. In other words, third world countries will have to relieve OECDs countries of the “farts” generated from their own internal economic logics by accepting to underwrite their economic deficits by undergoing painful political and economic hara-kiri to relieve OECDs of their burden i.e. to open up third world countries market to accommodate (dumping) import substitutes goods that are not needed as against those that are needed that has maintained and sustained global economic and political imbalances. The report observed that OECDs also deregulated their economies! It did not say how and the implications. It however confessed that:

...they have therefore transmitted these policy changes to other countries through their dominance of international trade and finance, and through their control of the Bretton Woods institutions: the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (UNRISD).

The UNRISD report further notes that adjustments required deflationary policies and cut-backs in welfare services, it went ahead to say that the advocates of adjustments anticipated that setbacks would be temporary, and that short term social cost could be offset against long term economic gain, the paradox here is that long term gains for Africa have been the incremental erosion of values systems and traditional norms that held society together, and the attempt to introduce new ones that often generate ethno communal and religious violence, genocides and intra state civil wars. Scholars have insisted that it was the “insistence by the financial institutions for these countries to adjust their economies, fundamentally to restructure their economic activities, privatization and back-cutting on state expenditure (UNRISD, pg 10), that led to increased pauperization and proletarianisation of the people (Egwu, 1998). Globalization should not be misconstrue as a substitute for global capitalism nor is it meant to obliterate global inequalities, globalization is integral to global capitalism, and represent a different phase

in capitalism, a more advanced way of sustaining the unequal international economic imbalance of which third world countries are assigned a position in the global market system to provide cheap labour through migration and opening its market for unrestricted and unrestrained penetration of capitalization. Globalization is not shaped by altruism or philanthropic assumptions; it is still within the modernization agenda for third world countries to modernize. The direction of globalization was the erosion of institutions and structures that promote what is often regarded in modernization theories as primordial ties; kinship, lineages that are considered as obstructive to political and economic modernization. The shift from interstate wars and conflicts since the 90s and the corresponding intensification of the IMF and World Bank conditions for African countries to cut-back on fiscal spending in the face of obvious need for these countries to expand the capital expenditure base to create jobs for its hungry population is highly discouraged by such conditions. According to Egwu SAP is not only an economic instrument it is also implied a project of politico- administrative reform, including state restructuring.³ State and local government creation were all part of the conditionality packages. Egwu's politico-administrative thesis tends to shed lights on institutional erosion and displacement of traditional structures and the rise of identities that arose from state reforms. The introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (S.A.P) as a measure of stemming the country's economic fortune heightened the crisis. However, Ihonvbere argues that SAP only accentuated the (systemic state problem) problems that were already sown in the soil. The proletarianisation and pauperization of the workers and urban poor, forced to resorted to multiple modes of survival in order to eke out a living (Egwu, 1998; Mustapha, 1992; Asobie, 1993). Bangura (1989) notes that in periods of crisis and adjustment. Sentiments that feed on unequal development such as ethnicity and religion are thrown to the fore. Since 1980 there has been massive deregulation of, and increased pervasive of ethno religious violent conflicts and genocide on the continent of Africa.

Misconceptions and Distortions of History, and the rise of Religiously Radicalized Youths

³ Also see Chazan, et al 1989; Ihonvbere, 1993; Osaghae, 1995; Egwu, 1998; Mustapha, 1992; Asobie; 1993; Bangura, 1989

The common argument surrounding the rise of religion and politics in Nigeria often begins and ends with the Jihadist movement of 1803. The Fulani conquest of the Hausa states and many parts of northern Nigeria is often characterized as having foisted a new religion in the area where as Islam pre dated the very conquest of 1803. One school of thought on the Jihadist movements suggests that the conquest emerged as a result of direct corruption of Islam on the one hand, and that the movement was necessitated by the quest to purge Islam of corruption. The second school, somewhat objected to, queried the rationale for Jihadist expansion in to the Borno area where the corrupt practice of Islam was unknown. The third school of thought saw the reform to mean the politicisation and domination of other groups who are non Hausa/Fulani and non-Muslims (in this case the animists). For Islam, politics and religion have always been companions, unlike the separation of state and religion doctrine of Christianity where politics and religions are separated. The politicization of religion often give credence to religious elements in the public domain to either reframe or misrepresent the connections between religion and the state/politics. The new class of youths that emerged saw politics as co terminated in the spiritual even though the orthodox Christian resisted the intertwine, the Christian youths did not and took advantage of it. In reality in Nigeria religion and the political process are tightly related and reinforcing, the few who understood the interrelationship benefited at the expense of the mass.

Colonial and post colonial state formation reinforcement of the Jihadist tendencies in which non Muslims animist became subjects, encouraged “conversion” from animism to Islam as perquisite for status change created resistance and hostility to the Hausa/Fulani rule. Many of the resistant animists later became, Christians and began to disassociate themselves from Hausa/Fulani rule by reactivating or re constructing new cultural symbols or resurrecting their own unique cultural identities as Christians who was used as demand on the state for limited “self autonomy” within the area. The severance from Hausa/Fulani domination were to include separation from local government areas control by the group and, or separate chiefdoms control by them. Liberation theology, political theodicy and the politics of “salvation and redemption were the approaches used to either

over turn, modernize or transform the status quo, liberation theology emphasizes the employment of religious radicalism to change perceived injustice and the enthronement of “godly” governance, radicalization and instigation of violence runs counter to the teachings of “Christ” as proclaimed by most Christians, liberation theological approaches among Christians scholars remain highly contestable. Political redemption, as preached by Pentecostal churches, implies that “believers” or “sons” or “daughters” or children of God” should take control of the rein of power and teach “unbelievers”, “children of Lucifer” who have used political power to enrich themselves, dominate and enslaved others and created injustice in the land how to use it. Political theodicy therefore suggests that only a “believer” in the Christian mould has the divine anointment to redeem Nigeria. Thesis is flawed by the poor performance of the last civilian administration, headed by a Christian/south westerner. The organization, structure and values of contemporary Christianity in Nigeria have been described as “political Christianity” and its end of trying to redefine the political space engaged in “salvation politics” in which access to socio political and economic redemption became synonymous with “salvation”. The path to “redemption or salvation” is no different from the Hausa/Fulani Muslim view of resisting to be controlled by the “Kafir”, or the “Arne”. (Which alternatively implies exactly what the same stereotypes that Christian youths deployed in the 90s, Kafir and Arne have identified deeper, derogatory religious connotations which meant “unbelievers”).

Rather than viewing Nigeria’s problems as systemic to the state and locating it from the historical construct of the state, religion has been most prominent culprit. Most Christians perceives Hausa/Fulani control as Islamic control of the state. For most Christians the problem is not systemic to the state but Islam as a religion and Muslims those who controls the state, and to deal with the problem Islam must be attacked as religion of the “devil” and to redeem its people is to win them over to “Christ”. This is not only a very wrong approach it manifest “intellectual stupor” to re invent the wheel that they sought to redeem. The impact of identity mobilization in the 90s was very profound on social and group transformation but did little to effect significant change on the political structure of the country.

Social Capital and Social Trust and their Implications for Ethnicity in Nigeria

Social trust, social norms and social capital that guide previous relationships were all disrupted and displaced as the forces of globalization encountered them. Social Trust is the “total stock of cooperative social relationships based on norms of honesty and reciprocity” (Fukuyama, 1999; 20). Social Capital is a form of “social trust” the expectations that arises within a community of regular honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community (Ibid, 1995; 1999; 51), forms significant measure of “social capital” (Ibid, 1997; 47). Harris used the concept of “Widening Radius of Trust” (Harris, 2003; 205) to explain the degree of expansion, and shrinking of trust in private businesses in India. Fukuyama used a “positive radius of trust” to connect the positive externalities of group behaviour on others who are not direct members of the group, the reverse of which is negative. Globalization, therefore, creates trust within groups more than between them; trust shrinks between groups and expands within them. In Nigeria, inter-group relations manifested a negative radius of trust between groups whose shared identities were not defined by religion, whereas conversely, a positive radius of trust within groups was defined by those whose shared identity was defined by religion.

In contrast to the assumptions of modernization, globalization revamped nationalism and ethnicity across the globe rather than diminish them. Intra-state violence responded to the displacement of internal protective values and social institutions. Due to the overlapping connections between culture, religion and ethnic identities, and their reinforcing nature, ethnic identity became rigidly defined by religion. Ethnic groups connect more with other groups who are perceived as having shared religious identities, and so their solidarity, allegiances, and, importantly, their willingness to mobilize and fight wars for such groups increased. Most Muslims youths identified with the course of Muslims in other ethnic groups while Christian youths identified more with groups who shared their religious beliefs. As a result, ethno-religious recruitment and mobilization cut across cultural borders as youth mercenaries participated actively in all of the open violence that characterized the period.

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